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From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell

Banana Skins?

Year four of the Government and several recent developments, none catastrophic individually but taken together having the potential to do serious political damage, have begun to cast ripples on the domestic political scene as the Coalition enters its penultimate year.

The general assumption up to now has been that Fine Gael will remain as the largest political party after the next election and will probably form the next government. It's a measure of how far – and fast – we have travelled since the Troika Era that, at a time when the corner appears to have been turned economically, with the latest indicators all now firmly positive and the government loudly claiming all the credit, the first sprouting of political doubts about this scenario have appeared.

Fine Gael is still the firm favourite and speculation has been and remains whether it will achieve an absolute majority (unlikely), continue in coalition with a much smaller Labour party (most likely), or, in the event of significant reductions in support for both parties, form part of some wider, rainbow-style coalition. With eight fewer seats next time round, and given the likelihood of some pendulum swing, it's going to be a lot tighter in any event.

The role of independents could become a factor here. With " Don't Knows" and undecided polling consistently above 20% since the 2011 election, the actual number of independent deputies was boosted significantly when a group of T.D.s who opposed last year's abortion legislation were expelled from Fine Gael. Taoiseach Enda Kenny has eschewed the common practice of allowing the dissidents back before the next general election by making clear that the dissidents are out – period. There have been rumours and media speculation that the dissidents might join with others to form a new political party but nothing concrete has emerged – hardly surprising given the fate of most Irish splinter or dissident parties.

Recently the odds on a new party may have shortened slightly. The clear election tactics of both government parties next time round– whether they contest individually or in tandem – will be to claim to have saved the nation economically, combining this with a few careful sweeteners in the next two budgets and promises of more to come. A cautionary note: as several previous governments have learned to their cost, campaigning on a platform of having taken tough resolute action " in the national interest" can backfire, particularly if the actions taken have hit the electorate hard in their pockets, certainly the case this time round.

The other clear if unstated tactic should be to avoid banana skins. 2014 has already seen this particular aspiration fail several times. Albert Reynolds' wry observation that the small hurdles trip politicians up may well get another airing. The latest of several banana skins, involving the Rehab charity, is potentially the most harmful to Fine Gael, not just because of the effect on the party's image, but also because Fine Gael's most important political strategist, Frank Flannery, the Karl Rove of Irish politics, has become a political casualty.

Flannery, whose Fine Gael roots go back to the 1980s, when, with Garret Fitzgerald, he sought to instil professionalism into the party, is credited with rescuing and reorganising Fine Gael after the debacle in 2002. He was the party's Director of Elections, a Trustee and a close adviser to Taoiseach Enda Kenny. On March 10 he resigned his posts. He also resigned from the board of Rehab, the organisation of which he had been chief executive for twenty five years until 2006.

The Rehab affair has been simmering away since late last year. The Dail Public Accounts Committee (PAC), tasked with scrutinising how taxpayers money is spent, revealed before Christmas that a number of high profile charities, most notably the largely state – funded Central Remedial Clinic, had been drawing on accumulated reserves to top up significantly the salaries and pensions of their already well paid leading executives. In the case of the CRC the top up more than doubled the Chief Executive's $150,000 salary. There was public outrage at the thought that charitable donations and taxpayers' money were involved. Public donations to many charities plummeted and attention focussed on top salary levels throughout the voluntary sector.

Most chief executives published their incomes but the chief executive of the Rehab group demurred, on the grounds that Rehab, though in receipt of considerable state funding, had a significant commercial arm as well and that her salary had been paid from commercially generated income rather than by the taxpayer. Predictably this did not wash with the public, and eventually Rehab disclosed that its chief executive was paid roughly $330,000, more than the Taoiseach (and Barack Obama!). Rehab further revealed that eleven of her colleagues are paid over $130,000 each.

Exchanges between the PAC and Rehab continue. The only head to roll thus far has been that of Frank Flannery, who built up the Rehab group from relatively small beginnings to a charitable business with annual turnover of $250 million. The details of his successor's salary, his continued involvement as a director, and revelations of his lobbying activities on Rehabs behalf, proved too much political baggage for Enda Kenny, prompting Flannery's resignation. The Taoiseach's ruthlessness has been noted, but the general verdict has been that, politically, Flannery will be very difficult to replace. Astute move or tactical error? Time will tell.

The Flannery affair came hard on the heels of several other banana skins - enmeshed controversies which also simmer on and which could yet bring down Justice Minister Alan Shatter and /or Garda Commissioner Callinan. First up were allegations that the offices of the Garda Ombudsman (which investigates all complaints about the Gardai) had been bugged with suggestions that the bugging could only have been done by some major or official agency. It was not long before rumours began and accusations were bandied about. Minister and Commissioner were adamant in denying that the Gardai had anything to do with bugging. A retired high court judge is to investigate and report before Easter.

Then came the Garda Whistle-blower controversy and the reigniting of the so-called penalty points for drivers issue (points are cumulative and can lead to loss of licence). Allegations surfaced last year that the Gardai's discretionary powers to review and cancel points had, in a small percentage of cases, been abused. The recent recommendations made by the Garda Inspectorate, to eliminate any possible abuse, have been fully accepted by the Government. However, the suspicion that in some cases at least the rules could or might be bent without due cause has left a sour taste with the public and has done nothing for the reputation of the Gardai as a whole.

The penalty point revelations were part of the material made public by two Garda whistle-blowers, one still in the force. Whatever about whistle blowing in the private sector, it is a different matter when the national police force is involved. The controversy rumbles on with Minister and Commissioner eye-balling the two whistle blowers. More sour taste. More heads to roll?

Normal politics is back – with a vengeance.

Sean Farrell is a former Irish Consul General in Chicago.

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What Does Irish Food and Respect Have in Common? Darina Allen

By Ryanne Gallagher Johnson

This month, IAN's own Cliff Carlson had the opportunity to speak with the incredible Darina Allen, co-founder of the world-famous Ballymaloe Cookery School, writer of 14 successful Irish cuisine books, star of the 9-season cooking show Simply Delicious, and Ireland's leading organic food, Slow Food, and Farmer's Market movements powerhouse. Starting with just a country house inn on an organic farm, Allen has taken the idea of locally-sourced, organic, whole foods on every table in every home and restaurant, and turned it into a renaissance across Ireland in the last three decades. It might seem astounding, as well as nearly impossible, that one woman can have such a major and positive impact on the dietary and lifestyle changes of so many people and organizations, and yet when speaking with her, Allen makes it sound almost simple.

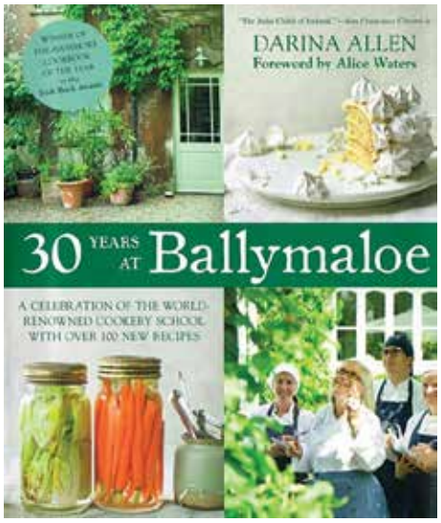
And in reality, it is. It begins with a simple concept: Know Your Food.

For a long time, much of Ireland was sure that the food they were able to produce was inferior to that of other countries. It took time, travel, and some experimenting with their resources to discover that their own climate, fertile soil, and long coastlines were prime growing conditions for some of the world's best produce. "There's nothing like travel to make you appreciate what's under your own nose," Allen explains. And once international travel became easier and more feasible, Ireland began to understand that their country was its own lush whole food goldmine. It was only a matter of time before someone cultivated the knowledge, know-how, and motivation to turn those benefits into something that has the potential to feed a nation.

