



Flogging Molly

Flogging Molly will be playing at the Aragon Ballroom on February 18th for their Green 17 Tour!

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Flogging Molly Green 17 Tour

by Maggie O'Leary

Fresh off a European tour, riding high from the release of their fifth studio album *Speed of Darkness*, and set to kick-off a U.S. tour in February, the band Flogging Molly has a lot going on to keep them excited. Dave King, the Dublin born, Flogging Molly lead singer, takes time from his busy schedule to talk candidly with *Irish American News*. King shares with *IAN* his enthusiasm for the bands upcoming Green 17 Tour, Christmas in Ireland, and how he feels the Irish people have made their imprint on the world.

For those who are unfamiliar with Flogging Molly, they were formed

in Los Angeles in 1997. Often described as an American-Irish punk band, Flogging Molly infuses elements of traditional Celtic music, punk, rock and the blues. King says “we are influenced by traditional music and inspired by it, but without question we put our own twist on it.” The seven piece band, whose members are Dave King, Dennis Casey, Matt Hensley, Nathen Maxwell, Bridget Regan (who also happens to be King’s wife), Robert Schmidt and George Schwindt each offers an eclectic variety of musical talents. In any given song, you can expect to hear a number of instruments ranging from the violin, mandolin, banjos, tin whistle, accordion, piano, drums

and guitar to name a few. Topped off with King’s raspy, yet eloquent voice, Flogging Molly has a sound that is very distinct.

The band has come a long way

MI on February 17th. “We always wanted something that would coincide with St. Patrick’s Day and this tour has been a great thing for us. We always look forward to Green 17 and

85 miles south of Dublin. They were able to spend Christmas with King’s mother who still lives in Dublin. “It’s been three years since we could spend Christmas in Ireland because we’ve been touring so much. We live in this little village there and the people are just so ridiculously nice—it’s wonderful and always great to get back.”

When I ask King how he feels being “Irish,” he humbly and simply states he is proud. He points out the strength of the Irish community around the world. “Seeing how the Irish have integrated into so many cultures and countries around the world is a true testament to the nature of the Irish people. We’ve become big parts of communities in America, Australia, England, and Europe—wherever it is—you can find an Irish pub or an Irish community.” Exactly! Enough said!

Flogging Molly has been touring for over a decade and has maintained a hugely loyal fan base around the world. To hear them live is an unforgettable and remarkable experience. Check out www.floggingmolly.com for a complete list of tour dates. Follow the band on twitter @_floggingmolly and I-phone and Android users can download the Flogging Molly app onto their smart phones!



since their early days playing at Molly Malone’s, the pub in Los Angeles where King and Regan first began playing together. “We played there every Monday night and we felt like we were just ‘flogging’ the place to death.” Hence, the band’s name became Flogging Molly. Their small fan base from the pub in L.A. has now grown into an international conglomerate of faithful fans.

Kicking off their 8th annual lead-up to St. Patrick’s Day, the 2012 Green 17 tour begins in Detroit,

since we’ve been touring the world, it’s now good to get back to cities like Detroit, Chicago, New York and L.A.” The tour stops in over twenty cities across the states and will end in Tempe, AZ on March 17th. The entire tour is known from years past to be a bona fide celebration.

In hopes of catching a little R & R between tours, King and his wife traveled to their home in Ireland for Christmas. The couple whose primary residence is in Detroit, also have a home in Wexford which is about

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From the Motherland

Sean Farrell



salary details two years in arrears, i.e., the latest details published are for 2009. This may have had the effect formerly of camouflaging rising salaries to

A Problem for RTE

It has not been a good few weeks for RTE, the state-owned national television station. The station is financed by revenue from the (compulsory) television license, currently costing around \$200 annually, as well as from advertising. It is, therefore, subject to the type of public scrutiny and criticism that a purely commercial station would not. Though not without its critics, RTE TV and Radio, has, with limited resources, consistently provided programming of a high standard, even measured against the yardstick set by the next-door BBC. In the area of news and current affairs RTE has a proud record of investigative journalism, including exposing incidences of institutionalised neglect and abuse of children in their care by some of Ireland's religious orders as well as the separate abuse of children in the Dublin archdiocese.

This record has now suffered a serious blemish with a large (reputedly seven figure) award against it over a false allegation made in its current affairs flagship programme that an Irish missionary priest, Fr. Kevin Reynolds, had raped a minor and fathered a girl by her in Kenya. The way the whole programme was conducted and screened, on the face of it beggars belief, and several investigations, both internal and external, are under way into the whole circumstances surrounding the programme and its aftermath.

The incident has been a field day for RTE's critics and comes just after the annual publication by RTE of the salaries paid to its top employees. This event has traditionally met with widespread public criticism but the howls have been louder than ever this year, given the economic climate and the latest imminent tax increases and welfare cuts. RTE did not help itself in this regard by persisting in its curious practice of publishing top

deflect criticism, but this is now working in reverse.

The revelation that RTE's top four highest paid each received over €500,000 (\$650,000 plus) in 2009, even though these amounts were less than in 2008, did not sit well with the public which pays them. Nor have the somewhat feeble attempts by some of the individuals themselves to justify the amounts. RTE has pointed out that most of the highest paid are on contract rather than employed as salaried staff and that their contracts are set to be negotiated down substantially as they come up for renewal. We shall see on that one; there is a school of thought that questions why a publicly funded body employing many talented people should have to hire anyone on contract, let alone pay them the amounts involved.

But pay is a minor matter compared to the defining issue for RTE in 2011—the Reynolds Affair. The saga became public with the *Primetime Investigates* programme *Mission to Prey*, broadcast in May, which looked at allegations of sexual abuse by Irish religious working in Africa. The last few years have been open season for attacks on the Catholic Church in Ireland. The growing secularisation of Irish society, the decline in religious observance and an influx of immigrants from different cultures denting what had been a fairly monolithic society provided the context; the shameful revelations of the many instances of betrayal of trust by the Church the content.

The sad litany of sexual abuse by priests, of institutional physical and emotional ill-treatment and neglect of children entrusted to the care of various religious orders and the existence of unsavoury institutions such as the Magdalene laundries, have received

wide media coverage in recent years. An Irish government fell in 1994 over a paedophile priest. The role of the Catholic authorities, in both Ireland and Rome, in dissembling or indeed covering up for guilty priests did not help, was the cause of an outburst from the Taoiseach against Rome several months ago and is surely at the root of the recently announced decision to close Ireland's embassy to the Vatican.

It was inevitable that, sooner or later, attention would turn to the remaining jewel in the crown of Irish Catholicism—the Missionary Church. During the 20th Century and up to the present, thousands of Irish priests, brothers, nuns and lay people worked as Missionaries worldwide. Their influence on the ground was considerable, particularly in education. Interestingly, the first great generation of Kenyan Olympic athletes were educated by Irish Christian Brothers. And, as a consequence of their experiences of abject poverty on the ground in Africa, Irish religious have founded development aid organisations (example: Concern) and been prominent in fundraising and lobbying for increased official Irish development assistance.

The RTE programme fastened on the "nudge, nudge, wink, wink" climate of prevalent Irish anti-clericalism. It apparently relied on a specific anonymous allegation naming a former missionary, Fr. Kevin Reynolds, retired, my age, and currently parish priest of Ahascragh, Co. Galway, as the father of a Kenyan girl, whose mother had been a minor when allegedly known to Fr. Reynolds. In a classic of tabloid "journalism," Fr. Reynolds was confronted on camera with the allegation just after conducting a First Communion ceremony in his parish.

He was at first bemused, then amused and then shocked as he vigorously denied the accusation. When it dawned on him that the allegation would be broadcast he protested his innocence and offered a blood test. Despite this and despite a number of exchanges between Fr. Reynolds and RTE, the programme went ahead, even including in it reference to his offer of the paternity test.

Fr. Reynolds was stood down from his ministry. He was devastated. Imagine, if

you will, as I have, the effects on him of these false charges. He sought legal support, offered on a *pro bono* basis. The paternity test, conducted on behalf of RTE, duly took place and proved he could not have fathered the child. The alleged victim withdrew the allegation. RTE delayed releasing the blood test results to him, though at this stage, apparently, the RTE Director General offered to resign.

Fr. Reynolds eventually had his day in court. He won, hands down, handsomely, and with a confidential massive settlement in his favour. Here we enter the theatre of the bizarre. An RTE spokesman, asked whether heads would roll, retorted that severed heads learned nothing. An official on-the-air apology, ordered by the Court, was gabbled on air in a near indecipherable monotone. The Director General was not available for comment. It appeared that an attempt was being made to brazen the affair out.

The public was gobsmacked. Then the reaction set in. There were questions in the Dail and on air. Enquiries were ordered, by RTE, by the Broadcasting Authority. These are on-going. Those involved in the programme have stepped aside. Fr. Reynolds has been restored to his ministry. The RTE Director General eventually went on air. The apology was repeated—this time with feeling! Yet the long term effects on him are unquantifiable and hardly something money alone can redress. There are hard questions to be answered before a justice hard earned is seen to be done.

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The Dogs of Ireland - Wheaten Terrier

By Ray Cavanaugh

Sharing much common ancestry with Kerry Blues and Irish Terriers, the Wheaten Terrier surfaced as a multi-talented farm dog. Aside from herding and guarding livestock, the Wheaten could take out vermin at will. The dog became very popular with the “com-

mon folk,” who were forbidden from owning Irish Wolfhounds, which had become a status symbol among aristocrats.

In fact, the Wheaten was often referred to as the “Poor Man’s Wolfhound.” Perhaps owing to this “poor man’s” status, the Wheaten, in spite of its



longstanding history, would not gain official breed recognition in Ireland until 1937.

By the late 20th century, quite a few Wheatens had emigrated to Australia and the U.S. The American Kennel Club describes the Wheaten as: “a happy, steady dog with an air of self-confidence. Wheatens tend

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Young Hurlers Visit All Star Games - San Francisco

By Colm Egan

A traveling party of 30 Youth Hurlers, Parents and Coaches made the trip to the 2011 Hurling All Star game at Pairc Na Gael, Treasure Island San Francisco on Dec. 3rd last.

On Saturday the Youth Hurling players got a chance to have a practice session with the All Star Irish players which turned out to be a wonderful event.

The Chicago players ages 10-16 played their hearts out and showed the Irish experts that the game of Hurling has a bright future on this side of "The Pond."

A special mention must go to the Hurling All Star players from Ireland who spent so much time with the kids on Saturday and Sunday. The hurling All Star players are young men at the height of their hurling careers and it was such an honor for the Chicago and San Francisco Youth players to be able to stand on the same field hurling with these Superstars. Players like Tommy Walsh of Kilkenny and Lar Corbett of Tipperary are players who grace the fields of play in Ireland with such skill and determination.

Watching the telecasts from Ireland next year will have a special meaning for the young players of Chicago as now they've met these giants in the flesh.

On Sunday the Chicago youth players played two matches against our San Francisco rivals in front of enthusiastic crowds in lovely 65° weather (nice for the first week of December!)



The Hurling Team

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witness firsthand how skillful the Inter County hurling players are was a great thrill and our young Chicago Hurlers watched each and every puck of the ball.

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Pictures and video reports of this historical trip can be found on chicagostjarlaths.com. For information on any Gaelic Games activities around the Chicagoland area please contact colm.egan.gda.central.usa@gaa.ie.


Chicago Gaelic Games information can be found @ chicagoirishsports.com.

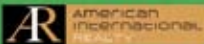
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With amenities too numerous to mention, see their websites at www.castlemartyrresort.ie or www.dromoland.ie.

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With features too numerous to mention here, check out the course in the hole-by-hole tour available at www.dromolandgolf.com.

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ARCHERY

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Dromoland Castle is located at Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, Ireland. The hotel can be contacted at 011 353 61 368144 or 1-800-346-7007; website www.dromoland.ie. Reservations can be made through the hotel (sales@dromoland.ie); through The Dromoland Collection at www.dromolandcollection.ie; or through Preferred Hotels & Resort at 1.800.323.7500 or www.preferredhotels.com.

The Dromoland Collection comprises Dromoland Castle and Castlemartyr Resort, two of Ireland's finest and most celebrated hotels. The hotels in this collection embody the legendary Dromoland tradition of incomparable hospitality complemented by exquisite surroundings, yet each possesses a distinctive style, character and charm all its own.

fering varied and interesting routes. Wildlife on the estate includes native red deer, pheasant, partridge, and many other country fauna.

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John Ford Ireland Project Announced

The Irish Film & Television Academy (IFTA), in association with the John Ford Estate and the Irish Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, is delighted to announce the establishment of John Ford Ireland—the annual Symposium celebrating the work and legacy of John Ford. American filmmaker CLINT EASTWOOD (*J. Edgar*, *Unforgiven*, *Million Dollar Baby*) has received the inaugural John Ford Award.

The Irish Film & Television Academy will through JOHN FORD IRELAND, lay the foundations for honouring, examining and learning from the work and legacy of legendary filmmaker John Ford, who is widely regarded as one of the most important and influential filmmakers of his generation. An annual gathering in Dublin will celebrate Ford's ongoing influence on contemporary Cinema. The Academy is working closely with leading Ford authorities, enthusiasts, experts and Academics throughout the world to bring the legacy of Ford back home to Ireland (see details on the Symposium below).

Ford, an Irish-American whose parents were raised in the West coast of Ireland, was a Pioneer of Cinema and created some of the most enduring films in cinematic history, combining exceptional creativity and innovative storytelling genius in a body of work (136 films) which

spanned almost 60 years.

Ford's films are recognized amongst the best films ever made such as *The Grapes of Wrath*, *How Green was my Valley*, *Stagecoach* and *The Searchers* (the greatest American Western of all time says the American Film Institute). Ireland and Irish themes featured heavily in numerous FORD films and he took great pride in employing Irish talent including Ireland's Abbey players (Sara Allgood, Barry Fitzgerald etc) who went to Hollywood to work with Ford.

The John Ford Award

Each year the John Ford Ireland committee, which consists of leading international experts on John Ford, will select one contemporary filmmaker to be presented with the John Ford Award; a filmmaker who has similar incredible skill and vision as Ford. A Filmmaker who has learned from the mastery of John Ford and who best represents Ford's legacy and ideals to the world—an individuality, a uniqueness of vision, an artistic talent that is admired and enjoyed by audiences throughout the world.

Clint Eastwood receives the inaugural John Ford Award.

John Ford still holds the record for winning the most Oscars for Best Director along with claiming the very first AFI Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to him by President

Richard Nixon. Over a film career spanning fifty seven years, Ford directed 136 films, receiving 26 Oscar Nominations. Ford was the first film maker to receive America's highest honour—the Medal of Freedom.

John Ford always emphasised his Irishness and paid numerous visits to the land of his parentage throughout his life—including a visit to his father's birthplace Spiddal, Co. Galway, during the Civil War and a confrontation with the Black and Tans! His beloved yacht the *Araner*, was named in honour of his mother's birthplace—the Aran Islands. He shot *The Quiet Man* in 1951 in Cong, Co. Mayo, placing Ireland firmly on the map as a filming destination.

His homage to Ireland and to the Irish experience emerges through the many subjects and characterisations explored in his films.

The Informer based on the IRA novel by the Aran Islander Liam O'Flaherty and for which Ford won his first Oscar; *Mother Machree* which is notable as the first Ford film to feature the young John Wayne, his last silent feature *Hangman's House* set in Co. Wicklow; *The Plough and the Stars* for which The Abbey Players traveled

to the States to star in; *The Rising of the Moon* filmed in Ireland and the

mentary *The Battle of Midway* and *7th December*.



The leading directors of the 20th century cinema have acknowledged Ford's genius—from Orson Welles, Alfred Hitchcock, Frank Capra, Howard Hawks, Elia Kazan, to Ingmar Bergman and Federico Fellini. Today's modern Hollywood film makers have also all cited Ford or a Ford film as a huge influence on their own career from Clint Eastwood to Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas.

Ford was one of the prime influences on the radical French New Wave movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The acclaimed Japanese director Akira Kurosawa worshipped Ford along with the great Indian director Satyajit Ray. Amongst countless praises for his films, Orson Welles is said to have watched *Stagecoach*

partly directed *Young Cassidy* a biographical drama based upon the life of Irish playwright Sean O'Casey.

Ford also fought during World War II making documentaries for the Navy Department. Although wounded during filming he managed to make two Oscar winning films during this time—the semi docu-

over forty times in preparation for making *Citizen Kane*.

John Ford Ireland Symposium

Plans are now underway for the first John Ford Ireland Symposium, scheduled to take place in Dublin in June 2012.

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Irish Books and Plays in Review



Frank West



Our Golden Irish Literary Heritage

Today there is a great awareness of our golden Irish literary heritage.

iBAM!, the Irish Book, Arts, and Music Celebration that was held at the Irish American Heritage Center was an enormous success, featuring an extraordinary number of Irish authors, artists and musicians.

This was not the case when I began this column in March, 1977! There were few books available and none written by contemporary Irish Americans.

I was told to go to the public library for books to review, but most of them had been written generations ago.

I have 16 books on my worktable now—some from Ireland—but most written by Irish Americans!

Heritage for the Future

I have reviewed several books by Vincent McDonnell, a noted author of books for young readers. He has won numerous prestigious prizes in Ireland.

The reading level of most of

his work is for the 7th and 8th grade and upwards.

He has a gift for simplifying



complicated topics. Young Irish Americans, and even adults, could learn a lot about Ireland from McDonnell.