A graduate in Hotel Management of the Dublin Institute of Technology in 1968, Allen opened the Ballymaloe Cookery School, Ireland's first cooking school, in 1983 in Shanagarry, County Cork, with her brother, Rory O'Connell. Operating on a 100-acre organic farm, ten acres of which are dedicated to organic market gardens, orchards, and greenhouses, the school offered just 15 courses in the early years. Really, for the time, the concept of organically growing and making your own food was a relatively "old" idea. So much of supermarket and restaurant food was packaged, processed, and ready-to-heat. Allen and her brother, however, wanted to bring the cooking practice back to its roots, so to speak, and re-teach people a healthier, organic, sustainable way of living. Also known as the "slow food" movement, it's the opposite of what the fast food craze had become, and helps revert us back to the basics of our foods. Classes at Ballymaloe focus on this concept, and are teaching hundreds of thousands of people how to feed themselves and their families starting from scratch. Today, the school hosts over 100 classes for students, ranging from how to make your own butter, cheese, and yogurt, to how to cure a pig, and how to smoke your own food, as well as teaching about organic gardening, and how to forage ("foraging" is now becoming a popular movement in the U.S., as well). The school offers a 12-week certificate course, shorter courses over weekends, and afternoon cooking classes.

Just over thirty years later, Ballymaloe is one of forty cooking schools in Ireland, one of the highest number of cooking schools per capita in the world. "I've created my own competition!" Allen laughs, "I think a lot of those are now run by past students of mine… I'm very proud of 'my babies', as I call them. Over 20 past students have written best-selling cookbooks, and numerous others have opened restaurants, and they write about food, and blog about food. My babies are scattered all over the world."

Last year was also Ballymaloe's inaugural Literary Festival of Food and Wine, which hosted a lineup of over 30 chefs and writers during a long weekend at the country house. Initially expecting an attendance of 2,000-3,000 people, over 8,000 guests filled the property for the fest, visiting from all over the world. "We nearly ran out of food by Monday last year, I think… we had people working and cooking through the night to be able to feed everybody," Allen says proudly. This year's festival, happening May 16-18, will have 42 speakers, as well as a Fringe Festival happening in the Big Shed on the property, where they'll have a farmer's market, budding food writers promoting their books, a craft beer section, a children's corner, a bookshop by authors, and much more. In her own words, Allen hopes "to make this the Sundance of food & wine festivals!"



So, what's next for this pillar of the organic food community?

"I'm working on my fifteenth book at the moment, and I have a few more in me, too, I think… I'd like to keep doing what I'm doing, teaching at the school… I've also become more into lobbying the government to embed practical cooking in the curriculum, so that no child leaves school, boy or girl, without having the life skills to feed themselves… and now that we, in Ireland know what fantastic (food) we can produce, I'd like to help make us the next center of the gastronomic world."

Sounds like an enormous challenge, doesn't it? "That sounds like a big ask, considering our reputation for a land of corned beef and cabbage, but when you consider the improvements and the renaissance in the last couple of years, if this continues, why can't we be the center someday? All we have to do is really believe it can happen, and we have the produce, and we have great chefs and cooks, and that's all you really need."

And Ireland's leaps and bounds in the food industry are a huge step in that direction. Restaurants across the country are rapidly joining the Good Food Ireland initiative, in which they are provided locally sourced foods for their dishes. Allen says that she, herself, looks for the Good Food Ireland restaurants when she's out for a non-Ballymaloe meal. "When you want something that isn't mass-produced, you have to make sure to find the Good Food Ireland symbol." It's the guarantee for the best authentic Irish food experience. Good Food Ireland is made up of people who are passionately committed to using local food and supporting Irish farmers, food producers, and fisherman. For information on Good Food Ireland, including a list of Good Food Ireland restaurants and places to stay, food trips, and recipes, visit www.goodfoodireland.ie.

While working tirelessly to promote Irish cuisine both at home and abroad, Allen has been an instrumental promoter of farmer's markets across Ireland as well. She's the councillor for Ireland in the Slow Food Movement and President of East Cork Convivium of Slow Food. Through the East Cork Educational Fund, she runs a program for local primary schools to help local children learn about food from garden to plate (Darina Allen biography on Ballymaloe's website).

If you're looking for a fun activity to add to your Ireland vacation itinerary, consider adding Ballymaloe House! "(We're) also a country Inn, with famous food, and we host a wide range of classes and lessons that can be tailored for specific groups of people," Allen entices her future guests.

The inn operates year round, and information about news, upcoming events, and classes can be found at the Ballymaloe home website, www.cookingisfun.ie.

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Southside IRISH

Indiana-born Author Living in Ireland Publishes First Book

By Tim Moran
Southside Editor

Mikal O'Boyle is a newly published author who just published Snake the Gypsy, a Young Adult fiction novel. Although she grew up in New Chicago, Indiana, O'Boyle is now a resident of Knock, Co. Mayo, Ireland after meeting her husband there while studying abroad at the National University of Ireland Galway in 2009. The Irish American News was fortunate to be able to learn more about her last month as she answer a few of our inquiries.

IAN: Can you tell me a little bit more about Snake the Gypsy and what your inspiration was to write that book?

MOB: Snake the Gypsy is a Young adult fiction story that is a bit darker than most. The narrator is an old gypsy woman recounting the days of her youth. As we move deeper into the story we find that her life is full of misfortunes and hardships, even torture at a physical and emotional level. The one good thing in her life is a mysterious snake. There is one catch to the story however and that is that the narrator contradicts herself.

I often draw my writing inspiration more from the authors I read rather than experiences I have encountered. I feel the darkness of this novel is drawn from the several Edgar Allan Poe stories I read. When I first put pen to paper I was in the mood to start writing one particular evening. I could picture an old woman telling a story and the characters and events sprung to life from there.

IAN: How much of a challenge was it for you to move from Northwest Indiana to Ireland full-time? Can you discuss some of the sacrifices you had to make and some of the positive aspects of living in Ireland?

MOB: Of coarse leaving family and friends behind is very difficult but thankfully the Internet provides us with ways of communicating through the likes of Skype and Viber. However, Ireland is an easy country to adapt to because the people are friendly, the country is beautiful and there is plenty of inspiration here to write stories. Now that I have started my own family it is more like home.

IAN: Is Snake the Gypsy your first book and if so, do you have plans on working on others?

MOB: Yes and Yes! I am currently working on another book, which is aimed at a younger audience. Instead of inventing creatures of out my imagination like I do in my published book I will create my characters out of garden insects that I am well acquainted with. The scene is built around my back garden home in Indiana at a time when my brothers and I were kids.

IAN: Can you describe your writing style and mention some other works you have published?

MOB: I try to make my writing very descriptive so the reader can see what I see in my mind that again comes from my reading of Poe and Jane Austin. It tends to turn toward the darker side and I thoroughly enjoy writing dialogue.

Snake the Gypsy is my debut publication and having more books published is the dream.

IAN: How often do you visit the United States, and would you ever consider moving back here?

MOB: I visit home usually twice a year and moving back is not completely ruled out. Sometimes being in Ireland I start forgetting what the sun looks like. Within the next few days the three of us along with my brother-in-law hope to book tickets to visit home this summer.

IAN: Why should someone who loves reading consider buying a copy of Snake the Gypsy?

MOB: The biggest plus with Snake the Gypsy is that it is unique. It is unique in its darkness. The scenes are fast paced with a lot of action and you get inside the main character's head as if you are wearing her shoes. It is an imaginative story where I have created many fictional creatures and have redefined fairies and goblins from conventional characterizations.

IAN: What is your favorite thing about living in Ireland and if someone has only one week to see the entire country, what should they make sure to see?

MOB: My favorite thing about Ireland is the humor of the people. They take a joke as well as they give it and they are more than willing to 'slag' us 'yanks'.

If someone had a week to see the entire country I would recommend visiting the Giants Causeway in Co. Antrim if they want a bit of Irish myth. Go to a Hurling or Gaelic football match. See Connemara for its rugged and natural beauty where they speak fluent Irish. Experience either Bunratty or Blarney castle. Climb Croagh Patrick in Co. Mayo. Finally, stay in Galway City and Dublin of coarse.

IAN: Where did you attend college and were you involved in any special activities?

MOB: I attended Smith College in Massachusetts, where I completed a BA Degree in English Language and Literature. While there I played four years of volleyball and captained the team for two years. I have continued playing volleyball in Ireland with the Galway Volleyball team.

IAN: Since I am living in Michigan City now, I'm curious as to which High School you attended while growing up in New Chicago?

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MOB: It's funny you mention you are from Michigan City. That is where I trained for my club, Dunes Volleyball when I was younger. I attended River Forest High School in Hobart.

IAN: Can you let us know any other details about yourself or interesting stories?

MOB: The funny story is that I met my Irish husband studying Native American studies of all subjects to go to study in Ireland and by an Italian professor. When we met, my husband told a few tall tales such as since he is from Co. Mayo he speaks mayonnaise. As a result of meeting him I quickly became cautious at believing anything said by an Irish man. I am living in an old fashioned thatched cottage which is around 300 years old, a place even older than the USA and our four-month-old daughter is the first child born into this house in 60 years.

Cold Weather Can't Deter South Side Irish

By Tim Moran
Southside Editor

It may have been a bit cooler than usual, but the sun still came out to shine on the pride of the South Side Irish on the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day in Beverly.

The cold couldn't keep droves of Irish and non-Irish families from celebrating their neighborhood and heritage on March 16, as the South Side Irish Parade made its usual trek down Western Avenue from 103rd to 115th Street.

"The temperatures were a little low, but the sun was shining and we like to think south siders have thick skin," said South Irish Irish Parade co-chairman Kevin Coakley during a pre-parade gathering inside Beverly Bank & Trust near 103rd and Western.

"It's always great to drive through the neighborhoods and see the tents and people gathering for family parties," he said. "The area has been a buzz and I don't think anyone canceled their plans because of the weather."

The 2014 version of the parade not only featured local businesses, schools, bagpipes and dancers - four United States Olympians from the area took part in the parade, as did The Mulliganeers, a Chicagoland non profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to fundraising for children in need and their families, who served as the Grand Marshals for the popular event.

Marching with The Mulliganeers was a special experience for south side lifers and current Beverly residents Kerry and Chris Lynch, whose now 2-year-old daughter Mary Cate was born with a rare medical syndrome that required numerous surgeries. Her family was one of many helped by the Mulliganeers, who assisted with travel costs associated with the family having to make multiple visits to Texas for the surgeries.

"The Mulliganeers are an incredible organization and they have done so much for our family," Kerry said. "Since we live in Beverly, being a part of this float is extra special."

Chris said going to the parade is an every-year thing for the Lynch family, but neither him nor Kerry have ever actually marched in it before, so the view from the street was a bit different.

"Being on the Mulliganeers float is very exciting, and Mary Cate likes the donuts - which is always an added bonus," Chris said, referring to the pre-parade party inside the Beverly Bank for participants on various featured floats.

As always, the South Side Irish Parade features area high school teams who won state championships over the last year. This year, it was the Mount Carmel Caravan being featured on two floats, as both their football and baseball teams are coming off championship runs.

For the Caravan football players, it was twice as nice to be a part of the parade again as they repeated as state champions in 2013.

"You can't beat this," said Caravan football captain Bob Brophy. "The ultimate goal is always to win a state title and to do it as a senior, there is no higher goal."

Brophy, like the Lynch family, lives in the area, so getting a view from Western during the parade will be something he will never forget.

"The parade has always been a big thing in our house, and it is nice to get a different point of view when you are with your team."

Brother Rice Rugby, Morgan Park Boys Basketball, Mother McAuley Volleyball and St. Ignatius Girls Water Polo were other teams celebrating championships with a float in the parade.

St. Ignatius graduate and current student at Marquette University, Maeve McSweeney served as the South Side Irish Parade Queen.

Four Team USA Olympians were an added addition to the 2014 march. Kendall Coyne (Women's Hockey), Aja Evans (bobsled), Emery Lehman (speedskating) and Ann Swisshelm (curling) gave the event a special American pride twist.

County Fair Foods, the staple grocery store located at the center of the parade route at 108th and Western, was selected as the parade honoree for their years of support in the community.

"It's their 50th anniversary and they give to the neighborhood in so many ways," Coakley said. "So many businesses step up to make this happen."

While the best day of the year in the Beverly community is now 11 months away, the Irish pride on the south side is always year-round. The bank at 103rd and Western will soon start counting down the days to the 2015 event on their marquee.

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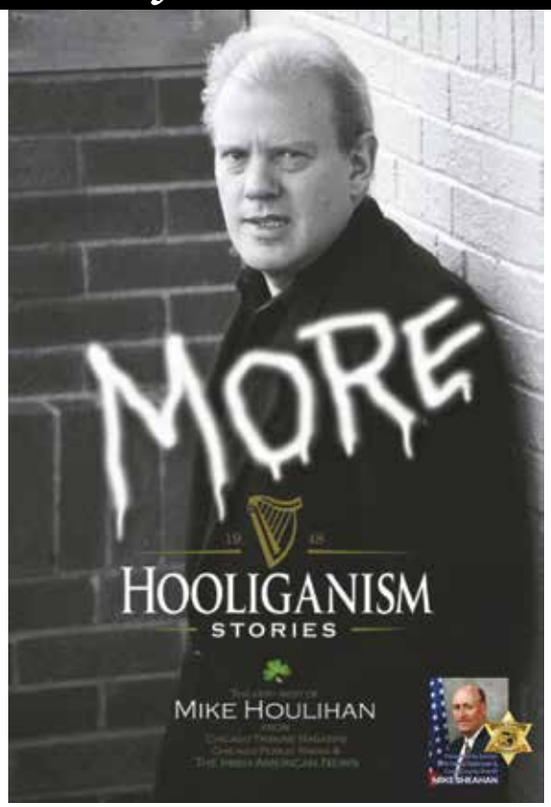

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Chapatti

By Christian O'Reilly
Review by Frank West

What acting! John Mahoney and Penny Slusher received a standing ovation for their wonderful acting in CHAPATTI.

The play is a gentle, subtle, compassionate look at a very human emotion: "the need for human companionship." The press release beautifully describes that need as the "yearning for completion of belonging, of the need to be wanted." In short, we all feel lonely at times. No need to explain the word, but the dictionary definition is succinct: "sad from being apart from other people."

Christian O'Reilly is an "acclaimed Irish playwright." He lives in Galway with his wife and their son.

The internationally renowned Galway Arts Festival celebrates its 25th anniversary with production of a play written by Christian O'Reilly. CHAPATTI will be produced in July at this years Galway Arts Festival.

CHAPATTI is the result of a unique partnership between Northlight Theatre and Ireland's Galway Art Festival. In the last five years, Northlight has sent three productions to it. Another result of this partnership may be that other plays from Ireland will be presented in Chicago.

We Irish find it difficult to express emotion. This is because of centuries of repression by British colonialism and by the Catholic Church.

I have seen both John Mahoney and Penny Slusher (pictured above) perform previously. They are ideal actors to show the subtle nuances of that emotional hesitancy. About Mahoney, O'Reilly says "He is an actor who transmits great humanity to his character…"

The play deals gently and humorously with a very difficult human need. Praise for this pleasing production goes to B.J. Jones, the director, whose years of theatre experience help him elicit vibrant acting. And to Jack Magaw, who leads the team that created the imaginative set. Praise also goes to Brigid Duffy, the dialect coach. The accents were so accurate that I thought I was listening to my relatives in Ireland.

CHAPATTI is presented at Northlight Theatre, 9501 Skokie Blvd, Skokie, now through April nineteenth.

Tuesdays: 7:30
Wednesdays: 11:00 and 7:30
Thursdays: 7:30
Fridays: 8:00
Saturdays: 2:30 and 8:00
Sundays: 2:30 and 7:00
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Tom Boyle

Easter 1916

It's almost 100 years since Padraig Pearse stood on the steps of the General Post Office on O'Connell Street in Dublin and read the Proclamation. In 1916 the Rising took place on Easter Monday, April 24th. Easter falls on April 20th this year.

"I write it out in verse
McDonagh and McBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be
Wherever Green is worn,
are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born."
W. B. Yeats

In two years we will mark the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising. Will we have a united Ireland? That's the question on everyone's mind. It's a possibility but not very likely, although most of us would like to believe it's inevitable.

Was your family involved in the time of the Troubles? My uncle, Terry Boyle, was awarded the 1921 Survivor's Medal/Truce Medal. Terry was an IRA man and was only nineteen years old when he received the medal. Uncle Terry passed away on Christmas Day, 1974, and my Uncle Pat gave me his medal the next time I was in Ireland in 1975. The medal had never been engraved so I made sure it was properly inscribed.

Uncle Terry was in the North Kerry Brigade of the IRA. Sometimes they would take to the fields at night and dig ditches across the roads to keep the army trucks from getting through.