He traces the history of Ireland from the arrival of the first settlers about 9,000 years ago to the present.

Historians think that the Celts come in small groups over a period of hundreds of years. The Celts and the natives intermarried. Eventually they merged, and became our ancestors.

The Celts named the country Erin (for their goddess of beauty or love). Today Ireland is also known as Eire or Erin.

Two important days celebrated by the Celts were the Summer and Winter solstices. The solstices were closely associated seasons. The Summer solstice marks the time when the days begin to grow shorter, and the winter solstice marks the day when days will begin to grow longer and brighter.

There are many other facts contained in this book. Quoting the cover: “In 1649 Cromwell invaded and brutally crushed the Irish. Penal Laws further suppressed the people. Despite this, and the devastation of the Great Famine, the Irish refused to yield and eventually won freedom.”

“Today, Ireland is a vibrant, free nation and *Ireland: Our Island Story* celebrates her success, and her ancient heritage.”

Ireland: Our Island Story by Vincent McDonnell. The Collins Press and DuFour Editions. info@dufour editions.com.

Spirits of People

“I waded at the past from the turn in the lane, Nineteen at the time, my decision was made. I

whistled a tune with ambitious lips, yet it never occurred that I had betrayed my family’s hopes with a simple goodbye.”

That poignant quote is from a poem, *At the End of the Day*, written by Gardiner Weir.

Ghosts of the Faithful Departed is a coffee table size book of color photographs of the many empty, abandoned houses in the Irish countryside. The houses are silent now and no longer is there the laughter of children or the sounds of a family in them.

Nobody knows what happened to the people who used to live in them. Did the young people emigrate? Were the parents left behind? Did the parents



pass away later?

I was astounded to see in almost every picture religious symbols left in these empty houses (some I remember from childhood): The Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The infant Jesus of Prague, I hope these images brought comfort to those who had lived here.

Years ago I was in a home in the West of Ireland where ten children had been raised. They had scattered to many parts of the world.

The parents moved to a nearby town. The house was closed with everything left as it was.

Several years later, I came back. The house that had once been filled with the sounds of people, was now eerily silent. It was as if it had been locked into time.

This quote is from *Twilight*, a poem written by Jerry O’Neill. It evokes the emotion I felt.

“I vaguely remember seeing you with small children, in some worn old photo book.

Was I with you and those children, building castles in the sand.”

Paraphrasing the author, the houses stand guard, waiting for

the families to return.

Ghosts of the Faithful Departed by David Dreedon. The Collins Press and DuFour Editions. info@dufour editions.com.

A United Ireland in the Future

United Ireland: Human Rights and International Law by Francis Boyle is a possible outline, or blueprint for a united Ireland.

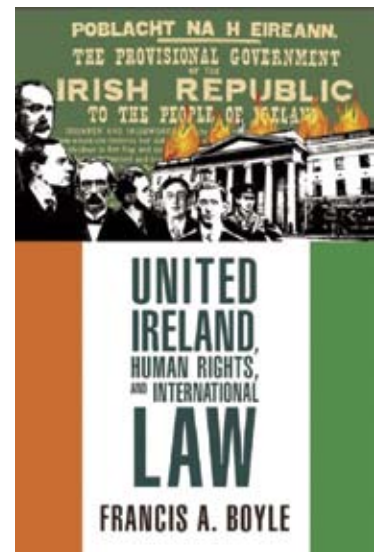
Boyle teaches international law at the University of Illinois at Champaign. He is a Doctor of Law and has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Harvard.

He says, “A future United Ireland is an inevitability. The only remaining questions are when and how?”

Boyle’s suggested structure for a United Ireland is based on the 1916 Proclamation that began the War of Independence: “We declare the rights of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland to be sovereign and inalienable.”

“A united Ireland could only be decided by all of the people on this island. But, I doubt that Protestants would want to live in a state called the Republic of Ireland.”

Boyle suggests that because of that fact the new state be called



“United Ireland” along the lines of the United Kingdom: United Ireland resulting from the union of the Republic of Ireland the Northern Ireland.

The reality of the cooperation of the Nationalist Sinn Fein and the Unionist DUP in the shared government of the North, makes a United Ireland a realistic possibility.

United Ireland, Human Rights and International Law by Francis Boyle. Clarity Press, www.claritypress.com

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The Irish Rover

By James McClure



center where she was always shooed away by the instructor during winter. Ricky was supposed to die of fatty liver disease but recov-

ered after three months of force feeding, Cheddar was supposed to die of liver and kidney problems but is healthy as a horse today. Dino could outrun anything, but not a cruel hunter's arrow through his paw years ago. He's now long since back to his obnoxious self give or take or toe.



The only thing this menagerie and its mistress can't conquer is age—the Husky by our estimate has only a few months left.

Kaia (pronounced Keye-YA) is a big coyote-like mass of love with equal parts separation anxiety and instant social-ability. No one she encounters is a stranger, and I knew I won her heart when I walked around the house and her face appeared in a succession of windows marking every direction of the compass.

A near final gift for her (and us) was to do considerable detective work to find the farm where she was born in Door County, Wisconsin. We took her back to see it on probably her last ride in a car, her elderly legs give out and can't quite make the back seat leap anymore.

Back in the late 1990's travelers on the old state Highway 57 would pass a farm with a sign saying "Red Huskies for Sale." We learned the business closed with the

death of the owner about 10 years ago and the controversial dispersal of the remaining puppies to a humane shelter. Too often this means euthanasia.

As we pulled into the remnants of the farm Kaia hobbled up in the backseat and her tail started to wag a bit. Her face studied the drooping barn intently. Clearly she was back as a puppy among the fields of Wisconsin near the water of the Door County Peninsula. She remembered. And then whimpered a bit. For there was someone she wanted to meet.

Across the driveway, a gorgeous Husky with her same exact coloring and features stared back, with Kaia's old majestic prize horse gate and a massive male WOOF-WOOF! Kaia, meet Thor... a little brother or cousin about two years younger and the last of the litter, now owned by the dog breeder's daughter.

It was a very cold December day with temps in the teens predicted for the coming week. While searching for the home's occupant Ginny noticed something moving in a mass of rusted steel bric-a-brac. Far from about a dozen adult cats a lone abandoned kitten was trapped in the metal shards and pushing weakly against the remnants. Why couldn't it see?

Ginny untangled and picked up the tiny matted and soiled creature. It looked blind, with thick crusts covering shut and sunken eyelids. Its paws kept searching for warmth and rescue. Inside the car it buried its face inside Ginny's arms, shivering and somehow fighting for life. I was reluctant to take on a hopeless case, but moved my finger back and forth and found the seemingly deformed face followed.

A nearby bar of roughnecks produced a plate of food and cleaning supplies. The little boy kitten ate and drank as if he never had, and probably hadn't.

Ten days later I'm pleased to say that little gray and white Horatio is doing fine and healing quickly. His healthy bright blue eyes are as big and beautiful as his boundless steps all over my keyboard as I type. He would have died alone in a short time but now faces a lifetime of love and companionship. Ginny will give him his nightly medicine tonight after I head home and he'll wake to a loving hello in the morning. Winter was never warmer.

IrishRoverJim@aol.com.

The Dogs of Ireland - Wheaten Terrier

Continued from Page 4...

to be less scrappy than other terriers but they are true terriers and will be more active than many other breeds... They relate well to children and can adapt to city, country, and suburban life."

Along with adaptability, certain Wheatens can perform well in agility and obedience competitions. However, one weakness of this breed is hot weather. They can overheat quickly without consistent hydration.

A medium-sized dog, the Wheaten Terrier's overall life-expectancy is quite good. Unfortunately some Wheatens fall victim to a wasting condition in which the dog is unable to absorb protein.

As long as a Wheaten can process its protein, owners should be prepared for a steady amount of playfulness. The breed is known to jump a person in order to lick his/her face repeatedly. Such habitual conduct is dubbed the "Wheaten greetin'."

A Wheaten can bark all day at strangers but will almost certainly not attack a human, unless there is extreme provocation. This breed, more than most, prefers to keep things upbeat with its owner; an overly strict training method can prove disastrous to its psychological well-being.

Online Only This Month

Due to the large quantity of columns this month and the lack of extra space, Mike Morley's *Mick* column will be online only.

They will all be back next month for your reading pleasure!

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Shamrock Kids
Pizza & Movie Night



+



Parents, bring your kids to the Shamrock Kids Pizza and Movie Night this winter.

The party is Friday, January 20 at 6pm and includes the movie *March of the Penguins*, pizza and soft drinks. The cost is \$4 for each child or adult for IAHC Members and \$5 per each child or adult for visitors.

Parents must RSVP by January 19 by calling 773-282-7035, ext. 10.

You can also call the above number for more information on the Shamrock Kids Club. This club is a fun way for kids ages 6-12 to learn about their heritage in a fun way and for families to socialize with each other.

Watch the Big Game
in the Fifth Province

Join us for a Superbowl Party in the Fifth Province on Sunday, February 5.

See the game on large screens and enjoy Miller Lite



drafts and food by Harrington's. The party starts at 4pm and the tickets are \$35. For tickets, call the IAHC office at 773-282-7035.

Valentine's Day Hooley

Valentine's Day is fast approaching and love is in the air, or at least in the Fifth Province. We will celebrate the holiday again with our annual Valentine's Day Hooley.

What's a hooley?
 A hooley is an old-fashioned Irish term for a dance and party. It has been a huge success in the past and includes something for everyone with dancing, singing, refreshments and live music.

To celebrate the holiday, there will be a Lisdoonvarna corner. Lisdoonvarna, County Clare, Ireland, is home to the Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival, where each year, swarms of singles travel to meet that someone special.



The IAHC's foray into matchmaking will be set against the backdrop of the Fifth Province's fireplace, with facilitators available to make that perfect match. We have had many folks meet that

special someone during the hooley, one match even resulting in a 2008 wedding!

Already paired up? No matter, the event is open to all who just want to celebrate the holiday with live music and dance.

The Hooley is Sunday, February 12, from 4pm-9pm. The cost is \$12 and

includes light refreshments, live music with Gerry Haughey, dancing and a cash bar. To purchase tickets, call the IAHC office at 773-282-7035, ext. 10 or purchase at the door.

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The Shamrock Heritage Gift Shop is open for business!

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for the

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President's Message

WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

As we leave 2011 and turn to 2012, we all are dedicated to do our best as volunteers to help manage and lead the Irish American Heritage Center.

Our members and benefactors have every right and expectation that the President, the Board of Directors, committees and staff search for the right answers and proactively act to implement strategies, programs, policies and procedures in the best interests of the Center and its members.

The continued success of the

Center in 2012 will not only be ensured by the searching for the correct answers. It will be solidified by continually asking the right questions.

In 2012, we will continue to ask the questions that will help keep us focused on the vision of our founders and on our mission.

We will be stronger in 2012 and beyond by asking questions about the issues and actions we face.

- Have we listened to our members on this?
- Will this strengthen our position

as the largest and best Irish cultural center?

- Will this help our building better serve our members and guests?
- Will this help us better manage the operations of the center better?
- Will this help strengthen our cultural mission?
- Will this help us be a good neighbor?
- Will this help reduce cost, in-



crease revenue and strengthen our financial position?

- Will this help us help others?
- Will this advantage our membership?
- Will this help us thank our volunteers and help us add to our volunteer pool?
- Will this help us add membership?
- Will this bring more people and more members more often to the Center?
- Will this help us strengthen our Chicago footprint?

There are lots of questions that

we will continue to answer in the best interests of our Center. The questions will help lead us to the answers that will help us continue to stay on the road the founders planned and the mission demands.

I look forward to your questions in 2012 and I promise the effort to answer them. I am excited about 2012 and hope you are as well.

Thank you for all you do for our Center!

John Crowley Gorski
President

Annual Appeal Continues

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

We are on the road to success, but we do need your contribution.

Your contribution will be enhanced once again by the matching program offered by Pat and Peggy Burke. We thank them for their continued generosity.

All gifts made to the Annual Appeal are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

The names below are contributors from December 1 through December 13, 2011. We will continue to list donor names through the March 2012 issue.

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Thank You All!

Memoir Class Captures Stories

Memoir writing classes continue this Winter at the Center. The course is taught by Virginia Gibbons, Professor of English at Oakton Community College and facilitator of the Great Irish Book Club at the IAHC.

Everyone has a story to tell. Here's an opportunity to tell yours. Whether it was one memorable summer or an incredible life voyage, this writing workshop not only helps you identify the key turning moments in your life,



but understand them against a backdrop of time and place.

Students will perform in-class writing exercises, readings and take part in discussions. Outside assign-

ments will also be given.

The Class runs from February 7 through March 13, from 7pm to 9pm on Tuesday nights.

The cost of the six-week class is \$60 per person and class size is limited to ten writers. Advance registration is necessary as the classes have quickly filled in the past.

To register for class, call Theresa Choske at 773-545-8057.

Celebrate St. Brigid's Day with CWI

Celtic Women International's Chicago Branch celebrates St. Brigid's Day this January.

Celebrating St. Brigid features a presentation with Father Dennis O'Neill and CWI Brigid's Tour Members, as well as reflections, meditations, poetry, music, refreshments and more.

Saint Brigid is one of Ireland's patron saints. Her feast day is February 1.

Anyone who attended Fr. Dennis O'Neill's presentation on Early Christianity a few years back, will recall how well he led up to the early Christian era by giving a short history of the Celts, and in particular, the



Celtic goddess Brigid. With that context, his discussion led to the fascinating story of Saint Brigid, the fifth century Irish saint. His depth of knowledge was truly amazing, and helped inspire some of the CWI mem-

bers to celebrate St. Brigid's Day in Ireland.

Father Dennis O'Neill has served at St. Thomas the Apostle, Christ the King, St. Clotilde, St. Giles, and St. Benedict Parishes and is the pastor of St. Martha Parish in Morton Grove, Illinois. He is the author of the books, *Lazarus Interlude* and *Pasionate Holiness*.

Celebrating St. Brigid is Sunday, January 29 at 2pm.

Tickets are \$10 for IAHC or CWI members and \$15 for general admission and can be purchased at the door.



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Think You're So Smart?

Test your trivia knowledge with Quiz Night at the Center.

The cost is \$30 per team, with a limit of six players per team. There are prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and food and drinks are available from the Fifth Province Pub.

2012 Quiz Nights are Fridays on January 20, February 17, March 23, April 20 and May 18.



For more information, call 773-282-7035.

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- Carpeting for the Auditorium
- Push brooms, sweeping brooms and dust pans
- Snowblower
- Salt/de-icer for the ice on the stairs and sidewalks
- 40 cup electrical coffee pots
- Brass cleaner
- Floor polishing machine
- 2 wheel dollies
- 4 wheel kitchen carts
- Flatware
- Commercial pots and pans sets
- Kitchen serving bowls and serving baskets

The Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and gifts and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES NEEDED

- Volunteer to rent a shampoo machine and shampoo the fabric seats of the 5th Province and Erin Room chairs
- Volunteer to polish all the brass door handles in the Center
- Volunteers for security services
- Dry cleaning service to clean the building drapes
- Volunteer to wash all the door windows in the Center
- Volunteer to clean window ledges in the building

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Antique and Rummage Sale Co-Chair
- Work at home data entry typist
- Genealogy Fest Co-Chair
- Finance Committee members
- Membership Committee members
- Teen Night Co-Chair
- Volunteer Committee members
- Development Committee members
- Kids Club Committee members
- Golden Diner Servers
- High School Art Show Committee Co-Chair and members
- College Art Show Co-Chair and members
- Business and Job Fair Committee Co-Chair

PIOBAIRI

PIOBAIRI, a piping presentation hosted by Pat Cannady and Friends returns to the Fifth Province Pub in 2012.

Come and sample the pub menu and enjoy the music on selected Saturday afternoons from 5 to 7pm.

Dates are:

Jan 7	May 5
Feb 4	Jun 2
Feb 18	Jun 16
Mar 3	
Apr 7	



Wish List

In 2012, we wish you would:

- Give to the Annual Appeal
- Attend the Valentine's Day Hooley in February
- Bring your kids, grandkids, nieces or nephews to a Shamrock Kids Club event
- Trace your family tree at a Genealogy Session
- Volunteer! Whether it's once a week, or once a month, we need you!

2011 Annual Raffle Winners

The winners of the 2011 Annual Raffle are:

\$10,000 Jim Collins
 \$2,000 Margaret Minogue
 \$1,000 Kathleen Mulcrone
 \$500 Michele Cleary Allen
 \$500 John Cosgrove
 \$500 Noel Murtagh
 \$500 Joan Bourke

Thanks to all who bought and sold tickets for this great fundraiser!

Culture Corner

Visit the **IAHC Library**

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

the **Genealogy Club**

• for monthly meetings on finding your roots

the **Art Gallery**

• for Exhibits, lectures and art classes

and the **Museum**

• for our collection and special exhibits



HOURS

Genealogy Monthly Meetings

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

Museum

Call our office for a docent led 45 minute tour

Art Gallery

Special exhibits throughout the year

Library

Mondays and Wednesdays 4-8pm

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-1 pm

Friday closed

Saturday 9-3pm

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



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January 2012

January 1	Building Closed		
January 4	TIR NA NOG Seniors meeting	Fifth Province	11am
January 6	Francis O'Neill Ceili Dance	Fifth Province	8pm
January 7	PIOBAIRI	Fifth Province	5pm
	Shamrock American Club Card Game	Sham Amer Rm	7pm
January 12	CIIS Tara Club Meeting	Room 304	10am
January 14	St. Patrick's Fathers Social	Room TBA	8pm
January 18	Celtic Women Monthly Meeting	Fifth Province	7pm
January 20	Shamrock Kids Pizza and Movie Party	TBA	6pm
	Quiz Night	Room 109	8pm
January 21	Cash For Kids Concert	Auditorium and Fifth Province	6pm
	Roscommon Club Dance	Room 310	7pm
January 26	CIIS Tara Club Meeting	Room 304	10am
January 29	Genealogy Meeting	Library	1pm
	St. Brigid's Day Celebration	Sham Amer Rm	2pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Tues., Thurs., Fri., & Sat. Golden Diners Senior Lunches Kitchen 12:30pm-2pm

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The Real McCoy

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the fifth province

UPCOMING ENTERTAINMENT

All shows start after 9 p.m.

JANUARY 2012

Fri, 1/6	Ceili Mor
Sat, 1/7	Dereck Byrne
Fri, 1/13	Flonnghas
Sat, 1/14	The Dooley Brothers
Fri, 1/20	Gerry Haughey
Sat, 1/21	Cash for Kids
	Johnny Cash Night (\$10 cover, 6pm)
Fri, 1/27	Joe McShane
Fri, 1/28	Paddy Homan and Maurice Lennon



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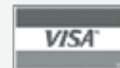
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pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



Mary Hickey 1957-1998 – Art Through People

While teaching English at Bishop McNamara High School in Kankakee, IL, I met and fell madly in love with a tall skinny red head, Mary Elizabeth Cleary, in 1979. I was and remain gob-smacked by this singular human being who painted, sculpted, sketched and arranged magnificent and simple art. As a girl, Mary spent a great deal of her time with her grandparents, Oliver and Antoinette Duval, on their farm in Herscher, IL—about 16 miles west of the town of Kankakee.

Mary painted the big red barns and sketched the great house along Route 115 on the west end of town that overlooked the athletic fields of Herscher High School. Mary developed an eye that could soak in the changing light on objects and represent what her soul actually experienced. Mary always saw

something more and her delicate hands could pattern with chalks, inks and paints the lines and angles of God’s geometry.

In the summers, Mary would spend weeks with her easel and paints in the corn and bean fields of the richest farmland in Illinois and capture the landings and lift-offs of the insects that somehow escaped the insecticidal designs behind her grandfather’s hard spent ‘hard-dollars on sprays’ that the Koerner boys dropped in toxic waves from the Grumman Ag-Cat biplanes. Oliver Duval was one tough old Frog-eater and he would blaspheme and cast scatologically toxic maledictions toward the Herscher Grain Elevator and Koerner Airport, to the south and east of Route 115, respectively. “God Dem lousy useless waste of hard dollars!”

Mary absorbed the pastels and pigments of Oliver’s Color Wheel of Calumnies! The wiry, long-shanked, Indian cheek-boned old sinner was a tyrant antic. Oliver had been a farmer all of his life in French Illinois – St. George, Kankakee and finally Herscher, interrupted by service in France with the AEF of Black Jack Pershing, and Depression Era work at Bear Brands where he met his bride-to-be—Antoinette Fortin. Oliver was gob-smacked.

Antoinette—Grandma Toni—was the antithesis of Oliver. She was gentle, sweet, and thoughtful of the feelings of others and a magnificent and creative cook. Mary absorbed equal parts Toni and Ollie and blended them wonderfully with the Celtic attributes of the Clearys—Red-heads as well.

Mary painted and reflected the marriage of souls with crafty brush strokes and skilled sweeps of the pastels. She painted birds, fruits, barns and people. At Bishop McNamara High School, Mary came under the tutelage of three significant influences—Suzanne Granzow, Pruchnicki Mary’s Art teacher; Nick Novich, the Mac football coach; and English Teacher and Father James Fanale, CSV, who

taught English and Religion.

Her artistic gifts absorbed in the green and gold fields of the Duval farm and its owners blossomed with the guidance of Mrs. Granzow-Pruchnicki. Suzanne is a person who God took extra time in crafting. Her interests and energies are exhausting to experience—in her studio one finds reproductions of Oriental art, Japanese silk, Oils and Water Colors, Sculpted works in every medium imaginable. Mrs. Granzow-Pruchnicki directed Mary’s eye to everything that gives praise to creation in the most delicate and preservative craftsmanship. The Bronte Press run by Suzanne, her sister Elmira Wilkey and her genius theologian husband Paul, reproduces the works of great writers in miniature. Hand carved wooden press pieces meet the very best quality papers and parchments in a celebration of genius.

Genius is the apprehension of all that is possible and no one did a better job of pulling in Mary’s direction all that can and should be understood than Nick Novich. Nick Novich is the very model of the gentleman athlete scholar. The son of Serbian immigrants, Novich grew up in the De Paul area and won an athletic scholarship to

John Carroll University in order to pursue his love of literature, music and art. Nick Novich earned his coaching spurs under tutelage of Leo High School legend Jimmy Arneberg when the two taught together at Loyola Academy. Athletics is an extension of pure art and an expression of the human capacity for achievement. Educators killed the student-athlete by compartmentalizing disciplines. Novich, like Arneberg, was a throw-back to a better time and a military Veteran.

Nick absorbed literature like today’s college students swallow Bud Lite and as a teacher coach introduced his students to the worlds to be dragged out of the pages of Dickens, Thackeray, Heller, Tolstoy, Proust and Pound. The curses and maledictions of Mary’s farmer grandfather became poetry. Poetry was music and music was light, shadow and color. Like the rays fingering down from the gray clouds over a Herscher bean field, Mary understood the path to God.

God’s fingers tickled the hairs on the back of your neck and made your shoulders shudder you awake to understanding life’s oddities. That was Father James Fanale, CSV. Father Fanale had the eyes of Gerard Manly Hopkins, behind thick horn-rimmed glasses, and St. Thomas Aquinas with the humor of John Cleese. God was more than the Jovian thunder. God was the reed instrumentalist who called sounds out with delicate fingers and whispers. Rules and consequences are chirped as well as blasted from a blow-hard. God answers all calls and sometimes the answer is a definite “No.”

I met Mary in 1978 while she was a student at Southern Illinois University. Mary told me that she was the person who directed me to Father Yarno’s office when I interviewed for a teaching position at Bishop Mac in 1975. She was a student and was hoping to be a baby-teacher and therefore erased that magic moment. No, I would not wake up to Mary’s light until four years later. Mary blessed me with marriage and three wonderful children, as well as a tutorial in a life well-lived.

From that moment in 1979, until Mary went back up the fingers of Christ to her Herscher farmer grandparents in 1998, I was blessed to live the art of love as it is meant to be lived. Mary Elizabeth Cleary-Hickey soaked up living from Oliver, Toni, Suzanne, Nick, and Father Fanale, and so many hundreds of others. I don’t know art, but I know what I love. Thank you, Love!

Winstons

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Stained by Time

I'm not sure why this time of year is usually equated with darker emotions, but the progression through autumn towards winter somehow changes our perspective. As our conversation becomes more weather centered, not only do we seek to protect our bodies, but also our spirits. As we become more reflective, melancholic, we force ourselves to look forward, to transform the darkness into a future hope. Not only do we have to brave the elements, we also have to have fortitude against the tyranny of falling back, and retreating further into ourselves. Seasonally, we are drawn by the shorter days and longer nights to relate this time of the year with death, or dying. Whereas young love, rejuvenation happens after the cold, dark days are over.

As the English poet, Robert Herrick, advocates, springtime is the time to 'gather the rosebuds while ye may,' as opposed to Shakespeare's 'winter of discontent.' As the shades of night gather so too do the portents of gloom and despair. Faced with such bleakness, we are look for inspiration, for a gentle light against the blackness.

The creative among us have cast the winter months in the role of the Victorian villain, stealing goodness and mercy

from the best of us. It becomes a world where Scrooge reigns supremely, a dark soul desperately in need of enlightenment, and salvation. And yet, even here the corruption of the monster is dramatically enhanced, so that we might reach into the very depths of this mutant creature to find the hidden self. The hibernated humanity, keeping alive the hope, that at heart we are capable of change.

If it's not the lighting of bonfires as our ancestors did, we fight against the night in an effort to raise our morale. Sometimes we try too hard, and our false light diminishes into empty commercialism. Real values become cheapened, and we simply decorate the surface but remain fundamentally dissatisfied. What religion and literature seek to offer us are symbols that work to inspire us, and give us something more than the glitter of tinsel. While we lighten our homes, our streets, with lights; refusing to let our own light be devoured by the long season of cold and barrenness, we need to find a way out of the Narnia, kill the winter witch so that we can reclaim and resurrect what makes us human.

There's something invigorating about the literature we celebrate at this time of the year. I

recently went to see a dramatic interpretation of *A Christmas Carol* at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. I was interested in seeing how such a socially challenging story would be interpreted on stage. To be fair to such a well-known establishment, it's hard to be both entertaining, and commercially viable. When one thinks of Dickens one thinks of not his genius for storytelling, but his social conscience. The miscreant, Scrooge, becomes the vehicle to highlight the blindness of a society who ignores social inequalities. His preoccupation with the plight of child labour was enough to enact legal changes for the betterment of children.

With this in mind, it was difficult to watch a sentimentalized rendition of one of his stories without feeling as though we had lost the plot. It is ironic that a story whose moral is one of the vacuities of indulgence should be presented with a set that was almost decadent. The grittiness of the moral was lost to special effects, and heartwarming aspirations of racial diversity. Bob's Cratchit's became the melting pot of the American dream. Victorian England becomes changed to a liberal re-writing of history, and social reality. How ironic to find a story about poverty incarnated into a financial extravagance.

Unfortunately, I was musing about these things when someone asked me what I thought of the production. I didn't know how I felt about it until I started speaking. There were two women in front of me who

were listening in. I could see that my comments were not appreciated. This is the Goodman for God's sake, and it's Christmas after all. Take your 'bah humbug' somewhere where it's wanted. It's for the children. Where's your Christmas spirit? To be honest, I really didn't care one way or the other until I realized that there was some kind of unspoken code at work. Let's not ruin the moment, the fantasy.

Theatre, it seems, is still a place where we can hide from the truth. When the play ended, one of the ladies said to me 'it was gritty enough for me.' I'm sure that it was. If we have to see the poor then it should be under the transforming lights of a theatre, and under the mask of make up. It certainly makes poverty more attractive, and

less unsightly. It was certainly a production that scared the Dickens out of the moral. I wonder what our celebrated Jonathan Swift would have made of such a show. The man, who disgusted with poverty, wrote *A Modest Proposal*, a tract that suggested that Irish Catholics procreate and use their offspring as a part of the food chain. Offensive, deeply satirical, but written by a compassionate man who was sickened by the apathy of the more fortunate, and the less thoughtful.

If we have to have Scrooges, wealthy curmudgeons, then let them be true to life, and not some Disney caricature. If winter is a time to reflect, and be thankful for what we have, then let's give more than a thought to those who have not.

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Chicago Gaelic Park

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



A Chairde:

I want to wish all IAN readers a Happy and Healthy New Year. It was a tradition growing up in Dublin to open the front door at midnight on December 31st and sweep out the old year with a brush (broom). The belief was that you were sweeping away all the garbage and bad luck of the previous year and starting with a clean slate. On the subject of the old and the new, occasionally I am asked, is Gaelic Park a for profit enterprise? And the answer is no and yes. We say at Gaelic Park that the only reason we are in business is to subsidize and support our Irish Culture. The business arm of Gaelic Park (our professional staff) which hosts weddings, banquets and has a full service

bar operates like any other catering business and is a for profit or loss operation. Gaelic Park is home to many and various groups representing different aspects of Irish culture. It is our mission to be a center for all such activities as the GAA, Gaelic Park Players Drama Group, Irish Dancing Schools, Gaelic Park Choir, Radio Show, County Associations and the list goes on. Gaelic Park does not charge any fee to any of our constituent groups for the use of the facility and the doors are open, the lights, heat and the coffee is always on; the model has been and is that the cost of maintaining and operating the facility and 55 acres at Gaelic Park is subsidized by the business arm

at Gaelic Park. Gaelic Park's Board of Directors consists of 30 volunteers who are not compensated. These wonderful volunteers are motivated to preserve our Irish Culture and give their time, and often their professional expertise, to ensure that we can continue to be a center for Irish and Irish-Americans in Chicagoland. Gaelic Park is always seeking new members and directors; new blood is vital to the health of any

organization and a new member is eligible to run for a position on the Board after three years of membership. The shareholders and membership of Gaelic Park will be voting in ten new directors in this month of January and hope that all eligible members will participate and vote. A Happy New Year to Gaelic Park!

John Devitt, President

Ceili Dancing resumes on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30pm. Donation of \$2 a night. **Set Dancing** is held year round on Monday nights, 7:30-9:30pm with a \$3 weekly fee. Everyone is welcome!

CGP Sunday Radio Program

Live broadcast is 7-9pm on WCEV 1450 AM. Call 708.687.9330 to request a song or dedication.

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

Irish Music Sessions in the Pub are held on Thursday evenings at 7:30pm by Pat Finnegan and Friends. Everyone welcome!

Mark Your Calendars for 2012

Women's Little Christmas Party Friday January 6, 7:30pm. Bring a Donation of Canned Goods for "Together We Cope" and receive a complimentary gift certificate for The Carraig Irish Pub.

Movie Matinee Sunday January 8 viewing of the movie *Once* at 2pm in the Tara Room. Admission is free, with food and drink available for purchase! Planned for February 12, *Michael Collins*.

Celtic Supper Entertainment

Sunday, 1/15 - Gerard Haughey; Sunday, 1/22 - John Dillon; Sunday, 1/29 - NO CELTIC SUPPER.

Musical Luncheon Wednesday February 1 is our next luncheon. Call for group reservations today at 708.687.9323. **NO LUNCHEON IN JANUARY.**



Tickets On Sale to Party at the Park

Merry Ploughboys Party	Sat., Feb. 4	\$20
Wolftones Concert	Sat., Feb. 18	\$25
Leahy's Luck,	Sat., March 17	
St. Patrick's Day Dinner Show		\$45

Spring Play

Coming in April, *Try Anything Twice*, a hilarious comedy by William Rocke. There's chaos in the McGowan house when vivacious wife Josephine wins a Glamorous Grandmother Contest and brings home womanizing TV star Clive as part of her prize!

Bridal Vendor Boutique

On Sunday, February 19 Gaelic Park will host "Bridal Boutique," a showcase of Gaelic Park, its facilities both indoors and outdoors, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, preferred vendors which will include photographers, bakeries, florists, DJs, travel agents, and more, all available to help put the perfect wedding reception together. The grand finale will be a Bridal Fashion Show, featuring a selection of gowns from The Bella Sposa Bridal Boutique in Tinley Park. Doors open at 12.30pm and admission is \$5.00.



Gaelic Park has earned an excellent reputation as a wedding venue.

Experienced and professional staff help in the planning and execution of a wedding reception which will create memories that will last a lifetime. Two beautiful banquet rooms and a gorgeous outdoor patio space surrounded by trees, shrubs, a pergola and waterfall gives the bride a selection of choices for her reception. If you have any questions, call 708.687.9323.

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Live Music in the Pub

- 1/6 Pat Smillie
- 1/7 Richie Z
- 1/13 John Dillon
- 1/14 Michelle McGuire
- 1/20 Joe McShane
- 1/21 The Irish House Party Band*
- 1/27 Gerry Dignan
- 1/28 Sean & Charlie

*The Irish House Party Band, a four-piece group, will be making their first appearance at The Carraig Pub on Saturday, January 21 starting at 7:30pm. The band, direct from Dublin, Ireland, is hosted by All-Ireland champion musicians, dancers and entertaining presenters who create a unique Irish experience in a pub setting. With the sounds of Flutes, Whistles, Guitar, Bodhran, Uilleann Pipes and Concertina, this show will surely have us all clapping and enjoying a great night of entertainment. As with all live bands in the Carraig Pub, there is no cover charge.

Music is at 7:30pm on Friday; 9:30pm on Saturday nights. New expanded Pub food and appetizer menu!

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Super Bowl Sunday at CGP!*

Check Website for Full Schedule



Chicago Gaelic Park

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



CRAIC A PALOOZA RETURNS TO GAELIC PARK!

CRAIC-A-PALOOZA was started a couple of years ago and was inspired by two things: Firstly, the Irish Gaelic term 'craic', which means fun, lively discussion, conviviality, etc. In essence, the things that the Irish are best known for. It's used, of course, to talk about a 'good time', or 'lively conversation', whether that's at the local pub, a family party or other social gathering. Wherever good conversation and laughter are found, there you will find 'craic'.

The second, and more important inspiration, is you, those reading this. The large Irish and Irish-American population to be found in the Chicago area - the many thousands of home builders and skilled trade workers and volunteers who, quite literally, built Gaelic Park from the ground up. And their friends and family, all are invited. This is our way of saying THANK YOU to everyone involved in Gaelic Park's 30 year heritage.

The Board of Directors, staff and many loyal volunteers wanted to host a get-together, or reunion, so everyone can meet up with old friends, have an evening of food, fun and keeping the ties between us as strong and tight as a miser's purse strings. YOU are the heart and soul of Gaelic Park, and so we invite you to come to the party on:

DATE: Saturday, Feb. 11

TIME: 8pm - Midnight

WHERE: Tara Room, Chicago Gaelic Park

WHAT: Free event - no cover charge.