Another IRA man, Captain Jack Lawlor B CO 2 NO.1 Brigade North Kerry, was my father's first cousin. Captain Jack Lawlor was executed by the Free Staters in Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry on October 31, 1922. Jack, and two friends were on their way home from the village when they was stopped by a Free State soldier who was very drunk. Jack disarmed him and knocked him unconcious, and left his rifle lying there. Later in the night the Irish Free Staters picked him up and took him into the village. They put him before a firing squad and shot him. They left his body lying in the road in front of St. Mary's Church. This story has been handed down through the family over the years, and later appeared in a book, "The Tragedies of Kerry." It was a dangerous and difficult time in Irish history.

My stepfather, Bill Kent, came from Bruree, Co. Limerick. Their house was next door to the Colls, where Eamon DeVelera grew up. During the Troubles, the Black and Tans would surround the school house so the children couldn't go home. The children would wait until dark, sneak out of the school and crawl home through the ditches. That school is now an Eamon DeVelera museum.

"Glory O, Glory O, all you bold Fenian men." "Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart. "O when may it suffice."

St. Patrick's Day Parades LGBTQ

At the parades in Boston and New York, the mayors of these two cities boycotted the parades in order that they be politically correct. Major sponsors backed out. Heinekens, Guinness, and Sam Adams Ale.

The Boston parade was willing to let the LGBTQ march, but did not allow them to carry an LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) banner. They wouldn't march because they wanted to dictate to the parade organizers.

The exclusion of the LGBTQ group was previously ruled constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court following a lawsuit in New York.

According to the liberal agenda, they must be included at the expense of all others.

The Chicago Pride Parade for the LGBTQ community will take place in June. Are there any Irish groups who want to march with them? Perhaps Guinness, Sam Adams Ale, and Heinekens would like to sponsor The Chicago Pride Parade, or better yet, maybe a Closet company would like to sponsor it!

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is about our Irish Heritage, not anyone's sexual preference! Let's hope that's not too profound a statement for our politically correct politicians.

Russell Hartigan

The Honorable Russell W. Hartigan, Judge in the 5th Municipal District, State of Illinois, Circuit Court of Cook County is running for 3rd Vice President of the Illinois State Bar Association. Best of Luck Russ!

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Michael Flatley, Ronald Reagan and Mother Jones Among Inductees Honored at 2014 Hall of Fame Gala

The Irish American Hall of Fame (IAHOF) inductees for the 2014 class of inductees will be honored at a black tie gala this April.

The 2014 inductees by award category are:

Arts and Humanities
Michael Flatley

Business & Industry
George Meany

Public Service
Commodore John Barry
Mary Harris "Mother Jones"
Ronald Reagan

Sports
Connie Mack

Religion
Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

Education
Mother Mary Frances Clarke, BVM

Science
Michael Collins, Brigadier General, U.S. Air Force (ret.) and former NASA astronaut

IRISH AMERICAN HALL OF FAME

The IAHOF's goal is to preserve and promote the stories of the Irish in America and the ongoing links between Ireland and the United States.

The Awards Gala recognizing the inductees is Saturday, April 12 at 6:30pm at the Center. The evening's emcee is Catie Keough, Host of 24/7 Chicago. Dinner, music and the awards celebration follow. Tickets for this black tie event are $175 for IAHC members and $200 for general admission. Tickets can be purchased by calling the IAHC at 773-282-7035, visiting www.iahof.org or see the pull-out in this issue.

Founded in 2010, the IAHOF inducted its first honorees in March 2011. To see the complete list of all 33 inductees and learn more about the IAHOF, visit www.iahof.org.

Beeswing in Concert

Traditional Irish band, Beeswing, brings its special blend of Irish music to the Center this spring.

Beeswing is an all-female, traditional Irish band who sing in four part harmony. The groups is made up of four velvety voices blended with fiddles, banjos and bodhran, showcasing folk music of Ireland, with twinges of the American South.

Swirling together voices and instruments, each offers her own gifts and experience to their special blend of music. The performers, although from different musical backgrounds, are each strongly influenced by Irish traditional music and culture.

Beeswing features is Mai Hernon on vocals, bodhran and dance, Roxanna Whittington on banjola, fiddle and vocals, Andi Hearn on fiddle and vocals and Jeanne Chirdon on tenor banjo and vocals.

Beeswing in Concert is Saturday, April 19 at 7pm. Tickets are $20 and can be purchased by calling 773-282-7035.

Leo Moran and Anthony Thistlethwaite of The Saw Doctors

Leo Moran and Anthony Thistlethwaite of the Saw Doctors will perform for one night only at the Center this April. Only 300 tickets will be sold for this intimate night of music.

Moran and Thistlethwaite have played together for years as part of the legendary Irish band, the Saw Doctors. They are now on the road to bring their years of songs and stories to a smaller and more intimate audience. The duo will perform together for the whole show, telling stories from more than 20 years on the road, sharing favorite songs not only from the Saw Doctors, but original pieces and songs and writers who have influenced them.

The concert is Saturday, April 26 at 8pm and tickets are $20. There is a 4 ticket limit per order and the show is 21 and over.

To purchase tickets, call the Center at 773-282-7035 or visit www.irish-american.org.

Anam Cara Readings

Enjoy an encore performance of storytelling this April. Anam Cara is a semi-annual evening of readings by the creative writers from the on-going six week Memoir and Creative Writing Workshops at the Center.

As a special treat, these readings will feature *Loud and Clear,* readings from writers from Chicago's large storytelling community.

Anam Cara readers include Anne Carney, Maryruth Coffey, Monica Dougherty, Barbara Johnson, Angela Lombardo and Jim Padar. *Loud and Clear* readers are Josh Berling, Erin Diamond, and Chris Padar.

Anam Cara is Saturday, April 5 from 6:30pm to 9pm in the IAHC Library and suggested donation is $5.

For information on the event or Memoir and Creative Writing workshops, call Theresa Choske at 773-545-8057.

The Heritage Line

Irish American Heritage Center Chicago, Illinois

WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

President's Message

April is a "taxing time" on us each year and often we do not look forward to this month.

It's a bit different this year as we look forward to April to hopefully mark the end of the third coldest and third snowiest winter ever in Chicago.

We want to thank all of our volunteers, partners, committees, neighbors, staff, members and guests who helped make our St. Patrick's Day weekend events so successful. We also want to thank all who braved this winter to volunteer and help us. We want to thank all our members and our customers. The thank you's are numerous and countless.

We now are working hard on the Hall of Fame Gala, the 2014 Open House, Bridal Fair, membership renewals, roof plans, concerts, the Fish Fry and the 2014 Irish Fest as well as on many other events and projects you will find on our website at www.irish-american.org.

We continue to work on processes and procedures to better predict and better plan and control our future. Some of our newest chairs and others are working on Cultural Committee programming, our Finance Committee on the budgeting process, and our Energy Reduction Program 2014. These and other efforts are designed to continue to shore up our financial foundation to allow more financial focus on mission-related opportunities.

We have looked to the past to help provide us direction and focus for the future. The bylaws and the mission statement help keep us pointed in the right direction. It is up to all of us to help lead and manage the Center in a manner that allows for addressing the By Laws, the mission and mission opportunities.

We have looked to the past to learn and to change to make stronger efforts to improve our financial, building and organizational practices, policies and procedures.

We are asking all our volunteers, committees, partners and others to become members of the Center. This is a change… and there are others.

There are many great and some unfortunate American stories of change and reluctance to change. Remember Kodak? Kodak dominated the photography scene for more than 100 years. It commanded the most significant market share of the photographic film sales in the US. The "Kodak moment" became a part of the basic language. Where is Kodak today? Digital has now replaced film. What is ironic is that Kodak's own researchers virtually invented the first digital camera in 1976. Is it true Kodak did not embrace or promote the digital camera they had invented in order to protect the past and the status quo? Who knows, but regardless, in 2012, Kodak filed for bankruptcy. Was this a failure of imagination, a refusal to accept the need for change?

I read about this recently in an article and want to give credit to the writer and to the points below gleaned from that story and the article.

Good lessons for us and how we can continue to move forward.