Gaelic Park will be featuring 'roll-back' pricing on drinks and will provide complimentary appetizers and sandwiches.

WHAT ELSE: Live music!

Regular performers at CGP events will be singing and taking requests from you.

WHO: You'll see 'who' when you get here!

You will see old friends, and you may make a few new ones.

This is a party for the young and old adults **(21 years and over)**.

WHY: What else do you have to do on a Saturday night in February? That's what we thought. This is a great time to shake off the Winter chill, and come in where the warmth of the people is measured by a smile, a nod, a kind word and a hug. Just to say, "How are you, haven't seen you for a while, let's talk and have a bit of a visit."

That's CRAIC A PALOOZA

Save the date, call your friends and family!

"Occupy Chicago Gaelic Park"

Saturday, February 11, 8pm



Gaelic Park Players

Everyone is talking about the recent fall performances of the play, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*.



The superb acting and directing should be up for academy award nomination!

County Connection The first meeting of the County Down Association will be held on March 30th. On January 8th, the Sunday mass at Gaelic Park will be honoring our deceased members. Breakfast is served after the mass for a cost of \$8. **If any CGP County association has events or announcements they would like included in this column, please forward to the Chicago Gaelic Park office, Attention: NEWSLETTER STAFF. Send your event information at least one month in advance of the scheduled date to make the deadline for publication. We welcome your County news!**

Ladies Auxiliary The first meeting is January 11 at 7:30pm and a Bingo night! If there is a question regarding the weather, please phone 708.636.9323 after 3:30pm for confirmation. Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. New members are always welcome - please join us at our next meeting!

Old St. Pat's at CGP 2012

Old Saint Pat's continues with monthly guest speakers at Chicago Gaelic Park through the month of May.

Light refreshments and hospitality begins at 6:30pm and discussion follows at 7pm.

Wednesday, February 15

Bob Kolatorowicz, Adult Spirituality, Old Saint Patrick's

Topic: Vocabulary of Faith

Wednesday, March 21

Al Gustafson, Founder Career Transitions Center

Topic: Give Us Today our Daily Bread

Wednesday, April 18

Mary Kay Slowikowski, Public Speaker

Topic: One Woman's Journey to Grace

Wednesday, May 16 (final night)

Dr. Mary Amore, Executive Director of Mayslake Ministries

Topic: In the Footsteps of Jesus

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NEW YEAR RESOLUTION? MEMBERSHIP AT CGP!

Complete this form today!

Hooliganism

Mike Houlihan



I received some hate mail a few weeks ago in response to last month’s column.

It was sent from someone going by the name of “Tom.” He started his fan letter by stating, “After reading your incredibly bizarre piece in the *IAN* newspaper I have to wonder if you’ve truly lost your mind...”

My immediate response was to reply, “Yes I have lost my mind, now please, please stop bullying me!” But I decided that “discretion is the better part of valor” and digested Tom’s diatribe and his outrage at my Swiftian satire. I reminded myself what I’ve told my editor and publisher, Cliff Carlson, on more than one occasion, “If I’m not pissing Somebody off, I’m not doing it right!”

I got the sense from “Tom” that he wanted to draw me into a debate of some kind about my words and who I had skewered in my column. I replied to the malevolence with these words, “Tom who?”

Not five minutes later Tom wrote back, “It doesn’t really matter who I am. It is only the truth that matters.”

Well “Tom,” maybe your mommy never told you this, but it does matter who you are because if you don’t have the courage to put your name on something you’ve sent, it’s a safe bet there is no truth in anything you say.

I can only assume you are just another in the long line of bicycle seat sniffers I’ve encountered throughout my career who don’t enjoy my sense of humor, AKA “Houli-haters.” That’s fine Tommy, but please don’t expect to engage me in a discussion with you or any other delegates from NAMBLA.

I do appreciate the fact that gerbils like you actually read *Hooliganism*, but seriously Tom, you aren’t my type. So feck off and let me enjoy the folks who love me, the real people who have real names.

Folks like Anne Marie Grogan, who I met again after over 62 years, at IBAM

at the Irish American Heritage Center last fall. Anne was a friend of our family when we lived on Estes Avenue in St. Margaret Mary’s parish and did a lot of babysitting at the Houlihan house. She told me of the night my older brothers hid the baby, me, in the empty bathtub behind the shower curtain to drive poor Anne almost crazy.

Anne Marie recently sent me a Christmas card and letter with some old news clips of yours truly. She also sent a spiritual bouquet for my family with the gift of two Christmas novenas for our intentions. I was touched by her generosity of spirit.

The card was signed, Anne Marie Grogan.

Or folks like my friends the Barrett sisters: Suzanne, Nancy, and Mary. Suzanne runs “Barrett Office Suites and Services” in the Loop and I’m renting a very cool office there during the holidays and the kindness of the sisters is contagious. They sign their names to thank you notes all the time, Tom.

Or my lovely grand daughter Charlotte, the coolest person in the world. Charlotte is two years old and has grown very attached to a statue of St. Joseph we keep in our home. Charlotte could very well grow up to be a Chicago cop because the other day she dropped the statue and chipped Joe’s nose and my wife was distraught, “What happened to St. Joseph?” she cried.

Charlotte looked grandma dead in the eye and said, “He tripped.”

I have a feeling Tom, that a person like you, too spineless to reveal his identity, lacks the faith of Anne Marie Grogan, the charity of The Barretts, or the hope of Charlotte Houlihan.

I’ve just started an occasional blog at www.mikehoulihan.com and encourage all you “real people” to check it out whenever you’re in the mood for some *Hooliganism*.

Houli-phobes like “Tom,” please, let’s not waste each other’s time. For the rest, Happy New Year to all!

Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



Deep Thoughts Concerning Coffee in the Olde Brewery

I was in my local hostelry, The Olde Brewery in Oranmore the other evening, having a cup of coffee and eavesdropping on what people thought of the Budget. Now in the Brewery they don’t charge you for coffee, well not if you’ve drunk enough beer during the week, they don’t. Admittedly if Cue Ball Brendan or Happy Darren are behind the counter they might give you a look of contempt as if you’ve just asked them to follow you into the Gents’; but over all you’ll get something half drinkable thrown up to you.

Now with a Cavan name like Brady I’m obviously not known for splashing my money around. So I think that this is a good system. Drink enough and you’ll get a few free cups of coffee out of it. It’s logic, really: the more you drink, the more you save. Well, it’s Pub Logic at any rate.

So I was there with the newspaper and checking out what everyone thought about the Budget. The general consensus was that all politicians are a shower of expletives deleted. Then they went back to the football and I went back to the paper, thinking of what a bunch of amateur haters the customers were.

Now all three of my regular readers out there know that I really hate

politicians. I don’t just hate them part time in some kind of namby-pamby way. I hate them full time. If I could get Hate brownie points for hating them into overtime I’d be right there, volunteering. If there were an “I Hate All Politicians” tax (jeez, don’t give them any ideas!) they would have me to rights.

It was in this vein of thought that I came across this letter from Fred Johnston of Galway. Last month in this column I was railing about the enormous pensions being paid out to political failures with particular emphasis on one Raye Burke. Well, it seems I’m not alone. Take it away, Mr. Johnston:

“...To read that a former minister for justice, Raye Burke, a convicted and jailed tax evader—you couldn’t make it up!—has a fat state pension is disgusting and an insult to Irish men and women who find themselves struggling merely to live. In a civilised society he should receive no pension at all.”

“So why was he not stripped of such entitlements? God help us, is there some constitutional impediment? Or, more likely, is it that we Irish don’t do shame? I am inclined to the view that we harbour a fatal cap-doffing peasant mentality, we will take anything that is thrown at us as long as it favours ‘our own.’”

“Can we not understand that there is no patriotism in the likes of Burke and, more recently, the rogue bankers and developers? That none of them cares a fig for this country?”

“We are on our knees now. This Christmas some of us will starve or watch our children starve and some of us will be made homeless. Burke and his ilk will dine well. The wretched bankers who ruined this country will quaff deep of the best wines, still free on our streets, though running no risk of having to live on them. We will do nothing.”

“It’s not their fault, it’s our fault. We are serfs to the bone and deserve nothing better. Because we no longer have economic sovereignty. We could do no worse than give up all pretence to being a country and surrender our ungovernable selves back to the Crown.”

Now I don’t want Chris Fogarty of this parish (*For the Republic*) coming after me with an axe because of that last sentence, but I definitely see where Mr. Johnston is coming from.

Is it just because we got used to the tipping of the forelock to our masters? Is it because we, deep inside, feel ourselves to be inferior?

As I’ve said many times in these columns, I just don’t get it.

We would rather get into fights with each other at the end of a drinking session than we would to commit ourselves to fighting the real enemy.

Mr. Johnston touched on this with his outstanding letter.

He has probably never seen one of favourite films, the cruelly under rated and passed over *V for Vendetta* and yet he might as well have been quoting the best line from that movie:

“If you want to know who is to blame, you need only look in a mirror.”

Time over time we put up with certifiable creeps like everyone in Fine Gael, who are probably pure sociopaths in that they have lied and lied again, without caring one whit about the people that put them there. There’s not a bother on them when it comes to lying to your face. They don’t see a damned thing wrong with it.

They have long ago forgotten that they should be serving us, not the other way around.

If I wrote until the end of time I don’t think that I could for one second get across how much I loathe them.

On that note, I’m heading over to the Olde Brewery. I need a cup of coffee and I want it in a pint glass, without the coffee.

Heather A. Begley



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For The Republic



Chris Fogarty



Americans by vaporizing \$trillions of savings to grab a few \$billions for themselves are, like Hank Paulson, brought into government or,

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."—Greek Proverb

ADJACENT PHOTOS are of OccupyChicago at LaSalle and Jackson streets. Sign-holders are my Mary, Gary, and Bruce Parry. Gary is a recently laid-off printer, Bruce is a West Point grad, Vietnam vet (Captain; 5th Cavalry Div.) and laid-off economist. Another regular is laid-off construction worker Joe Hudoba from near Midway airport. Some are laid-off teachers, others are students. Some cops support, some harass. FauxTV asks: "What does Occupy want?" Bruce answers: "I'm participating because I believe this is the start of a movement of poor and working people to take back the economic and political democracy they are being denied. 'We are the 99 percent' clearly lays out the basic inequality of our time: class inequality. The one percent run this country in their own interests and are ruining it for the 99 percent. We must reclaim the power that all real democracies promise."

Each Occupy participant has his/her own reason (left-wingers want Christ's "I am my brother's keeper" as national policy), but all share some basic beliefs. They know that America needs its patriots like never before; that the one percent have taken over by bribing our government into legislating ever more impunity for corporate treason and crimes against us, that the one percent have grabbed an ever-increasing portion of the wealth produced by America's workers, that America is the opposite of what it was during, say, WW2; that the Nuremberg Tribunal confirmed our rightness then, while now Nuremberg's Justice Jackson demands Nuremberg-like prosecution of Bush/Cheney et al for their Supreme Crime in Iraq; their torture sites, etc.

WE ALL KNOW that American justice is now "two-tier;" that those who rob a bank for a few hundred dollars are subject to being shot, or to many years in prison, while banksters whose fraudulent "Collateralized Debt Obligations" and "Credit Default Swaps" impoverished millions of

like Jon Corzine allowed to stonewall Congress about \$1.2 billion misappropriated from his customers' accounts.

PERHAPS it's true that "no U.S. laws were broken." If so, the criminals who wrecked our economy are as immunized as Nazis were under German law. Like our war criminals and financial



predator, the Nazis violated no domestic laws: The legislators in both nations, respectively, under criminal influence, paved the way by decriminalizing everything being planned, starting here with Clinton/Gramm's removal of Glass-Steagall. For so long as money controls our elections (thus



our laws) our Constitution cannot be restored; thus, for now, only a supranational entity like Nuremberg can reestablish law in the U.S.

CORPORATIONS are perpetrating a *coup du monde*. The coup seems headed by Goldman Sachs (GS). Both Paulson and Corzine are GS; so are the two unelected men now running

Greece and Italy. GS henchmen from Brussels are in Dublin running Ireland. Meanwhile U.S. pols, especially Repubs, while selling us out to the 1 percent, simultaneously respond to AIPAC money by out-promising Israel's most murderous Anti-Palestinians.

OUR GOV'T that refuses to prosecute admitted water-boarders ("We don't want to look back;" Obama") is now advertising for guards, etc. to imprison Americans in concentrations camps. It's all "legal" under new Homeland Security laws and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that violate the Constitution's Amendments 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 14. But destruction of the Constitution didn't begin with Bush/Obama. The government refused to prosecute MI5/FBI agents who incarcerated Mary, two others and me in the Federal Jail at Clark and VanBuren twenty years ago, framing us based upon their perjures and fabricated evidence; while also framing me for murdering the Langert family, people I'd never even heard of, all while covering for murderer Biro whose weapon was FBI agent Lewis'.

DISTRESS SPREADS. In a few decades, by outsourcing jobs, U.S. corporations have turned us, history's greatest creditor-nation, into its greatest debtor-nation. Later, financial predators led by Goldman Sachs, looted America's remaining wealth by, in effect, counterfeiting money via their fraudulent CDOs and CDSs. Today, published lists of names/addresses of real estate tax defaulters are Chicago's largest ever. In my neighborhood some high-rises have hundreds of condo owners in tax-sales. Are their mortgage-holding banks the culprits?

Palestinians have proven less gullible than the Irish; they didn't allow Sen. George Mitchell to "solve" the issue of Occupation by transferring the disputed territory to the occupier as was done in Ireland. World maps now show Ireland's Six Counties as British; not disputed territory as heretofore. Irish gullibility is further demonstrated by the news-media-promoted belief that the two, Adams and McGuinness, who fronted Britain's GFA campaign that successfully signed over the Six Counties to Britain are the very two entrusted to lead a campaign to unite Ireland; thus to "take back" those self-same Six Counties.

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Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea

Tom Boyle



prison based on new DNA evidence tells us that it was the right thing to do, even though it was probably one of the most

Fifty-First State

State Representative, Bill Mitchell, and State Representative, Adam Brown, are fed up! Under their proposed legislation the state would be telling Chicago and Cook County to get lost.

"Without the domineering overly liberal and tax hungry metropolis" they contend Illinois could be more like Indiana, run by the GOP. Downstate conservatives are against the income tax increase, the civil unions law, and the abolishment of the death penalty... Let's put it all on the ballot! I wonder if they remember that Governor Ryan first declared the moratorium on the death penalty and started that ball rolling. The number of people being released from

controversial issues we ever faced.

We are still faced with the likes of John Wayne Gacy who certainly deserved to die much sooner than he did.

Back to the State of Cook. Will Puerto Rico be upset? Not at all. They have all the benefits of citizenship, they just can't vote.

Corned Beef

The annual St. Patrick's Day Parade fundraiser will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2012. Once again, the waves of the Irish diaspora will ripple through Plumber's Hall. Dinner chairman, Martin J. Healy, and co-chair, Lolly McKeown, promise us a night to remember. The Shannon Rovers will lead the parade of dignitaries into the hall. The Pipes and Drums will stir your emotions, and connect you once again to your ancient homeland, Innishfail. Libations, Harrington's Corned Beef, boiled potatoes and cabbage—all you can eat—served family-style with apple pie for dessert.

The Grand Marshall and Guest of Honor for 2012 will be presented, along with the Queen and her Court. It all starts at 6pm. Tickets are \$70 each; 312-421-1010 or email pfaaden@ualocal130funds.com.

Maggie Daley

We were all beguiled by Chicago's First Lady—Maggie Daley exuded a warmth and charisma seldom encountered in the waters in which she navigated.

From the wake at the Cultural Center, to the mass at Old St. Patrick's Church, and Monsignor Wall's eloquent eulogy, to the heartbreak of her grandson sobbing as he held his grandfather's hand. The Shannon Rovers played the song "Maggie," I'm sure the lyrics crossed everyone's mind, "When I said I loved only you Maggie, and you said you loved only me." Emotions ran

high, and all of Chicago felt the loss.

Blago

Hooked on booze to sleep? How come he's not taking Ambien? This is a way to reduce his time in jail. Another scam, a ploy used by many others to shorten their sentence.

Why did the former governor choose the prison in Littleton, Colorado over Milan, Michigan or Terre Haute, Indiana, or Oxford, Wisconsin amongst others? All of which are within driving distance for his family to visit. The story I'm hearing is that he can write a book without having most of the profit eaten up by taxes if he goes to Littleton. I wonder if Oprah will recommend his book?

IFC Luncheon



Newlyweds James and Jennifer Sloan

The tribute to Maggie Daley was delivered by Reverend Joseph Altman, pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Church in Bridgeport. He was followed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel who also had words of praise for Maggie Daley, and he talked about the Irish contribution to the building of Chicago, an ethnically diverse city. He went on to praise the Mather High School Soccer Team who won the 2-A State title. He detailed the ethnic diversity of the players, once again highlighting the ethnic diversity of Chicago and the contributions all make.

The new president of the Irish Fellowship Club is Brian Hickey. Patrick Daley

Thompson moves to Chairman of the Board.

Healy Law Firm

The annual Christmas party was held at Gibson's Steak House on Rush Street. Our gracious and congenial hosts were Martin and Joann Healy. Many dignitaries and luminaries were spotted in the crowd, including Irish Consul General Aiden Cronin and his wife, Maedhbh, who is indeed a very charming lady.

Chicago's O'Hare

I went to a book signing for the launch of the new book by Michael Branigan, *A History of Chicago's O'Hare Airport*. The forward was written by Christopher Lynch, who wrote the definitive book on Midway Airport. Since I have not yet read this book cover to cover, I can promise you this... You will find many fascinating facts and photographs, especially when it comes to the Douglas aircraft plant during Word War II, where they were building the C 54 Skymaster. It just so happens that my mother was 'Rosie the Riveter,' and my step father, Bill Kent, was the shop steward for the UAW. This is a must read.

Sloan Wedding

On Saturday, the 26th of November, James Martin Sloan and Jennifer Sarah Korrisson exchanged wedding vows at the Church of St. Mary in Lake Forest, IL. A reception at the Deer Path Inn followed the ceremony. James Martin Sloan

is the son of Jim and Rose Sloan of Lake Forest. The bride and groom honeymooned in Thailand.

Afghanistan

I had the opportunity to speak with a U.S. Marine officer who had served in Afghanistan and the Middle East. He made a most interesting comment when he said, "The Afghan people do not understand what democracy is. It's a tribal country and I don't understand why we keep sending young men over there to be killed."

Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



a great number of business development seeds over the years. In summary, he probably actually has an elevated level of expectations; however closely

What Are Your Great Expectations For 2012?

When I was a boy there was a movie called *Great Expectations* based on the book by the same name, written by Charles Dickens. I have faint memories of the central character, a small boy, Pip, who befriends an escaped convict who later rewards the boy, by providing him with great sums of honestly earned money. Even at that tender age, I was captivated by the combination of those two words—Great expectations. What did they mean?

I believe that I have had great expectations all of my life even though as a child I didn't really understand the concept. I thought I was going to be successful. I was going to acquire some level of competency in my chosen field; whatever that was going to be. I thought I was going to have a fine life. Somehow I felt I deserved that. But clearly not everyone has been gifted with such positive expectations.

One of my nephews, Donald, told me a story about being on an elevator in his office building recently. Being the nice fellow that he is, he decided to engage some young person from the company's marketing department in conversation. "How are things in the marketing department these days?" The instant response was "Crappy, as usual, we only have three weeks left in this quarter." Don was shocked by the tone of that response; he had expected a far more upbeat answer than he got.

As recently as earlier this week, I had breakfast with a long time colleague of mine, who is a highly accomplished executive search consultant. We were discussing our views on 2012. How would the economy affect his business and mine? Would it be "good" for the type of consulting that each of us does? He said he didn't have any real expectations, great or small, for 2012. He said he felt the Lord would provide him with enough opportunities for a reasonable degree of success this coming year, as He has done in the past 25 plus years. But knowing my friend, I am sure that he is not totally relying on the Lord's graces. He has made a great number of contacts; he is continuously networking; he has planted

guarded.

Clearly there are a great number of issues on our economic plates. But the real question is how do you choose to respond to the circumstances? I read some place years ago that there were more millionaires "made" during the Great Depression than any other time in our nation's history. How could that be, other than many people had great expectations? People must have felt that they had nothing to lose by taking a risk. As Americans, we seem to have become increasingly uncomfortable taking risks. A friend of mine told me of someone he knew who was a hospice nurse. She told him that she asked every patient the same question. "If you had your life to live over, what would you have done differently? The universal answer from these people staring at death was; "I wish I had taken more risks."

They weren't talking about taking "crazy" risks such as jumping off a tall building and expecting that Wonder Woman or Spiderman will catch them on their way down. I don't think anyone should take such a risk. But are you overlooking other risks (aka opportunities) that could potentially provide you with wealth well beyond your earlier expectations?

Must great success be preceded by great expectations? Don't we all want to believe that we are going to be successful? Great athletes

and other performers always expect success on the playing field or court or diving board. Every professional football player is playing the game so that he can get to the Super Bowl. Tim Beckman, the new football coach at the University of Illinois says, "You play this game to win. That's winning championships."

All this speaks to the question; do you anticipate that you will have success in the next year? As we get to the end of the year, many of us become reflective and think about some specific things we should correct: stop smoking, stop eating the wrong foods, stop speeding, etc., etc. These all deal with tactical elements of our lives, not the more strategic elements of our lives. Do you have great expectations? Do you ever think about becoming a multi-millionaire? Will you ever visit countries all over the world? Perhaps many of us don't have such expectations because the world of hard knocks has beaten those expectations out of us. As Fats Domino said, "Ain't that a shame!"

If you have great expectations, I suggest you guard them closely. Otherwise people will ridicule you and verbally abuse your grandiose ideas. Don't you have a few special expectations hidden below the surface of your skin? My challenge to you is simply this: determine if 2012 is the time to bring them into the light of day? Doing so isn't going to be easy; there will be uncertainties and doubts, but achieving any one of these great expectations will make it all worthwhile. As the US Army says: Be all that you can be.

Please accept my best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2012 for you and yours. *Carpe Diem*. As we start another new year, I would again like to thank my two wonderful editors: my wife, Sandee Wask Fitzgerald and my brother, Joseph Fitzgerald. They have been

of great help to me over the years.

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

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Daly Investor

By John P. Daly



Fixed Income Risk in Your Portfolio

With interest rates at historical lows, some investors may be anxious about a possible rate climb and its potential impact on their fixed income investments. Rising interest rates typically cause existing bonds to lose value. While investors might hold short-term instruments to manage this risk, an interest rate decline could spoil this strategy by forcing investors to reinvest in lower yields when their short-term instruments mature.

Rate movements in either direction affect portfolio returns. This is true in any market environment, regardless of the current rate level. The larger question is how to manage the risk. As you read the financial headlines and evaluate your current fixed income exposure, it may be helpful to consider these principles about fixed income investing.

Interest Rate Movements Are Unpredictable

Today’s bond prices already reflect expectations for tomorrow’s business conditions and inflation, and these expectations can change quickly in response to new information. This new information is unpredictable. Investors who accept market efficiency should not be surprised when the credit markets foil the experts. Since no one has a reliable method for determining when interest rates will rise in the near future, investors should avoid making fixed

income decisions based on a forecast, media coverage, or their own hunches.

Pursuing Higher Expected Returns Requires More Risk Taking

The strong link between risk and return appears in all investments. When investing in stocks, bonds, or other assets, investors must accept more risk to pursue a higher potential return.

In the fixed income markets, earning a return above short-term government instruments is usually a function of assuming a longer maturity or a higher credit risk. Bonds with longer maturities and lower credit quality are usually considered riskier and have offered higher yields and returns to compensate investors for higher risk.

On the maturity side, investors who commit their capital for longer periods of time are exposed to the amplified effects of changing interest rates. Bond prices and interest rates move in the opposite direction: When rates rise, the value of an existing bond declines; when rates fall, bond values rise. The market adjusts the price to match the yield available on a new instrument. The longer the bond’s maturity, the greater the price adjustment for a particular interest rate change. A long-term bond is more exposed to rate changes than a short-term instrument, and usually (but not always) offers a higher yield to compensate investors for the

extra risk. Also, lower-coupon bonds are more affected by interest rate changes than higher-coupon bonds. For example, if rates move 1%, a bond that pays 3% will experience a greater gain or loss than one paying 5%. On the credit risk side, the weaker a borrower’s financial condition, the higher the yield it must pay to attract investors.

Investment Strategy Should Drive Fixed Income Decisions

Investors may hold fixed income securities for a variety of reasons—to reduce portfolio volatility, generate income, maintain liquidity, pursue higher returns, or meet a future funding obligation. Each objective may involve a different portfolio approach, or a combination of strategies. For example, investors who want to maximize current income may not be strongly concerned with the effects of short-term price volatility. They may extend maturity or accept slightly lower credit quality when the market offers a yield premium for doing so. On the other hand, investors seeking long-term wealth appreciation may commit most of their portfolio to equities and keep their fixed income investments short term and high quality to buffer the volatility of stocks. Regardless of your approach, you should know the difference between controlling risk and avoiding it. You cannot eliminate risk, but you can manage your exposure by diversifying across maturities, industries, countries, and currencies. Your decision to take more term and default risk may depend on the current state of the yield curve and credit spread.

Many factors influence the direction of interest rates and performance in the bond markets, and these are too complex for anyone to reliably predict. Your strategy should reflect your overall investment goals, risk tolerance, and other personal financial considerations. This is a solid approach to managing your portfolio in an uncertain interest rate market.

John P. Daly is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and President of Daly Investment Management, LLC, a FEE ONLY Registered Investment Advisor specializing in financial planning and wealth management for individuals and families. Phone: 312-239-1317 Email: john@dalyinvestment.com. Readers are encouraged to call or email John with questions regarding Investments or financial planning. www.dalyinvestment.com.

Consulate of Ireland High School Essay Contest

By Aidan Cronin

As the newly arrived Consul General of Ireland in Chicago, I was delighted to lend my support to the first ever Consulate of Ireland High School Essay Contest, recently organized by the Consulate, in collaboration with Education in Ireland, the Irish government initiative that promotes Ireland as a study destination for American students.

Duncan, 10th Grade, St. Ignatius College Prep—with two worthy runners-up: Mary Elizabeth Wagner, Senior, at Benet Academy and Demetrious Daily, 9th Grade, Rowe Clark Math & Science Academy, to each of whom great credit is due for their wonderful essays. Thank you as well to the teachers and counselors who encouraged them, and



(L-R) Mike Duncan of St. Ignatius College Prep and Consul General of Ireland, Aidan Cronin

The competition was part of an ambitious campaign launched recently by the Irish Government to increase the number of American students choosing to study at Irish universities and colleges by 50% over the next 3 years.

The campaign is building on a strong base, as the US is already the greatest sender of international students to Ireland. In 2010, some 7,000 US students chose to study in Ireland, making it a top 10 study abroad destination for Americans.

The majority of these students came for a semester or junior year abroad but a growing number also chose to pursue full-time degree programs. These students were not confined to those with family links to Ireland; the typical US student in Ireland is a global, career-minded individual seeking a high-quality and affordable college experience. They are ambitious, outgoing and curious. And in our small nation of just over four million people, they are reaping the rewards generated by decades of dedication to higher education.

In honor of Ireland’s tradition of producing inspiring writers, artists and musicians, entrants to this year’s essay contest were asked to describe, in 1,000 words or less, “What Inspires Them...” The response to the competition from High Schools across the Chicago area was overwhelming. While reading such wonderfully-written stories of inspiration and courage was a pleasure, and in itself inspiring, the judging panel was hard-pressed to select a winner and two runners-up from the large number of high-quality entries. After long deliberations, the winner emerged—Mike

many other students, to enter into the competition.

From the Consulate’s and my own perspective, initiatives such as this are hugely beneficial in raising Ireland’s profile among young Chicagoans, the leaders and decision-makers of tomorrow, and alerting them and their parents to the possibility of Ireland as an education, business or tourism destination. This was the first in a range of planned initiatives from the Consulate to reach out to the people of Chicago, whether in the political, business, cultural, education or other sectors, to increase their awareness of Ireland, of what is happening there and of what we are doing to address the economic and other issues facing us today.

As some of you will be aware, we recently moved office, leaving the Wrigley Building after a stay of almost eighty years, and crossed the river to 1 East Wacker Drive. It was a sad day in many ways, given our long and historical relationship with that landmark Chicago building. But a change is as good as a rest, as they say, and, fully rested, myself, my colleague Vice-Consul Tim Reilly, and all of the staff of the Consulate, stand ready to take our relationship with Chicago and the entire mid-west region onto a new level in the coming weeks, months and years. This High Schools Contest and our engagement with young Chicago is one small, but we think significant, step along that road.

For further information about studying in Ireland, log on to the Education in Ireland website www.educationinireland.com.

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Tradition In Review

Bill Margeson



Chicago Reel and Outside Track. To be perfectly honest, this was the toughest choice of the year.

**Song of the Year—
Somebody Special/
Matt Keane**



This song was written by Don Stiffe and recorded by his friend and fellow Galway-area resident, Matt Keane. It is a masterpiece of what a love song should be and is available on Matt and his daughter Orlaith's album, *Pictures in Time*. Even better, Matt re-recorded the songs with a new arrangement utilizing a visiting Polish string quartet at Galway University. Matt tells us that this second version will soon be available with the rest of his work on iTunes. Find this. Post him through his webpage. Both versions are superb with his voice from God, but we love "Somebody Special II" even better. Either way, a gorgeous song, gorgeously performed by the Voice of the West.

**Female Musician
of the Year—
Pauline Conneely**



Pauline Conneely of Chicago Reel once won the All-Ireland Banjo Player Award, and she is one of the best. Her fantastic skills are on display in Chicago Reel's new album—*Chicago Reel!* Another master musician living in Chicago, she is the deal. Pauline rocks. Pauline rules!

**Instrumental
Album of the Year—
Green Grass Blue Grass**



It should come as a shock to no one that this album wins this award. There were some really good contenders this year, but this album stands out like the diamond it is. The Brock-McGuire Band never misses, and this is their latest stunner. An incredible concept leads to an even more incredible album.

**Female Vocalist of the
Year— Norah Rendell**



The Minneapolis-based singer has done it perfectly with her group, The Outside Track. Her voice is made for the powerful arrangements of the group. It makes no difference here that she is also a superior wooden flute player. She is a killer singer. An easy choice this year.

**New Group of the
Year— Full Set**

This Irish-based sextet of young musicians and singers has stunned the trad world with the force of their entry onto the scene with the album, *Notes at Liberty*. The album is perfectly conceived and executed. You can write about this all day. You have to hear it. There were many worthy contenders this year, such as

**Vocal/Instrumental
Group of the Year—
Outside Track**

Two albums now from this multi-national contingent have stamped them not only as yet another new force in the music, but among the top groups in the world. Outside Track is traditional, creative, and brilliant on every cut. A stunning collection of taste, musical ability, and incredible depth of knowledge for ones so young.

**Concert of the Year—
Brendan Hendry/
Brendan Mulholland/
Jim Rainey**

This trio came in from Northern Ireland for Irish Fest in Milwaukee. As you have read above, Brendan Hendry is this year's Male Musician of the Year.

Next year's is probably the flute player, Brendan Mulholland. Jim Rainey did a lovely job of accompaniment on guitar. The lads offered a weekend of music and concerts of perfection. Their albums show masters at the top of their form. This is the way Irish music is supposed to sound and it has never sounded better than in those concerts.

Event of the Year— iBAM!

This event put on by this paper and the Irish American Heritage Center in Chicago is unique and the best celebration of the diversity of Irish culture in the world, perhaps save Irish Fest. It is different from Fest. It was so perfect this year that it established a new guidepost for what a celebration of Irish culture can be. A stunning event making us all extra proud of being Chicagoans. Wow!

2012 Top TIR Awards

It is that time of year again. Here we go with the annual Awards for the best in traditional music for 2011. Tons of stiff competition this year. Here we go! The *Irish American News* proudly announces its **2012 Top TIR Awards**:

**Male Vocalist of the
Year— Denis O'Sullivan**



This brilliant singer with the Chicago Reel was a massive discovery for us in 2011. More the shame on us for not fully appreciating his incredible style and beautiful voice sooner. From Ireland, he is now officially a Chicago treasure and one of the very top singers in the tradition. Period!

**Male Musician of the
Year— Brendan Hendry**



This Northern Ireland fiddle player defines what it means to be an Irish musician. His style and taste are impeccable, and nobody deserves this award more. A stunningly gifted musician as evidenced on his two albums so far, *Stringtones* and *Tuned Up*.



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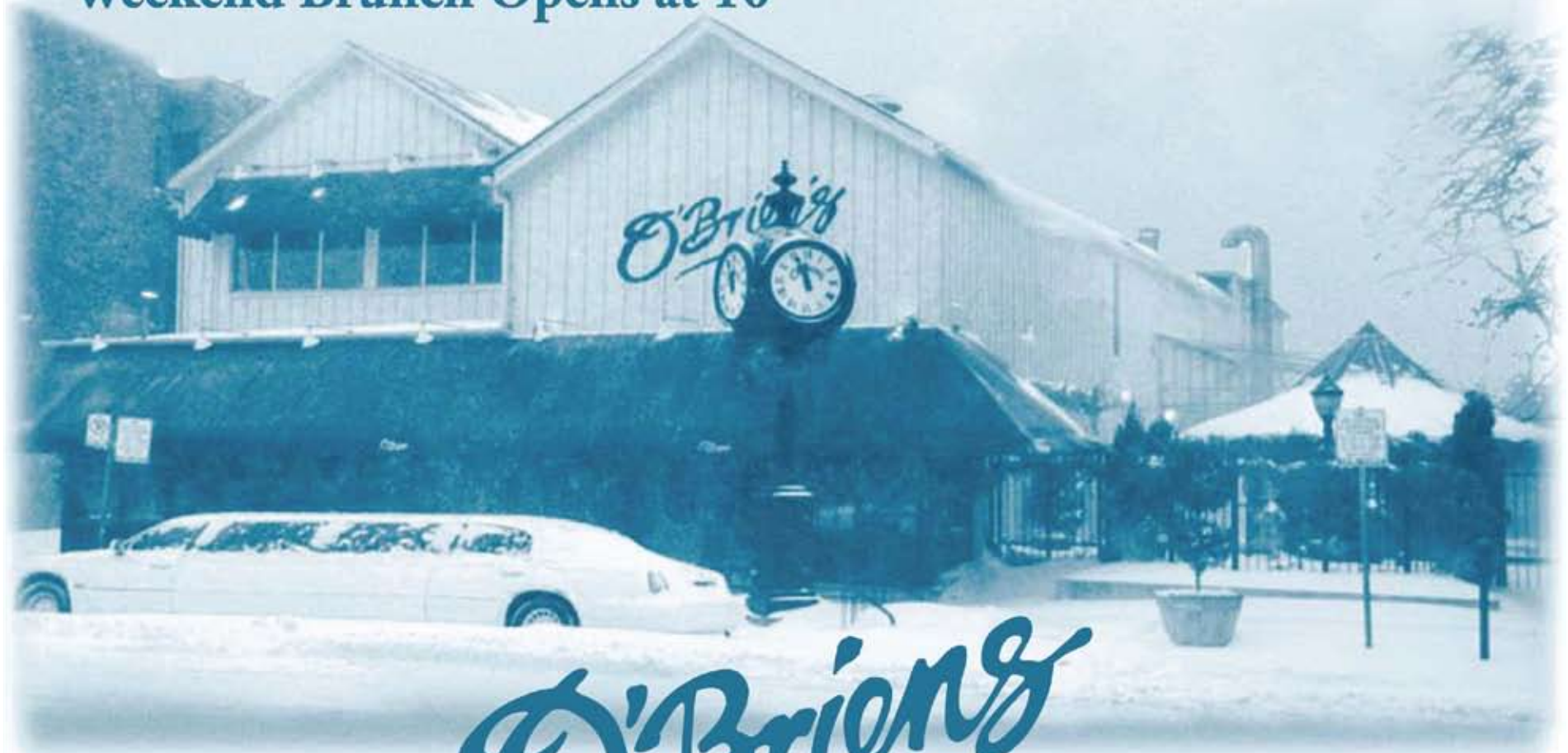
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Happy New Year!