It is up to us as leaders of the Center to:

1) Have a clear understanding and a clear line of sight on our mission

2) Learn from the past to help create goals and desired outcomes

3) "Read" the times and keep pace with change as we set measurable priorities

4) Accept and understand reality and resist the temptation to maintain the status quo

5) Don't just make minor changes where major change is needed. Urban Designer Daniel Burnham is quoted as saying "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood"

6) Take calculated risk, experiment and be bold with a timetable that resists delay

7) Tirelessly search for the truth and use what you learn from the truth. "The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it" said writer Flannery O'Connor

8) Build a business model and a financial foundation that protects our building and funds our mission. And, be sure to add a good dose of common sense

9) The future is the youth. Invite them, recruit them, embrace them and make sure they feel welcome, invested and empowered

10) Communicate with clarity and transparency

We have a great team and we are blessed with a great future provided we learn from the past and from others and change to adapt and stay relevant. After all, did not the founders of the Center challenge the status quo and implement change that have impacted generations and will impact countless generations to come?

Stop on by the Center and take a picture. I am pretty sure you will be bringing a digital camera and not a film one. Smile, it is always time for an "Irish American Heritage Center moment."

John Crowley Gorski
President, IAHC

Lenten Fish Fry

Through April 18, 6:30pm-9pm

Adults $12 and Children $8

Members enjoy $1 off their dinner

Tea with Mother Jones

Saturday morning teas return this April in the Fifth Province. Join us to learn more about Mother Jones, labor leader and activist with performer Betsey Means of WomanLore. Means will perform *March of the Mill Children*, a speech by Mother Jones.

Mother Jones was an Irish-American schoolteacher and dressmaker who became a prominent labor and community organizer. She helped coordinate major strikes and cofounded the Industrial Workers of the World.

In 1903, upset about the lax enforcement of the child labor laws in the Pennsylvania mines and silk mills, Jones organized a Children's March from Philadelphia to the home of then President Theodore Roosevelt in New York.

The Tea is Saturday, April 12 at 11am. Tickets are $25 and reservations, which are necessary, must be made by April 9 by calling 773-282-7035.

Annual Palm Sunday Mass and Irish Breakfast

Join The Irish American Heritage Center for its ***Annual Palm Sunday Mass and Irish Breakfast, Sunday, April 13, 2014.***

Join us for Mass at 10:30 a.m. in the Auditorium followed by breakfast in the Fifth Province.

Tickets are Adults . . . . $8.00 Children . . . $4.00

Reservations must be made by April 10. *The form below can be used to mail in checks.*

For more information, call 773-282-7035.

Annual Palm Sunday Mass
and Irish Breakfast April 13, 2014

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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The Heritage Line

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April 2014

April 4	Lenten Fish Fry	Fifth Province	6:30pm
	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
April 5	Píobairí	Fifth Province	6pm
	Rose of Tralee Night	Fifth Province	7:30pm
April 6	Galway Fellowship Club Brunch	Erin Room	1pm
April 11	Lenten Fish Fry	Fifth Province	6:30pm
April 12	Tea with Mother Jones	Fifth Province	11am
	Irish American Hall of Fame Gala	Erin Room	6:30pm
	St. Patrick's Fathers Social	Fifth Province	8pm
April 13	Palm Sunday Mass	Auditorium	10:30am
	Palm Sunday Breakfast	Fifth Province	11:30am
April 15	Celtic Women International Meeting	Room 304	7:30pm
April 18	Lenten Fish Fry	Fifth Province	6:30pm
	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Sham Am Room	7pm
April 19	Beeswing in Concert	Auditorium	7pm
	Roscommon Club Social	McGinty Room	8pm
April 25	Quiz Night	Room 109	8pm
	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Sham Am Room	7pm
April 26	Leo and Anto in Concert	Auditorium	8pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Tues	Set Dancing	Room 111	7:30-9:30pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Tues., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.	Golden Diners Lunch Program	Kitchen	12:30pm-2pm
Wed	Irish Language Class	Room 304	11-1:30pm
Wed	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
Thurs	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsals	Room 304	7pm
Fri	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili Mor	Room 111	8pm
Sat	Irish Language Class	Library	7-9:30pm

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the fifth province
IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

APRIL ENTERTAINMENT

4/4 Ceili Mor
4/5 The Dooley Brothers
4/11 Seamus O'Kane
4/12 St. Patrick's Fathers Dance
4/18 Joe McShane
4/19 Clan Na Gael
4/25 TBA
4/26 Jeff Ward

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The School of Celtic Art offers beginner and intermediate traditional Celtic Art classes for teens and adults that cover introduction techniques for knot work, interlacing and color theory. Students can also complete a project of their choosing in a supportive, creative atmosphere.

The spring semester runs from Tuesday, April 15 to June 17 on Tuesday nights from 7pm to 9pm and the cost is $140 for IAHC members and $150 for non-members. Students can also take 5 weeks of classes for 50% of the above cost.

To register for the semester, call instructor Frank Crowley at 773-612-6584.

The Heritage Line Staff Kathleen O'Neill, **Editor**

Contributors: *Shelby Baron, Theresa Choske, John Gorski, Mary Griffin, Natalie Miller, Mary Morris, Peggy Murphy, and Sheila Murphy*

For The Republic

Chris Fogarty

IS IRELAND'S GOV'T the main enemy of its people and of Irish-America? Taoiseach Kenny ought to explain its acts and omissions, as follows:

1) **NEWS FROM NY**. As I wrote this, eMails informed the world that "Ireland's" Consul General got the NY St. Patrick Day Parade Committee to invite the RUC/PSNI to march in it along with a group of "Ireland's" Gardai Síochána (police). BBC "broke" the news. Within hours the Parade Committee were so inundated by outraged callers that they issued a recision. Now, the next day, the Parade Commission have reinstated their invitation. Good! Let the PSNI march to the roar of Bronx cheers the length of the parade route (before being arrested and interrogated).

2) **AS THE WORLD'S** most murderous police force, the RUC were ostensibly scheduled for abolition under the GFA. Instead, its name was changed to the "Police Service of Northern Ireland" (PSNI). Scores took golden handshake retirements and were immediately rehired as consultants "investigating" their previous crimes. Torturers of republicans later made killings (including financial ones) in Iraq and "black sites" for the U.S. gov't. Others became TV experts advising Americans "how to deal with terrorists." Currently, PSNI crimes against the Irish are back to pre-Hunger Strike depths. They imprison republicans without charge or trial, and then torture and otherwise abuse them.

3) **RUC TORTURERS**. With "Irish" gov't acquiescence Britain, under Thatcher, became Europe's most-convicted torture State; its victims exclusively Irish.

4) **CAR BOMBS** that murdered 33 and maimed 300 in Dublin/Monaghan were primed that morning in the farmhouse of an RUC. The "Irish" gov't abets the (named) perpetrators. Why?

5) **PADDY DIXON** was an "Irish" gov't asset and owner of the bomb car used to murder 29 in Omagh. It must have been satellite-surveilled, as Chicago FBI Agent Patrick "Ed" Buckley and New York criminal David Rupert had spent four years in Ireland arranging it for MI5. Its purpose was to free up Britain's military without which America couldn't mount its wars against Islam. Omagh was to be blamed on the IRA as Buckley did the Langert murders in Winnetka earlier, to demonize the IRA and thus drive home the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and its surrender to Britain of Ireland's contested Six-Counties. The 29 innocents were murdered, it was successfully blamed on the IRA. Thus the IRA WERE demonized, the GFA WAS driven home, the Six-Counties WERE surrendered to Britain, Britain's military WERE freed up, and we DID attack Islam. Omagh was thus a great success; the U.S./U.K empire expands.

6) **BLACK & TANS (B&Ts)**, reviled for their 1920-23 reign of terror in Ireland, are now honored by a memorial in Glasnevin cemetery. Installation was by the association of retired Gardai. It was to strengthen the depleted Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) that Britain sent the B&Ts and the Auxiliaries into Ireland. Many RIC resigned after the IRA killed hundreds of them including the January, 1920 killing in Thurles of RIC Luke Finnegan, my first cousin once removed. His brothers resigned.

7) **THE KILMICHAEL** (Co. Cork) memorial commemorates the IRA volunteers killed there during an ambush in 1920 against a unit of Auxiliaries, Britain's official terrorists in Ireland, during Ireland's War of Independence. A few days earlier the ambushed unit had murdered a local non-combatant, James Lehane. The previous week Auxiliaries had driven their armored vehicles into Dublin's Croke Park during an All-Ireland final and machine-gunned the people, murdering fourteen including a player (for whom Hogan Stand is named). Kilmichael lies between Macroom and Dunmanway, where the road runs through a gap in the hills. I've visited it. The memorial is very old and needs renovation. It is a shocking fact that planning permission has been granted to a "parity of esteem" memorial in which the British terror gang will be more prominent than the part commemorating those who fought and died there to free Ireland. The construction permit allows a life-size model of a British Crossley Tender troop-carrier of the Auxiliaries.