A Word With Monsignor Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Rev. Monsignor Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO



Good News in the New Year: Bringing Light and Hope in Darkness

For most of us, the New Year brings a review of the "old" year's accomplishments and a new start. So it is with Catholic Charities! Each year on November 11, Veterans Day, 1,100 of our more than 2,000 Catholic Charities employees gather at our Annual All Staff Meeting at Drury Lane in Oakbrook to celebrate our past, our present and our future. We review and recognize the professional achievements of our staff, who are the hearts and hands of the agency, and celebrate their anniversaries of employment. We take time to honor all American veterans, including our own staff members who are veterans of the Armed Services.

In 2011, thanks to our outstanding Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, staff, and thousands of generous donors and volunteers, Catholic Charities upheld the highest professional standards as we provided compassionate social and human services to the poorest of the poor, assist-

ing more than one million people.

Whether these neighbors of ours are desperately poor, homeless, frail and alone, or in need of food, clothing and shelter; or better off financially, but suffering a devastating crisis, Catholic Charities strives to provide what they need. That could be food, clothing, housing, rental or emergency assistance; the skills to manage money, or counseling services to heal a personal or family relationship.

But it also takes the efforts of thousands of heroes in our very real "army" of volunteers, such as our Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, our young adult Junior Board, and parishers and parishioners throughout Cook and Lake counties, whose generosity and energy are astounding.

• For example, the hundreds of Catholic Charities' young adult Junior Board members brightened the lives of countless seniors and children, recording over 5,300 volunteer hours last year and raising nearly \$40,000

for Catholic Charities programs. Hundreds more board members and volunteers helped their neighbors in need by serving on the committees of our 31 annual agency-wide and regional fund-raisers such as "The Spirit of Saint Nicholas Ball," which support specific programs such as our Children's Programs.

• Family and Parish Support Services: In Fiscal Year 2011, our housing programs brought light to the darkness of homelessness by providing 458,747 nights of stay for homeless individuals and families; and 80% of our clients achieved stable permanent housing upon leaving these programs. We provided services to 4,502 veterans; and 2,352 domestic violence victims benefited from many of our services, including housing and counseling. Our Homelessness Prevention Call Center and Central Information and Referral programs answered 139,943 calls for help, keeping people housed.

• Seniors have always been a very high priority at Catholic Charities, so I am proud to say that last year our Senior Services helped 99,005 older adults with 2,154,098 units/hours of assistance. In addition, we built and manage 1,533 safe and dignified apartments for seniors, the disabled, and veterans; and have broken ground for the new 42-apartment All Saints

Residence for seniors on Chicago's far south side.

• Catholic Charities' Community Development & Outreach Services runs several community food and nutrition education programs promoting health and prevention services, while developing a variety of job training programs for youths and unemployed adults. This past year, we gave 176 at-risk youth an enhanced quality of life through employment and leadership opportunities. Our "Lunch-n-More Catering and Food Service" enterprises provided 730,678 fresh, healthy meals for children and families in low-income areas, (a 289% increase from the previous year).

• New initiatives that provide job training for Catholic Charities' clients include our Painting Enterprise, Child/Adult Care Food program (CACFP), and the Mentoring Plus Jobs program. Nutrition programs for families include our WIC (Women, Infants,

Children) Centers, now offering fresh produce. This past year, our nutrition program for Seniors, Mothers and Children distributed more than 159,000 nutritious food packages.

These are just a few of our 157 Catholic Charities programs at 150 sites that provide food, clothing, housing, rental assistance, counseling services, emergency assistance and hope to people of all faiths and means throughout the year.

As we launch into this New Year with renewed faith and charity, I remain deeply grateful for the light that your prayers and support bring to our neighbors who need our help to live lives of dignity and hope. Thank you for bringing your light of love and hope into the darkness of their poverty and despair. May God bless you and your families!

To learn more about Catholic Charities or to volunteer, please visit www.catholiccharities.net.

At The End Of The Day

By Gardiner M. Weir

At the end of the day when darkness descends
And the mind cries out for its rest,
A voice from the past calmly whispers my name
And asks me the same old request;
"Tell me why? Why? Tell me why?"

I can see the small fields with protruding stones
Like the knees of an urchin child,
And the heather and gorse that add color to life
By the cairn where the druids once smiled.
And I cry! Oh, how I cry!

I can see the stonewalls where the hawthorns grow
And the house with the weeds in its thatch,
The open half door where my father leaned out
As he pled with a youth with ambition to match,
"Stay son! For us! Can't you please try?"

I waded at the past from the turn in the lane,
Nineteen at the time, my decision was made,
I whistled a tune with ambitious lips
Yet it never occurred that I had betrayed
My family's hopes with a simple goodbye.

Now, At the gate of my dreams I stand and knock
With the hope that I'll be let in,
To rewrite the past and try to explain
That the world held so much that I wanted to win
Not wasting my life in a byre and sty.

Yes, here I am,
In the land of plenty while trying to sleep,
I still see those fields where I played as a child,
Now a grave in the gorse where my father's ghost moans
His lament of a son that ambition defiled
And found far-off fields are often just lies.

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An Immigrant's Musings

Fr. Michael Leonard



migration. This coupled with the following principles (below) from a wide coalition in Iowa; offer a glimmer of hope for the future.

Band Aid Fix

Late last November, Congress took a baby step in tackling America's outdated immigration system. In passing H.R. 3012 the House voted to end country limits for employment-based visas, which could increase the number of highly-skilled workers from China and India to obtain green cards.

The bill would also raise per-country limits for green card applicants for certain family-based visas; this would benefit, in particular, people from Mexico and the Philippines.

One commentator on a popular blog summed up the bill as follows: "'The Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2011' does not raise the number of visas issued annually, but, by removing the limit on the number of visas issued to individuals from any one country, would begin to reduce the backlog of Indian and Chinese immigrants who currently have longer waiting times than other nationalities. Not coincidentally, immigrants from these countries hail from the two most populous nations in the world, with economies that have risen as global competitors over the last decade. They also have some of the highest levels of educational attainment and income among immigrants in the United States. Bottom line: the migrants who would most benefit from this bill are viewed as the cream of the crop."

Since the passage of this bill, I have had many calls from the Irish community enquiring: "what about the Irish, why are we excluded?" My answer is this. Firstly, this bill is a band-aid. It is an effort to try and fix a gaping wound, which needs stitching by applying a simple band-aid. H.R. 3012 does nothing for the undocumented and surprisingly enough does not address the issue of border security or internal enforcement of immigrant labor laws.

On the other hand, with immigration once again at record numbers from Ireland, this is an opportunity for the Irish to seek an E3 type agreement to help our young people deal with the present situation in such a bleak economic climate. It would also deal with future-flow and remove the enticement to Irish people to overstay in the US.

By now, with both parties shifting their focus to the 2012 elections, have given up on a major overhaul of U.S. immigration policy. The recession has caused lawmakers and activists to look for ways to align America's economic interests with targeted reforms.

As I go to press, there are renewed hopes of the Irish securing an E3 visa agreement. The deal has now received backing from the top democrats in an amendment sponsored by Senators, Schumer, Durbin and Leahy. It also has the backing of a republican bill sponsored by Senators Brown and Mark Kirk of Illinois.

The latest survey on attitudes to immigration in Iowa, have produced a surprising result for those who consider "conservatives" anti-im-

Five Principles to Guide Iowa's Immigration Discussion

FEDERAL SOLUTIONS We believe that immigration policy falls under the purview of federal not state government. We encourage Iowa's Congressional delegation to lead efforts toward developing common-sense immigration policies that protect our borders and work to the benefit of all U.S. residents. We urge our state and local leaders to adopt policies that are in the best interest of all Iowans and infringe neither upon federal jurisdiction nor the Constitutional rights of Iowa's residents.

SMART ENFORCEMENT We respect the rule of law. Smart immigration policy is the opportunity to restore law and order by directing enforcement to real security threats and serious criminal activity. Authorities should avoid policies that have negative economic and humanitarian consequences for our communities.

KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER Strong families are the foundation of vibrant communities. We oppose policies that unnecessarily separate our families. We champion policies that support families and improve the health, education and well being of all Iowa children.

MEET OUR ECONOMIC NEEDS Iowa is best served by commerce-friendly policies that maximize investment potential, individual opportunity, and workplace equity. We acknowledge the economic role immigrants play as entrepreneurs, workers, consumers and taxpayers. Policy in Iowa must confirm our global reputation as a welcoming and business-friendly state.

A CULTURALLY RICH, WELCOMING STATE Immigrants have been integral to Iowa's culturally rich communities since the state's inception, and continue to contribute to our society. We must forge policies that reaffirm our legacy as a welcoming, inclusive state and support organizations that facilitate immigrants becoming full civic participants. Iowa should always be a place that welcomes people of goodwill.

Happy New Year

H appiness depends upon your outlook on life.
A ttitude is just as important as ability.
P assion find yours this year!
P ositive thoughts make everything easier.
Y ou are unique, with special gifts, use them.
N ew beginnings with a new year.
E nthusiasm a true secret of success.
W ishes may they turn into goals.
Y ears go by to quickly, enjoy them.
E nergy may you have lots of it.
A ppreciation of life, don't take it for granted.
R elax take the time to relax in this coming year

—Catherine Pulsifer

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



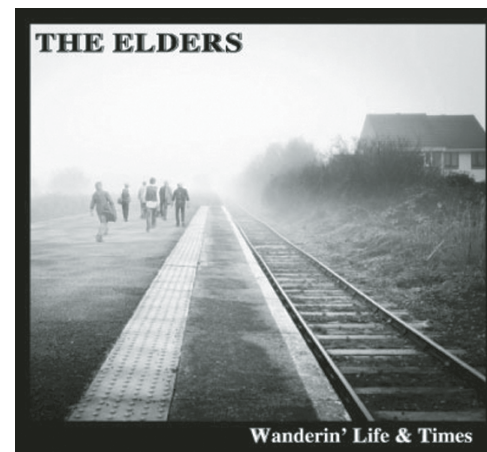
Piping It In

Jack Baker



Birlinn by Scottish picker Rod Paul is probably near the top of my list. It features the genius of Fraser Fifield on several different types of

Happy New Year! Here we go again with another year full of Celtic music, the grease on my mental wheels. I have no new releases to tell you about but I saved one from last year to review because it's simply that good and the band too is simply that good. It has been my distinct pleasure to watch and hear the Elders perform for the last few years. Last year they released an album called *Best of the Elders, Volume 1* which really was a collection of their best. For those of you late to the game, this CD will certainly get you caught up on where they have been and give you an idea of where they're going. Further in-



formation on where the Elders are going is contained in their latest CD *Wanderin' Life & Times*. All the songs are written by members of the band and show their progression as a musical force in Irish music. The band members are Ian Byrne who does vocals and doubles on bodhran, whistle & flute; Norm Dahlor on bass, banjo & vocals; Brent Hoad playing fiddle, mandolin, accordion & vocals; Joe Miquelon on piano & keyboards; Steve Philips on guitar, mandolin & vocals and Tom Sutherland on drums and percussion. A big bunch of talented guys, The Elders on stage take advantage of all their collective skills and put on a fun show that never fails to please. Their new CD pleases as well. Several of these original tunes will make it to their next volume of the best of, I don't doubt. During the festival season this year make it a goal to see the Elders in person, it's worth the effort and in the meantime get their new CD, *Wanderin' Life & Times*, and prepare yourself to sing along when they play at a festival near you. You can find their tour schedule online at www.eldersmusic.com.

January, for me, means the start of the "lonely times,, when I sit in the store for hours on end and see no one except the mailman. During these times I have what I call my comfort music that I put on the CD player and listen to all day. Older recordings that are, I feel, classics and they tend to cheer me up too, which is good. Here are a few of the ones that are still in print and available.

pipes and a passel of talented artists. All the tunes are originals and it's all instrumental. I put this on when I have to dust or clean because it really moves and when I'm listening, I move too. Good stuff for a lonely afternoon.

Often I like to visit the roots of the Irish folk movement so I'll slap Bothy Band's *Old Hag You Have Killed Me* on the CD player and sit back and just enjoy. Crisp and as fresh as when it was recorded 36 years ago, this one will never grow old. I always get a kick out of people hearing this for the first time and their reactions. All of the Bothy Band recordings are classics, this

just happens to be my favorite. When I get a yearning for uilleann pipes, I'll often put on Tommy Keane's *The Piper's Apron*. Of all my uilleann pipe recordings, this is the one I gravitate back to time after time. Trad and clean and backed by a raft full of good players, Tommy's work on this CD speaks to me, just good stuff.

One recording that pops up playing in the store a lot is Phil Cunningham's *The Palomino Waltz*. Phil used to play with the legendary Silly Wizard band and continues to play and produce great CDs but this one was his zenith. Every time I hear it I'm amazed that he can get that much sound out of an accordion with just ten fingers. He cranks out a set of reels on this CD that is one of the best I've ever heard, "The Four Stroke Reel," "Martin O'Connor's Flying Clog" & a reprise of "The Four Stroke Reel" constitute the 4th track and will leave you breathless. This is followed by "Leaving Glen Affric" a lovely slow air and a chance to catch your breath. Overall the best example of Phil Cunningham at his absolute best.

Next month I'll mention a few more of the lonely time CDs, unless, of course, I get a bunch of new releases. Hope springs eternal.

Thanks to all the friends that helped me get thru another holiday season. You can catch me at the store or call 630-834-8108 or online at pipingitin@comcast.net. Slainté.

Crowley on Kells

By Frank Crowley



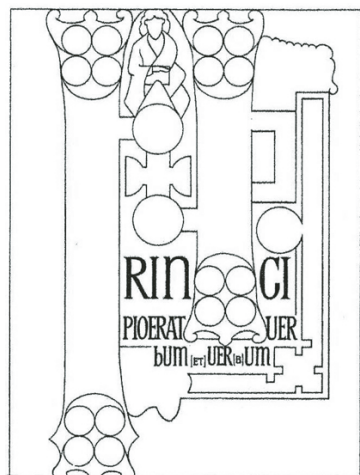
St. John’s Gospel

“In the Beginning Was the Word and the Word...” f292r

We now come to the fifth of five Incipit Illuminations of the Gospels. I’ll remind you that they are called “incipit” because they each use the first word or phrase of the Gospel text to create a complex design and include bands of interlacing along with discs and spirals, often with human figures.

As I previously suggested, these five illustrated distinctive and transcendent leaves were primarily produced by a monk I call Artist/Scribe A (A/S A.)

Based on the historical records of scriptoriums, copying manuscripts and sacred books was usually a collaborative project and included scribes of unequal skills. When we examine these leaves slowly and carefully, and judging by characteristics of drawing style, colors and techniques, we can see there are distinctly different smaller sections that appear to be done by collaborators.



Outline drawing of the letters and shapes of the main parts of f292r

This leaf, as all the other incipit leaves, is designed using the shapes of the first few letters or phrase of each Gospel. In this case, St. John.

Here is the partial phrase in English:

“In the Beginning Was the Word and the Word”

Here is the phrase in Latin: “IN PRINCIPIO ERAT UERBUM ET UERBUM”

Now here is the phrase as it is separated into the available designed space and spelling as

designed by A/S A:
IN P
RIN CI
BIDERAT UER
BUMUERUM



Notice that the “RIN” letters are made of dog and vine interlacing. Next, the “CI” is made of an intertwined dog and human figure.

You will also notice that in the third line “PIO” is rendered “BID” and in the fourth line the “ET” and “B” are missing. There are a few reasons why this sometimes happens. It is not necessarily a spelling error. Often abbreviations are used and if there is not enough room, letters are dropped. In some cases the reason is not clear.

Let’s examine the rest of this magnificent design. We immediately see the first large letter shapes outlined in blue. (“stems,” “strokes,” and “bowls” are the names of parts of letters) I say “letter shapes” because the design uses the stems, stroke and bowl which we read separately or add together to form the letters “I,” “N,” and “P.” They are the first three letters of the first two words.

The long stem is an “I.” Then an angular stroke is formed where two circles of spinning discs join a smaller stem to form the “N.” Next, the right shorter stem of the “N” is turned into the stem of the “P.”

Notice the bowl of the “P” is joined to the stem at top but not at bottom. Within these three letters is a design of angular shapes filled with minute interlacing. In some places dogs, other places birds and still other sections are filled with interlaced ribbons.

Finally, the tops and bottoms of the letter stems are medalion shapes. These medallions, and all other available spaces in the design, are filled with approximately 335 circles of varying sizes. Some circles have crossed lines or step designs inside. Others are plain yellow discs or spinning spirals.

This monogram shows the playfulness of a master artist. Some of this letter-play is used in other Gospels but not at the artistic level of the *Book of Kells*.

Sitting above the angular stroke of the “N” is a figure that is believed to be St. John. He is holding a book on his lap supported by his right hand on top and his left hand, under his robe, on



the bottom.

To the top right is another human figure. He is sitting, his one visible eye appears closed, holding a goblet (of wine?) A lion, teeth bared and tongue rolled out on the man’s lap, is staring directly at him. Is this another reference to the dangers of drinking as in Luke, f188r? The lion’s head is on top of a long band outlined in a darker blue-green color filled with interlacing snakes. It stretches down the right side of the leaf and turns left at the bottom, ending with the interlaced legs of the lion—surprise! The band is the lion’s body.

Next time: **The Eight Circle Cross**
Comments or questions welcome.

We Get Letters

My wife and I both enjoy *The Irish American News*, but are appalled that you give space to that small-minded bigot Houlihan. Month after month he slimes anyone and any organization not in agreement with his petty little agenda. We appreciate humor and controversy, and we respect free speech, but mindless bigotry qualifies as neither.

In the December column he attacks the LGBT community as a whole, musicians Elton John and Johnny Mathis, the governor, the president, and Planned Parenthood—maybe I missed someone else. And I think this was pretty much a normal month for him.

Bill and Peggy Buescher

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Danú Brought the Christmas Cheer This Holiday Season

By Katie Hamilton

Local audiences were treated to an early Christmas present from the famous Co. Waterford band Danú in December. The traditional Irish ensemble headlined performances at the Krannert Center in Champaign and the McAninch Arts Center at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn as part of their *Christmas in Ireland: An Nollaig in Eirinn* concert series.

The concert featured Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh, Benny McCarthy, Donal Clancy, Liam Flanagan, Eamon Doorley, and Martin O’Neill playing a showcase of traditional carols and Irish tunes on the flute, tin whistle, fiddle, accordion, bouzouki, and bodhrán. The McNulty Irish

Dancers accompanied the band with choreographed performances for five lively jigs and reels.

Danú has regaled audiences worldwide with the time-honored songs of Ireland since their first tour together in August of 1995. “We are a traditional Irish band—that idea is still our base,” said accordionist Benny McCarthy. “That’s what we’ve been about

since the very start. We’re all from Ireland and we play the old music from Ireland.”

To date, the band has released seven albums including their latest, *Seanchas*, in 2010. They are currently working on a studio album inspired from this Christmas tour to be released in time for the holidays next year.

In the meantime, the band

is enjoying their time on the road—especially in the Midwest. “We love Chicago,” said Benny. “We’ve played at the Celtic Festival and various venues in Chicago—the Old Town School of Folk Music, The Abbey Pub, FitzGerald’s [in Berwyn], the Curragh Irish Pub. We’ve

had lots of fun over the years and we’ve lots of good friends here, like Jimmy Keane, and Pat Broaders—who joined us for our Christmas tour in the past.”

Danú’s next North American tour is slated for March 2012. For information on dates and locations, visit www.Danu.net.



The band Danú delighted audiences with their Christmas in Ireland: An Nollaig in Eirinn concert series, complete with guest performances by the McNulty Irish Dancers (dancers pictured L-R: Mary Kate Zimmerman, McKinmon Engelhardt, Annabel Engelhardt).

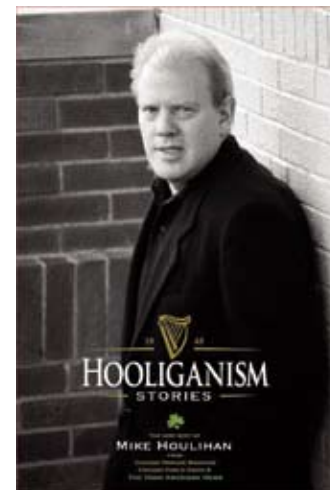
A Hooley with Houli at Peggy Kinnane’s in Arlington Heights

On Wednesday, January 25, 2012, *Irish American News* columnist Mike Houlihan will be at Peggy Kinnane’s Irish Restaurant & Pub to tell some stories, sign, and sell his book *Hooliganism*. The fun begins at 7pm and Houlihan will tell some preposterous stories from his celebrated book and hold court at this legendary Irish pub till 9pm.

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

Mike is offering all Peggy Kinnane’s patrons a 60% discount on the price of his book that night!

Stop into Peggy Kinnane’s for some



Hooliganism and kick off your St. Patrick’s Day shenanigans early.

Peggy Kinnane’s is located at 8 N. Vail Avenue in Arlington Heights. For more information. Call 847-577-7733.

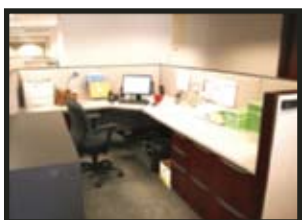
Hope to see you at Peggy Kinnane’s for a pre-emptive strike of Paddy’s Day and a Hooley with Houli.

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"traveling employee." This means that he has to travel throughout the city streets as part of his job. As such, our courts have determined that all of the risks of the street, such as slipping on ice, become part of his employment and an injury can be compensable.

"I can't file a claim because the accident was my fault."

Similar to the previous question, many people think that they cannot make a recovery if the accident

was their own fault, such as when an employee drops heavy materials on his foot causing a fracture. Or, a carpenter while using a hammer may strike his hand. Even though the accident may have been caused by the employee's own negligence, he can receive workers' compensation benefits.

"I was receiving benefits but now my employer went out of business, so I guess my claim is gone too."

In these unfortunate economic times, some employers have chosen to lay-off some, or a large portion, of their workforce. Others have closed their doors for good. Others still have been bought-out by larger companies. What happens if you had an on-the-job injury but work for an employer who falls into one of these categories? The general answer is your claim goes on.

Almost all workers' compensation benefits are paid through insurance, so the fact that your employer went out of business or was bought-out should not have a large effect on your claim. The insurance company will still have to pay benefits.

In these scenarios, an important question is whether you are working light duty or have restrictions to return back to work. Many employees who are injured return to work with restrictions; for instance, they cannot lift anything over 10 pounds. The employer may offer them a light duty or accommodated position, such as administrative duties instead of heavy labor. If you have work restrictions and your employer goes out of business or lays you off, the insurance company will be responsible for paying two-thirds of your average weekly wage while you are off work and unable to return to full duty, and may have to assist you in finding a new job.

"I can't file a claim because I broke a company rule or didn't have safety equipment on when I was injured."

Many individuals, especially construction workers, have safety rules they must follow at work or must wear certain safety equipment while working. For example, if you are working road construction, you might be required to wear a reflective vest. If you are welding or soldering you might be required to wear safety goggles. When working on scaffolding or on other heights, you may be required to use a safety gate or wear a safety harness. Oftentimes, we talk to individuals who do not believe they can pursue a claim because when they were injured they had forgotten to use safety equipment or follow a workplace safety rule.

So long as the individual was doing something in furtherance of his employment, he has a right to benefits, even if the employee forgot to wear safety equipment or follow a

safety rule. However, if an individual violates a safety rule purely for his own personal benefit, he may not be entitled to benefits.

In one notable case, an employee was denied benefits when he was riding double on a forklift during a lunch break in violation of a workplace rule prohibiting double riding. The court found that the employee was not due any compensation not simply because he violated a safety rule, but because he was acting for his own personal benefit, instead of doing something work related.

Conclusion

Many varied employment injury fact situations arise. Whether a particular injury is compensable may, on occasion, be unclear. The Act is remedial in nature and is interpreted in favor of coverage. If you have a question about compensability, feel free to call one of the attorneys at The Healy Law Firm.

By Martin Healy, Jr.
and Dennis M. Lynch



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

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

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

Readers' Questions Concerning Whether You Have a Workers' Compensation Claim

In several past issues, we have discussed the recent changes to the Workers' Compensation Act. Our readers have often questioned whether they can file a workers' compensation claim in certain situations. The recent changes have only compounded confusion about whether an individual has a claim. This article will address some of the questions we have been asked. In some cases there was a potential claim, in others not.

"All I did was slip on some ice, that's not my employer's fault."

Oftentimes, an individual thinks he cannot recover under the Workers' Compensation Act if there is no "fault" on his employer's part. For instance, if a delivery worker slips and falls on ice while making a delivery, he may think that there cannot be a recovery. In fact, there may be.

The Workers' Compensation Act is a compromise between business and labor that provides compensation to injured workers. The advantage to the employee is that the employee does not have to prove any fault on the part of the employer or a co-worker. Instead, the employee must only prove that the accident "arose out of" and "in the course of" the employment. Generally speaking, this means you must be at work and doing something work-related when you are injured. The advantage to the employer is that unlike civil lawsuits, the amount of compensation an injured worker receives is limited.

In the case of the delivery worker, he is what is classified as a



Edward F. McElroy of Comcast TV, channel 19, and Michael Shields, President of the Fraternal Order of Police, Chicago Lodge #7, were honored guests at the recent Superintendent of Police luncheon. Hall of Famer Bobby Hull, formerly of the Chicago Blackhawks, was the principal speaker. Father Daniel Brandt, the newly appointed Police Chaplain, gave the Benediction. Pictured, left to right, are Bobby Hull and F.O.P. Chicago Lodge #7 President, Michael Shields.

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The Irish Connection



By Colleen Kelly



my mother has told me this, but this year is THE year I am going to listen to her! Here is a list of my top ten New Year's resolutions:

A New Year of all Things Irish

It's a new year and a time for fresh beginnings. So, I decided to keep in line with that theme and come up with my Irish New Year's resolution. Every year I come up with the same old boring resolutions: lose weight, exercise more often, and attend Mass every Sunday (even on vacation). But this year, I decided to take a little different approach.

The older I get the more I realize how important it is to pass on my family's values, heritage and culture. I cannot tell you how many times

1. Attend Mass at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago. Known as the "cornerstone of Irish culture", Old St. Pat's, as it is affectionately called, is the only public building to have survived the Chicago Fire of 1871. And, in the summer this church hosts the ultra cool "World's Largest Block Party"! (oldstpats.org)

2. Be actually IN the Chicago Irish Parade and hopefully, IN the South Side Parade. The Chicago St. Pat's Day parade is so much fun, but to ride on a float and actually be IN the parade? Priceless! So, for any Shannon Rovers, Emerald Society, ABC, NBC, or anyone willing to give up a small corner of your float for a poor Irish writer (sounds needy, doesn't it?), please email me and let me know if I can ride your coattails. (chicagostpatsparade.com)

As for the South Side Irish Parade, being that I am half South Side Irish (my dad's side),

I was devastated when last year, the South Side parade was canceled. HOWEVER, it is because I AM part South Side Irish, I know one thing... you can't keep an Irish South Sider down. We need to revive the South Side Irish Parade. And, besides, I have another New Year's resolution to keep! (southsideirishparade.com)

3. Buy a Lovelulumae accessory for the St. Pat's parade. Last St. Pat's day, I missed getting one of these cool and unique hair and pin accessories handmade by local Chicago designer, Agnes Miles. Created in kelly green colors, they sell out fast and add a splash to any outfit. This year, in anticipation of the parades, I am ordering early! (lovelulumae.com)

4. Listen and support local Irish radio. Remember when your parents would have the radio on in the kitchen on a weekend? This year I am going to set the dial in the kitchen to Irish Radio so my kids, the grandparents, and anyone who stops by, will just absorb the Irish atmosphere. Two Irish classics and my personal favorites are *The Skinny & Houli Show* and *The Hagerty Irish Hour*.

The Skinny & Houli Show is hosted by Chicago legends, Jim "Skinny" Sheahan and Mike "Houli" Houlihan. According to its Hosts, the show is an hour of "frolicking, laughter, and fun with a tremendous Irish lilt to it!" (*The Skinny & Houli Show* airs every Saturday on 1450 AM on Saturdays from 3-4pm and Sundays from 8-9pm. skinnyhouli.com)

The Hagerty Irish Hour, is the longest running Irish-oriented radio program in the

country. Hosted by Jack Hagerty and his five siblings, the show plays classic Irish music and shares what's happening in the Irish community. (*The Hagerty Irish Hour* airs every Saturday from 9am to 11am at irish-hour.com)

5. Make an Irish Breakfast (at least once) for my family. One of my favorite new finds is Galway Baker's, owned by three sisters from Galway (hence the name). The three sisters cook up classics such as Irish scones and soda bread, but it is the unusual fare, such as breads made with Guinness that will make the biggest impact at my family's breakfast. (galwaybakers.com)



6. Check out the Irish American Heritage Center on the North Side and Chicago Gaelic Park on the South Side. Watch Irish football, sip a Smithwick's, and soak in the Irish heritage! (irish-american.org or chicagogaelpark.org)

7. Tell everyone about the Shamrock Kid's Club. Irish American Heritage Center's club created just for kids, is a great way to get kids to learn more about their culture,

while also having fun. From movie night to spaghetti dinners to crafts and ice cream sundaes, it is so much fun; I wish I were a kid again. (For more information, contact the Irish Heritage Center by email at info@irishahc.org or go to their website at



irish-american.org)

8. Listen to my mother... once in awhile anyway! My mother is so full of advice and Irish info, that people from all over kept asking her to write it all down. So, she created her own blog called, **The Irish Granny**, filled with Irish memories of her childhood, interesting tidbits and lots of fun "Irish advice." (theirishgranny.blogspot.com)

9. Visit more Irish pubs. An old favorite that I need to try again is Vaughn's Pub and lucky for me, there are two, Vaughn's Pub on the Northwest Side and in the Lakeview Neighborhood. Legend has it that the rich creamy Guinness they pour, will make you feel like you are enjoying your stout in a warm country pub in County Mayo, Ireland. (Vaughn's Pub Lakeview, 2917 N. Sheffield, 773-281-8188 and Vaughn's Pub Northwest Side, 5485 N. Northwest Hwy, 773-631-9206 www.vaughanhospitality.com)

10. Learn more Irish Toasts! Here is an old classic but one of my new favorites. As my Grandpa Sweeney used to say, "There are only two kinds of people in the world, The Irish and those who wish they were."

And lastly, to all the IAN readers, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year filled with friendship and prosperity and of course, all things Irish!



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Meehall Recalls

By Michael Carroll



"C'mon, Mom, the Sox game's on! We don't wanna miss it."

Mrs. Deepwell stood up straight, put her hands on her hips, and declared,

"You think I don't know what's goin' on around here, Joe? What're ya, goofy? The three of ya? I wasn't born yesterday, you know!" She glared down at Sack and I, then disappeared

around the corner. Crazy Joe grimaced, shook his head and waved us downstairs, to the couch in front of the little TV set. During the third inning, Joe headed into the bathroom to sneak a cigarette, carefully turning on the exhaust fan first. Sack took the opportunity to pour another Mountain Dew and grab a big fistful of Doritos from Joe's bag. I was too intent on watching the Sox catcher's pickoff move to second base to care.

"Didja see that, Sack? He was out! Out! Ump really blew that one... here's the replay! Joe! Get in here and watch this! See? Here comes the throw, and... oh. Oh crap."

Crazy Joe, leaning out the bathroom door, snorted in laughter and a wisp of leftover smoke blew out his nose. We all cracked up. Joe waved his hand back and forth in front of his face, tears streaming down his cheeks, unable to speak.

"What're you, Dirty Dragon?" Sack managed to get out. "Shut up, man! It was an accident!" Joe was still laughing. "Sack!" I yelled, noticing the time. "C'mon, man, we gotta go!" Mass had ended over fifteen minutes ago.

"Mike, don't forget yer Mass receipt! You too, Sack! Here, take one," Crazy Joe urged.

"Seeya later, man. Thanks for the receipts."

"Okay, see you guys later." Crazy Joe ushered us to the back door, just as his mother reappeared at the top of the stairs.

"You two leaving already?" She looked at her watch. "It's already one-thirty. You're late." A wry grimace, then a half-grin. I liked Joe's Mom. But you had to watch out for her, that was for sure.

"Hmmp. I see you and Sack found your Mass bulletins, after all." Lorraine regarded the folded white sheet in my shirt pocket. Uh-oh.

"I guess the man in front of you must have dropped his, eh, Sack?"

Sack only looked down and shuffled his feet.

"Oh, g'wan, get on outa here, you two! Geez! If I was your mother..."

We grinned and pushed open the back door, racing to get home before too much time had elapsed for our alibis to hold water. I don't know about my friend Sack, but as I recall, my mother inspected and stamped my Mass receipt without suspicion. I had made it back home free and clear this time, though I couldn't claim to have never broken a sweat.