8) **BLACK & TANS** and Auxies were deployed to terrorize the people from supporting Ireland's gov't. That gov't was Dáil Eireann, established on January 21, 1919 and comprised of the winners of the 1918 island-wide, landslide election. Britain promptly proclaimed that gov't an "illegal assembly" and proceeded to murder and imprison its members.

9) **"IRELAND'S" GOV'T** allowed predatory international finance into Ireland and later foisted all of their losses onto Irish taxpayers. Most of the €70 billion loss was incurred by a few developers and a few banks with the help of a few crooked pols. **Taxpayers were not involved, but now must pay.**

10) **KING GEORGE V, in 1922**, imposed his Royal Dáil over that of the Irish people, and all subsequent administrations are its successors.

NOW WE KNOW why the "Irish" gov't perpetrated the foregoing betrayals; and why it failed to defend Diarmuid Mac Dubhghlais, National Treasurer of Republican Sinn Féin, arrested last week for speaking in Irish in Occupied Ireland. The anti-Irish and anti-Irish-America deeds perpetrated in America earlier by "Ireland's" Consuls General were detailed in an earlier column.

THE QUESTION IS: How soon will the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the Irish people reestablish the true Dáil Eireann to be run for Irish benefit and not for British profit as now.

WHICH BRIT REG'T starved your relatives? See www.irish-holocaust.org.

GFA BENEFICIAL? See www.michaelmckevitt.com, and www.friendsofcolinduffy.com.

MI5/FBI; See www.chicago-mole.org.

WRITE to Ireland's patriot/prisoners. For names/addresses contact fogartyc@att.net or 312/664-7651

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

A Chairde:

The Gaelic Park Players Spring production, *The Butterfly of Killybegs,* will begin a three weekend run on Friday, April 11. I know the cast are excited about this production, and we are very proud of our play group and their record of delivering wonderful shows at Gaelic Park. I expect that once again there will be strong demand for the Friday and Saturday night Pub Grub and Show package offered at $20, which has to be one of the best deals in Chicagoland. Ireland on Parade is in full swing as I write this column, and it is wonderful to see the camaraderie and friendship among the dancers and families who make such a commitment to Irish dancing. We all know that busy kids are generally good kids and that any and all form of athletic endeavor including dancing are an integral part of developing healthy young men and women. I personally sympathize with parents who feel that one of the cornerstones of our Irish culture has been hijacked by the wig makers, dress makers and makeup artists which can place an enormous financial burden on families, and who offer nothing back in return. The St. Patrick's Day Parades are over for another year, and all are doing a better job of policing and attempting to return the parades to their humble grass roots beginnings. Parades have become an expensive exercise for organizers with policing, security and insurance costs increasing dramatically. These costs are being passed on to the participants, and unfortunately, many family and smaller groups are priced out of participation. It was once said that "the price for democracy is eternal vigilance," and when we are not vigilant, we all pay a price. Spring is finally here, so please check out our Gaelic Park Calendar and come visit us at one of the many happenings at Gaelic Park. I look forward to seeing you all at the Park soon.

John Devitt, President

Monthly Park Calendar

4/2	**Monthly Musical Luncheon**	NOON
4/9	**Ladies Auxiliary**	7:30pm
4/12	**Easter Egg Hunt**	11:00am
4/12	**Clare Association Dinner Dance**	
	Music by the Gerry Haughey Band	
4/13	**Monthly Mass & Breakfast**	10:00am
	Essay Winners Announced	
4/20	**Easter Sunday Carvery**	
	RESERVATIONS REQUIRED	
5/11	**Mother's Day Special Carvery**	
	RESERVATIONS REQUIRED	

Sunday Classic Carvery features a carving station hosted by Chef John, an extensive salad bar, and many additional hot entrees. Entertainment for Easter Sunday Carvery will be Gerry Dignan.
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Monthly Musical Luncheon Doors open at noon, hot lunch served at 1pm and entertainment for just $13 per person. Entertainment for April 2 will be Kara & Gerry Eadie.
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Pub Trivia Tuesday Evenings continues every Tuesday at 7.30pm with Quiz Master, Tim Tobin, testing your knowledge on all topics.

Monday Evenings	**Set Dancing**	*7:30pm*
Tuesday Evenings	**Ceili Dancing Lessons 7pm/Ceili**	*7:30pm*
Thursday Evenings	**Family Music Sessions in the Pub**	*7:30pm*

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

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- **Traditional Irish Music Session Hosted by Members of The Irish Musicians of Chicago and their Students every Thursday at 7:30pm**

the CARRAIG IRISH PUB

Live Music in the Pub

Fri	Apr 4	John Dillon	7:30pm
Sat	Apr 5	The Frett Brothers	8:00pm
Wed	Apr 9	Frank Rossi	6:30pm
Fri	Apr 11	Kieran Byrne	7:30pm
Sat	Apr 12	The Buddy Love Review	8:00pm
Fri	Apr 18	Gerard Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Apr 19	Bernie Glim & Country Roads	8:00pm
Fri	Apr 25	Coyote Riot	9:00pm
Sat	Apr 26	Chicago Kingsnakes	8:00pm

Thursday evenings at 7:30pm, Pat Finnegan and members of the Irish Musicians of Chicago with their students, perform a traditional Irish Music Session.

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Chicago Gaelic Park

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

All Ireland Trivia

Congratulations to the Up Down team, winner of the GPP All-Ireland Trivia Quiz! Patricia and Gerry O Sullivan, Jack O Grady, Peter O Flaherty and Michael Kowalesik

Classic Carvery

Margaret Keating, Agnes Gorman, Sean Ginnelly (Queen Contest Judge) with Ita McElroy celebrating her 80th birthday at the Classic Carvery.

Annual St. Baldrick's Event

2014 Irish Fest Queens

Queen Jessica Flynn (left) and the Queen Court, Erin Walsh

Jessica Flynn is 23 years old and a Court Security Deputy at Kane County Judicial Center. She has been playing the drum since age 9. Jessica attended Marist High School, University of Illinois at Springfield, and North Central College. She enjoys music, the outdoors, and loves being Irish.

Erin Walsh is 20 years old and a graduate of Oak Forest High School. She is currently attending Lewis University, where she is a student employee. Erin spent a semester in Ireland and was able to travel throughout Europe. She is a runner and enjoys partaking in various races.

Chicago Gaelic Park

28th IRISH FESTIVAL WEEKEND
May 23-26

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Become a new member of Chicago Gaelic Park OR renew your present membership through Monday, May 26 of Memorial Fest Weekend, and your name will be entered in a drawing to win a trip to Ireland! Winner will be announced on stage at the close of Irish Fest.

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Spouse (if joining) _____ last _____ first _____ initial

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Ireland on Parade

Maya Walbert & Bridget Winters attending opening night of Ireland on Parade

Happy Easter!

Chicago Gaelic Park

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

Spring Play

Gaelic Park Players are delighted to announce their spring production of ***The Butterfly of Killibegs*** by Brian Foster. The play is set in a Donegal fishing village where Mary watches her life ebb away as she looks after her bed-ridden mother. Grasping a final chance of love and freedom, Mary befriends the reticent Patsy Doogan, and readily accepts his proposal of marriage. Patsy, however, has a secret, and when it is uncovered Mary must prevent her mother from telling the local gossip.

Dates:

- Fridays 4/11, 4/25, 5/2
- Saturdays 4/12, 4/26, 5/3
- Sundays 4/13, 4/27, 5/4

Tickets:

- $12 Theatre Performance Only
- $20 Theatre & Pub Dinner (Fridays & Saturdays)
- $26 Theatre and Classic Carvery (Sundays)

Reservations are required for the Dinner & Theatre and tickets are non refundable. For reservations, call Chicago Gaelic Park at 708. 687.9323 and for more information go to our website at www.gaelicparkplayers.org or email us at info@gaelicparkplayers.org.

2014 Bridal Boutique

Clan na Gael Man of the Year: Tom Looney

Tom Looney is very humbled anIreland native Tom Looney is very humbled and honored to be recognized in such a special way by the Clan Na Gael Organization, and has always respected and supported their efforts through the years. He has trail-blazed so many Irish events and causes in Chicago and has been a pioneering presence in the Windy City for promoting, celebrating and educating Chicagoans about Ireland and Irish Culture.

Born on the youngest of seven children on August 31, 1940 in Ballycashen, Kilnaboy, County Clare Ireland, tragedy struck Tom and his family early with the death of their mother Mary in 1942 from polio, and the deaths of both grandmothers shortly thereafter. Without these women to care for his children, Tom's father, Thomas, was forced to find other families to take in his younger children to ensure they were cared for. Over time, Tom ended up living in 11 different homes, and had little to no contact with his family growing up.

At 13, Tom went out on his own and started working on a farm for room and board. He cut turf for money, eventually saving enough by age 15 for he and a friend to take a boat to England. They landed in Manchester and wore out a few pairs of shoes trying to get work, which was very difficult for two such young boys.

Eventually, Tom made his way to London, where he was reunited with his siblings John and Kathleen, who had been in the UK for many years by then. Once there, he worked numerous jobs; bar tending, driving semis, working construction, and selling everything from ice cream to washing machines. He also attended college during this time, where he took engineering classes and learned television repair, which became his final job before he left the UK.

In 1960, at age 20, Tom decided he was heading to the USA and boarded a plane bound for Chicago. His sister Margaret had moved there two years earlier and Tom had seen her off at the pier in Southampton, where he'd an opportunity to tour the Queen Elizabeth before she sailed. He started working in construction right away but when the weather got cold and the work dried up, Tom got a job selling magazines door to door and traveled through many states, eventually ending up in New York.

Then, Tom became a member of the 5th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army, where he served from 1963-65. In 1966, Tom had the privilege of being one of 3 Honor Guards over the Clan Na Gael monument in Hillside, IL, honoring the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising of 1916.

After returning to Chicago, he started his own television repair business, fixing sets all over the city. This lead to Tom attending electrician's school, where he became an IBEW Local 134 Electrician in 1965, and worked as an electrical engineer for 40 years. He started his own company, Cablecom Corporation, in 1973, and built the first franchised cable television system for the Chicago market in 1974. Cablecom specialized in cable television for large buildings, including the John Hancock, Lake point Towers, and Marina City.

In the 1980's, he recognized that because of Ireland's Section 31 of the Broadcasting Authority Act (1968-1994, which was censorship principally to prevent Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) interviews with spokespersons for Sinn Féin and for the IRA), the Irish people in America were only getting censored information and news about their homeland, and didn't have an accurate understanding of what was really happening during those troubled times in the north of Ireland. So, in 1988, Tom started his own cable television program called "Irish America", with the goal of reporting uncensored news in the US.

Tom and Bridget Looney

Every week, Tom made sure to get the news for his show directly from Sinn Fein and other uncensored sources, focusing on current news about the troubles from the north of Ireland. Irish freedom and injustices that lead to the turmoil in the north were particularly important to Tom, as his father had been a strong Sinn Fein man and one of the leaders in the United Ireland Movement in the 40's and 50's. Tom produced and hosted "Irish America", which in addition to the news, highlighted Irish music, history, culture, and politics. He was fortunate to interview and feature people like Gerry Adams, Joe Cahill, and Bernadette Devlin-significant because Nationalists at that time were banned from being televised in Ireland, as per Section 31.

Tom has had many wonderful accomplishments over the years, but his biggest and most important to date has been his family. First and foremost, Tom Looney is a family man. He has been married to his wife, Bridget "Breege" Looney for over 47 years, and they have 4 children (Thomas, Patrick, Siobhan and Deirdre) and 6 grandchildren (Liam, Ciaran, Ryan, Shane, Norah and Ronan). Tom has always worked hard in everything he has done to provide for his family and teach his children the value of an education and hard work. But he's never forgotten where he came from. He made sure his children learned about their Irish Heritage from an early age by bringing them back to Ireland as often as they could afford to go, telling them his childhood stories, teaching them the history of Ireland, putting his sons in Gaelic football and his daughters in Irish Dancing and Traditional Irish music lessons and bringing them to Irish concerts and shows regularly. In 1981, Tom packed up his entire family in their station wagon and drove to Washington, DC to picket outside the White House during the 1981 Hunger Strike. Every St. Patrick's Day, Tom and Breege pulled their children out of school to go downtown to March in the parade with their Irish friends. And every summer, Tom would bring his family to Old Navy Pier for Irish Family Days and to Milwaukee for their Irish Fest. His values and Irish roots are deep-seeded and celebrated with the Looney family.

Tom is currently the owner of the Abbey Pub, which is celebrating 40 years in business this year. Since taking over, Tom has worked hard to promote Irish music, culture, news and sports at the Abbey. The pub hosts the longest running traditional Irish music session in Chicago, and has been the venue for some of the biggest music acts out of Ireland, including Christy Moore, the Wolftones, The Furey Brothers, Dolores Keane, the Clancy Brothers, Hothouse Flowers and Snow Patrol. The Abbey shows GAA games of football and hurling live every week throughout the GAA season as well as any rugby or soccer matches Ireland are playing at home or abroad.

Even though he has made many efforts, influences, and has been a strong advocate for promoting Irish issues and culture, Tom Looney is a simple man, from humble beginnings, who has always believed in a United Ireland and has been passionate about having a place that welcomes everyone with Irish roots and/or an interest in Ireland and learning about Irish culture.

Daly Investor

By John P. Daly

Using Social Security Spousal Benefit To Get More Income

Let's face it, for many folks money is tighter and with lower interest rates it's tougher to get a decent income stream from savings and investment accounts. Consequently, more and more people are looking for ways to maximize their Social Security Income benefit. Longer lifetime expectancies also make it more important to try to maximize Social Security income.

One of the best ways to get more Social Security income is to understand and capture the spousal income benefit. Let's take, for example, the case of the couple, Ted and his wife, Sarah. Both Ted and Sarah thought they had a fairly good understanding of how they were going to choose their Social Security income election. They are both age 66, what Social Security calls Full Retirement Age (FRA). For those born between 1943 and 1954, they will receive 100% of their Social Security income benefit at age 66 (source: Social Security).

Ted has chosen to not file—or to delay receiving—his Social Security income until age 70. His monthly income benefit will build from about $2,000 at age 66 to nearly $2,640 when he claims at age 70. Meanwhile, Sarah had already claimed her Social Security Income benefit on her own record at age 66, receiving about $500 a month. Unknowingly, Ted and Sarah are missing out on a substantial income earning opportunity. Right now, at age 66, Sarah is eligible to receive her spousal income benefit, which is half of Fred's age 66 benefit, or $1,000 per month. Sarah's spousal income benefit of $1,000 per month is $500 more than her current $500 monthly Social Security income. This would amount to nearly $6,000 of additional income over a 12-month period, which adds up to a large amount of additional income over their lifetime.

Is there still a way for Sarah to collect the higher spousal income benefit? Yes, Sarah can collect the benefit if Ted files right now and begins collecting Social Security on his own record. Sarah can also collect this larger spousal income amount if Ted "files and suspends his application" at age 66. Ted can either go online or visit his local Social Security office and complete the paperwork to inform Social Security that he wants to file his application now and begin collecting his Social Security income check at a later time.

There are additional clever Social Security claiming strategies that can help people collect more income over their lifetime, but they must "do the math" and know the rules. For example, a spouse can collect his/her spousal benefit and then switch to his/her own benefit after it builds to collect a greater monthly income check. However, there are specific rules and caveats which do apply, so folks should consider working with a qualified Financial Advisor to develop a custom strategy for their unique situation.

On December 8, 2010, the United States office of Budget and Management greatly limited the timeframe in which an individual could fix, or re-do, his/her Social Security income election. This recent ruling stipulates that once people make their income election(s), they now only have 12 months to repair a claim and this includes those who have already filed or claimed within the past 12 months.

So, the takeaways here are for consumers to make sure they fully understand how and when to maximize and optimize their spousal Social Security income benefit. And, if they think they might have made a mistake with their Social Security income election, they may want to move quickly to fix it. Or, if they're about to claim or file, make sure they get it right the first time. If not, they now have only 12 months to fix it.

John P. Daly is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and President of Daly Investment Management, LLC a Registered Investment Advisor specializing in financial planning and wealth management for individuals and families. 180 N LaSalle St Suite 3700 Chicago, IL 60601 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

Hooliganism

Mike Houlihan

Local police are concerned that three venues in the Chicagoland area will not be able to contain the fans expected to turn out for the book launch of "More Hooliganism Stories" this month.