In the end, as you may have already deduced, it would have been far easier just to go to Mass. I hadn't given up on religion entirely, and would even go on to study for the priesthood. But old habits die hard, and I wasn't quite ready to abandon my slothful ways. In the autumn of 1979 while at seminary, my friends and I pulled off the greatest feat of ecclesiastical avoidance ever attempted by man. We actually ditched the Pope of Rome, and his Papal Mass at our school. Whatever bit of soul I haven't already mortgaged may be in peril for boasting of such infamy. But after all, millions of people have seen the Pope celebrate Mass. How many can claim that they ditched? It was our crowning glory, our finest hour. That's another story, and perhaps one best left untold. But back then, Sack and Joe and I had not a care in the world. School would soon be out, and graduation meant forever. Even our Sundays were our own. Hellfire and brimstone could wait. We had it made in the shade. We were ditchin'.

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

Ditchin' (Part 2 of 2)

My friend Sack and I, ditching church, had literally run right into him. Busted by Father Hayes, the pastor, no less! Our parents would absolutely destroy us. We grinned like fools under the priest's gaze, in the forlorn hope that idiocy might be the best policy in a situation like this.

"And how are you two... what, eighth-graders?... on this fine Sunday morning? On your way to Mass? Or back?" He peered down at us over his spectacles. Good. He was in a jolly mood today.

"On our way," replied Sack, just as I blurted out: "Back." We stared at each other, stricken. We'd blown it! Fortunately, it seemed that Father Hayes had heard it as "On our way back." He blinked once, but blithely continued his interrogation.

"Oh, so you boys went to eleven-fifteen Mass, with Father Graff?"

"Yes, Father," we chirped.

"Hmmp. What did you think of his homily this morning?"

Oh, no. It was a trap. We had absolutely no idea what Fr. Graff said, or even that he'd been at that Mass, and had taken a huge gamble in agreeing with Fr. Hayes in the first place. He might easily have replied, "That's strange, since Father Murphy celebrated eleven-fifteen Mass today!" How could we bluff our way out of this one?

"Well, Father," I stammered, "I thought it was pretty good, but, uh... a little bit long."

The old priest threw his massive head back and roared with laughter. Father Hayes certainly seemed to appreciate my wit, but then it could still be a trap.

"Heh, heh, heh... Father Graff's caught me yawning once or twice myself. Well gentlemen, I have to run a few errands, so I'll see you both in church next Sunday. Take care, boys!" The pastor turned and waved over his shoulder as he walked back to the rectory garage.

Safe at last, and it was still only 12:38pm. Sack and I breathed a sigh of relief and tapped lightly on Crazy Joe's back door.

"Hi guys, where are you two comin' from, all dressed up?" Joe's mom, Lorraine, appeared at the back door landing to intercept us.

"Oh we were just at 11:15 Mass, Mrs. Deepwell. We would have been here earlier, only we were talking to Father Hayes in the parking lot," Sack coolly replied, being sure to mention our close relationship with the pastor. Not that it would help any.

"So, where are your bulletins? Did they run out again?" She leaned against the door jamb, piercing us with a half-smile, half frown. You couldn't fool Lorraine: tough, street-smart and sharp of tongue. This was almost as bad as running into the priest. And Joe's mom would be much harder to get past.

"Yeah, Mrs. Deepwell, they ran out of 'em, just ahead of us. The guy in front of me took the last one." Sack improvised beautifully, I thought, but Lorraine would not cut the line, not just yet. Two fish on one hook must be reeled in very slowly.

"Hmmp. Seems like they always run out right before twelve-thirty Mass. You'd think they would print up a few extra. Seeing as how more people go to that one than any other."

Crazy Joe stood at the bottom of the steps, tapping his finger on the railing.

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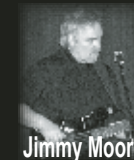
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By Heather Begley



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The human spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it. —C.C. Scott.

Unfortunately, everyone experiences a painful loss at some time and no one is immune. The loss of a spouse. Or a loved one. A job. A love. I lost my mom when I was seven years old. January 15th of this year will be the 27th anniversary of my mom’s death. She was only twenty-six years old when she

passed away unexpectedly from a heart condition. It was a tragedy for my family, but like others who have lost a loved one, we have never forgotten her or her love for us and did the best we could to keep going without her.

Such losses are trying and difficult emotionally and often, financially. I have represented families whose lives have been turned upside down not only because of

the emotional impact of losing their parent and spouse, but also because they lost their breadwinner. We cannot prepare for the emotional toll that these losses take on us, but there are some steps that can be taken now to reduce the financial stress that may follow a loss.

Evaluate your current life or disability insurance policy. Do you have enough coverage to assist your family through the tragedy of your unexpected death? Consider funeral expenses, college expenses, your mortgage and the number of dependents you have who depend on your income. Also, consider that eligibility for life insurance is not a given. Consider getting a life insurance policy for children or young people because they may not have been diagnosed with any conditions that would jeopardize their ability to be eligible for a policy later in life.

Terrible tragedies happen on our roadways. Life-altering injuries occur. There is a chance that the other driver has an insurance policy with the minimum policy limits set by statute, which in Illinois is \$20,000 for bodily injury. It is not unusual for a trip to the emergency room following an accident to exceed this amount of money. If you suffered a brain injury, fractured bones or paralysis, this minimum insurance would not begin to cover your future medical bills. Find out how much coverage you have under your automobile insurance policy. What are the policy limits on your uninsured or underinsured automobile policy? Do you have an umbrella policy? Once you exhaust coverage under the defendant driver’s policy, if the other driver does not have sufficient coverage, you can collect under your own insurance policy.

Life is full of unexpected twists and turns. Unfortunately, I have seen too many cases involving brain injuries and multiple fractures where there is insufficient money available to make the person “whole,” to the extent that is possible. Review your insurance coverage with an expert to find out if you can protect your financial future in the event that a tragedy strikes. Enjoy every minute with your loved ones. We never know what tomorrow will bring. This anonymous quote was shared by a friend on Facebook: *“Laugh when you can, apologize when you should, and let go of what you can’t change. Kiss slowly, forgive quickly, play hard, take chances, give everything, and have no regrets. Life is too short to be anything but happy!”*



Reel Jiggy

Deirdre Kozicki



I sit in one of the chairs that the Hyatt has set out for their guests in the very back row. I grip the edges of the chair so hard that my knuckles turn white. My heart is beating so fast that I’m afraid the people next to me will hear it in this noisy ballroom. Is that... beads of sweat forming on my forehead? I look around at all the other 130-something girls that look exactly the same as me. It is so quiet you can hear a pin drop (which is unusual for any feis). Every dancer who does dance or has danced in the past can tell you what’s happening without even having to be told what is going on. It’s time for the recall announcement at the 2011 Mid-America Oireachtas.

This year was my 2nd year doing solos at Oireachtas. If you remember, I recalled last year and ended up getting 49th, which is not bad at all for your first time. This year my goal was to qualify for Nationals. Earlier that Sunday morning, I got up at 5:30am to get ready. That part of the day was really all a blur because I was still half asleep. Before I knew it, I was side stage and the next in line to dance my first dance of the day, the treble jig. I refused to get nervous but I couldn’t stop those pre-show jitters that I get before any feis, let alone Oireachtas. But, I went up on stage feeling confident in my step and danced my heart out. “Here I go,” I said to myself as I pointed my toe to begin my step. “All the practice, all the time, all the effort; this is what it all leads down to.” In a series of whirls, hops, and leaps I was bowing to the judge. As I walked off the stage breathing heavily, I smiled knowing that I did the best I could. It was the same for slip jig. I knew I did all I could and now my fate was in the judge’s hands. I didn’t recall that day. I was heartbroken. I couldn’t believe I didn’t recall. I tried my hardest not to cry. I really did, but I felt them building up behind my eyes. I knew they were eventually going to fall. I’m not going to say I was happy with the 80th place I got because I’m not, but I did accept it. It did hurt for the rest of the day but the sun did shine again. I realized that there will be disappointments in dance. If it were so easy, we would all be world champions. It helped me when I realized that I wasn’t alone. There were plenty of other dancers out there that didn’t recall. When I thought it over,

I wouldn’t have done anything different that day. I did everything I could do and I guess I just didn’t have what the judges were looking for. I was happy for my friends that recalled and talked about what went wrong with the ones that didn’t. The next day I was filled with determination that I was surprised I had. I was determined to work my very best at all my practices and feisanna. I would work so hard for next year’s Oireachtas. As Henry Ford once said, “Failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.” (Maybe I’m just better at my reel and hornpipe.) So with my solos experience, I am not depressed but determined to do better. After all, there are no tears in Irish Dance.

The day before was team competitions. Teams are a whole different kind of atmosphere. While solos is exciting, teams is fun because you get to hang out with your friends and get to dance with them. My celli didn’t do so well (we didn’t recall) but my choreography did very well. I had learned a whole new choreography this year so I was extremely nervous about messing up and disappointing my whole team. In the end, my team pulled through. We got a 2nd! My team would have liked a 1st but a 2nd is fine, too. Congrats to all of the Mullane Healy Godley dancers that competed in this year’s Oireachtas and I hope everyone had a great Christmas. I wish everyone the best of luck and to make 2012 the best year ever.

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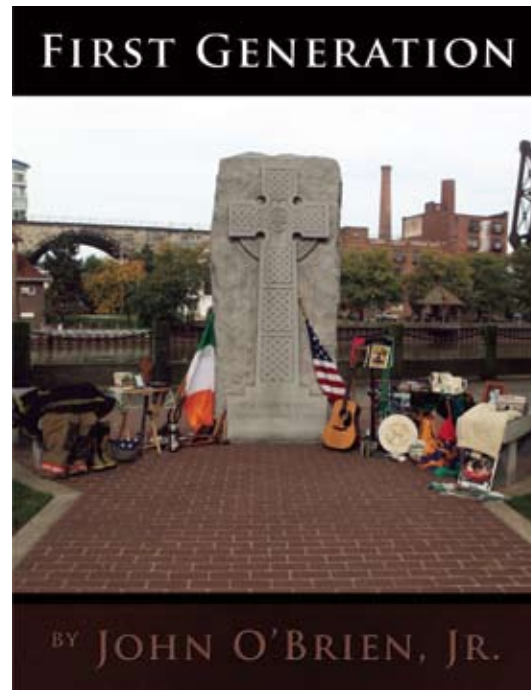


John O’Brien, Jr., Author, *First Generation*

John Francis O’Brien, Jr. is an author, writer, poet, publisher and spokesman. Named as one of *Irish America Magazine’s* 2011 Top 100 Irish Americans, he is Co-Founder, Co-Publisher and Editor of the *Ohio Irish American News*, which premiered in January 2007. His poem, *The Vacant Chair*, took 1st Prize in the Irish Book, Art & Music Showcase 2010 (iBAM!).



the Festival Organizers Convention, where John has been a featured speaker, he has been interviewed on over 100 radio and television programs and in print media. John developed and produced the *Fine Irish Pubs of Greater Cleveland* poster, which premiered in December 2010 and the *Greater Cleveland Irish Directory*, which premiered in 2011 and is updated bi-annually.



John is a founder and currently serves as Assistant Director of Cleveland Irish Cultural Festival; the 30th Annual event will be held July 20-22, 2012. A first generation Irish-American whose father is Founder and Director of the festival and hails from County Roscommon, Ireland; John continues his father’s legacy, love of the Irish heritage and vision for the festival. With nine stages, twenty-eight bands, an extensive and nationally recognized cultural hall and numerous other attractions, the festival is recognized as one of the very best in the United States.

John’s love for the rich and varied Irish heritage and dedication to producing an authentic cultural event has earned the respect and trust of the performers featured in much of John’s writing, especially in his book, *Festival Legends: Songs & Stories, the People Who Made the Music That Defined a People*, and an unmatched access to the performers and their stories.

Active in the Irish community in Cleveland and with

John developed, wrote and produced, *The Legacy Project*, a twenty-six minute video for the United States Library of Congress highlighting Cleveland Irish Cultural Festival as “an event of cultural significance at the turn of the century.” The production featured dozens of interviews with festival organizers, performers and volunteers.

During his “spare time”, John is the full time Public Information Officer (Spokesperson) for the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office. He serves on the board of the Irish American Charitable Foundation and the Sean Moore Irish Vocals Memorial Scholarship Fund as well as the Irish American Hall of Fame Selection Board. He also served for five years on the board of the Irish American Archives Society.

John is a graduate of Cleveland St. Ignatius High School and the University of Dayton, where he majored in Business Management and Communications.

(See ad on back cover.)



Police Superintendent, Garry McCarthy, meets Irish American Heritage Center President, John Gorski, at the Irish Fellowship Club Luncheon in December, 2011.

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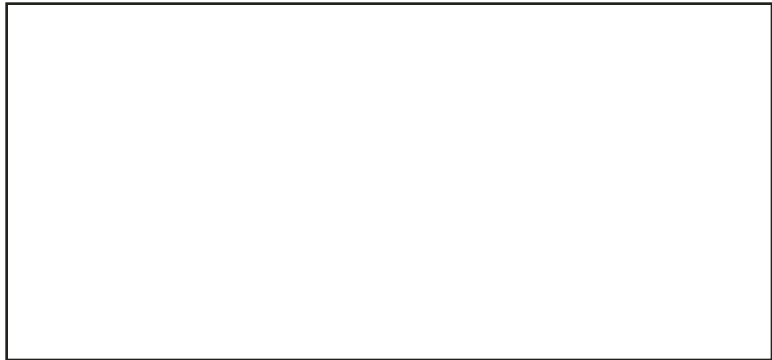


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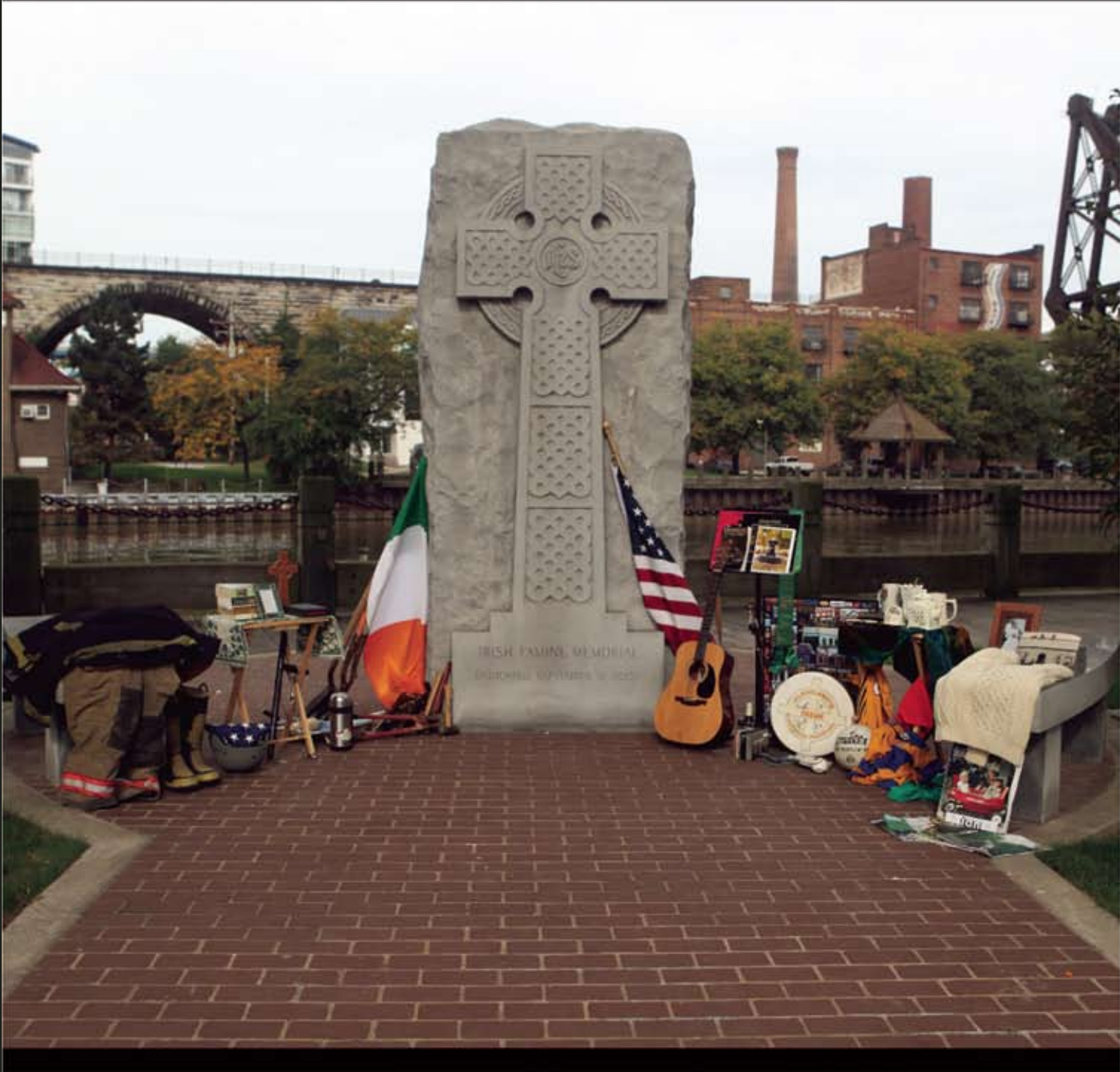
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