Frenzied female fans of Irish American News columnist Mike Houlihan are expected to mob the entrance to three Irish pubs in the next few weeks.

Houlihan is scheduled to appear at the pubs to promote his latest book, the sequel to his immensely popular debut tome "Hooliganism", which enraptured readers and critics alike. Said Houlihan, "We were going to call it "Son of Hooliganism" but that sounded too much like a Godzilla movie, and besides I've already got two sons and their lives are already miserable enough thanks to me!"

The new book features Houlihan's columns from the last six years as well as a foreword written by former 19th Ward Alderman and Cook County Sheriff Mike Sheahan. In the foreword, Sheahan makes allusions to the crime of "Hooliganism" which led to the imprisonment of feminist rock punk group "Pussy Riot" in Russia.

Once again the book's cover employs the deceptive photo of a much slimmer Houlihan from the year 2000 which triggers hot flashes and drives many women into menopause. The author has been heard to remark, "Yeah, that's my First Holy Communion picture!"

Houlihan will perform excerpts from the book and reportedly will be telling some dirty jokes he learned from Betty Loren Maltese. Additional traffic precautions should be taken by anyone in the neighborhood of these venues on the following dates.

Wednesday April 9th, Lizzie McNeill's Irish Pub, 400 North McClurg Court, Chicago. 7-9PM.

The book launch will take place immediately following the taping of the Skinny & Houli Show that night so get there early to avoid the horde of Hooliganism fans.

Thursday April 10th, Cork & Kerry Irish Pub, 10614 South Western Ave. Chicago. 7-9PM

Mob action details from the 22nd Police district will be on call to handle the swarm of Southside sluts who spurned the Hooligan in his younger days.

Friday April 11th. The Claddagh Ring Pub,

2306 West Foster, Chicago. 7-9PM

A stones throw from the Hooligan's birthplace, this venue could be the most dangerous of them all because of certain units of the AOH Ladies Auxiliary.

Members of Pussy Riot will not be in attendance at any of the "More Hooliganism" launches. Unconfirmed reports say they will be very busy on those evenings in Siberia.

"More Hooliganism" is also available online at www.mikehoulihan.com/store

Reel Jiggy

Deirdre Kozicki

The new Irish dance show Heartbeat of Home has just finished it's run here in Chicago but luckily I was able to go and see it. Before I actually saw the show, I participated in their outreach program at the Irish-American Heritage Center. It was open to kids of all levels and ages so a group of my dance friends got together and off we went. We were so excited to be taught by the actual dancers themselves since most had been previous world champions and celebrities of the Irish Dance World. We learned the ending of one of their main dances called Reel of Arrivals. That was so much fun to learn. It was nice to be able to use your hands instead of keeping them by your side the whole dance. Afterwards, there was a mini Q&A session, which gave us a lot of insight into the world of professional dancing. It was so funny to think that just a few years ago they were still doing feises and now it's their job. We also were able to meet the dancers and take our pictures with them so of course all my friends and I rushed over to the male lead Bobby Hodges. I had such a great experience because things like that don't normally happen in the dance world. My friends and I would do it all over again if we could!

Later that day, it was time to see the show. I changed into nicer clothes and my whole family and I headed down to the Oriental Theatre. As the lights dimmed on stage I was bursting with excitement. Despite the fact that the show was about 2 hours, time flew by. The numbers were brilliant. My favorite ones were the opening number, Reel of Arrivals, and the one where the boys dance on the rafter. They were so creative! I was just so amazed at how the cast could make these kind of sounds with their hard shoes and how the girls could get their leaps halfway to their ceiling. I guess practice does make perfect. There is a lot more modern and flamenco dancing than you would expect but it makes the show more exciting. Of course I like the Irish dancing a lot more but it was cool to see styles of dance I'm not that familiar with. At the end of the show, my sister and I waited by the stage door to meet the dancers we didn't get to meet at the workshop. I met the lead Ciara Sexton, who is probably the most fashionable and talented Irish dancer of our time. I also met the other dancers such as Olivia Griffin, Ceili Moore. It was such a fun day and it really inspired and motivated me as a dancer. It was a phenomenal show and if you have a chance to see it, you should. It is worth it!

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Saturday, April 12, 2014

Irish American Hall of Fame

2014 Awards Gala

Michael Flatley

George Meany

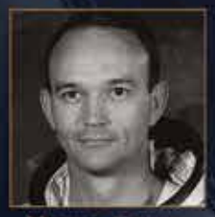
Mother Mary Frances Clarke, BVM

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones

Commodore John Barry

President Ronald Reagan

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen



Michael Collins Major General

Connie Mack

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IRISH AMERICAN HALL OF FAME

Recognizing the Contributions of Outstanding Irish Americans

Our Mission:

The mission of the *Irish American Hall of Fame* is to recognize and honor the outstanding contributions of Irish Americans to society in the areas of Arts & Humanities, Business & Industry, Public Service, Sports, Religion, Education and Science. The *Irish American Hall of Fame* will also pay tribute to exemplary Americans of Irish heritage who have truly shaped the Irish American identity in the United States.

Our Vision:

The *Irish American Hall of Fame* will preserve and promote the "story" of Irish culture by recognizing the contributions of individuals to the Irish-American experience. Telling their story preserves our story. The *Irish American Hall of Fame* will be a place where the shared story of the Irish in America will be available to all with an interest in the bond between Ireland and America.

About Us:

The purpose of the *Irish American Hall of Fame* is to preserve the "story" of the Irish in America, thus becoming a resource for all Americans or those interested in the development and history of America including, but not limited to, academic researchers, teachers and students of Irish and American history at all levels, those interested in genealogy, cultural historians and the general public.

The *Irish American Hall of Fame* is national in scope operated under the auspices of the Irish American Heritage Center, a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization.

Nomination & Selection:

Founded in 2010, the *Irish American Hall of Fame* accepts nominations from July through September each year. Nearly 500 nominations have been received from individuals in more than 30 states, Ireland and across the globe.

The *Hall of Fame Governing Committee* along with *The Screening Committee* is comprised of esteemed individuals from the Irish American community from across the country including university professors, representatives from Irish organizations, publishers and business professionals. Nominations are vetted and reviewed and a select slate of candidates is put forth in an election each year.

The 100+ member voting body of distinguished individuals from business, media, academia, and government as well as Irish organizations throughout the United States elect the inductees in January.

In this special section of *Irish American News*, we introduce you to the nine esteemed members of the Class of 2014 into the *Irish American Hall of Fame!*

Visit www.iahof.org for more information

Our Congratulations to the

2014 Irish American Hall of Fame Inductees

Front Row: Martin Healy, Jr., John Scanlon, David Huber, Kevin Veugeler
Back Row: Terence Geoghegan, Jack Cannon, Matthew Healy, Terry Sullivan, Patrick Anderson, Jill Fowler, Matthew Gannon, Dennis Lynch.

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2014 Irish American Hall of Fame Awards Gala

Program and Special Guests

Cocktail Reception: 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Dinner and Program: 7:30 - 10:30 pm

Master of Ceremonies: Catie Keogh, Host and Executive Producer *24/7 Chicago*

Induction Ceremony

Arts & Humanities:
Michael Flatley
Acceptance by recorded video feed

Business & Industry:
George Meany
Acceptance by George Meany Lutz
Grandson of George Meany

Public Service:
Commodore John Barry
Acceptance by representative of the U.S. Navy

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones
Acceptance by Larry Spivack, Regional Director
Illinois Labor History Society

President Ronald Reagan
Acceptance by Rick Ahearn, lead advancemen
for President Reagan

Education:
Mother Mary Frances Clarke, BVM
Founder of Sisters of Charity of
the Blessed Virgin Mary and Clarke University
Acceptance by Sister Teri Hadro, BVM
President of the BVM Congregation

Religion:
Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen
Acceptance by Anne Lyons Cleary, cousin and
Nancy Mitros, niece of Archbishop Sheen

Science:
Michael Collins, Major General (retired)
Presentation by Astronaut Eileen Collins
Acceptance by Grandson Luke Newell

Sports:
Connie Mack
Acceptance by Congressman Connie Mack IV

For more information on all the inductees visit www.iahof.org

Join us for an evening of inspiration, storytelling, entertainment and fun honoring these very worthy Irish Americans!

Individual Tickets:
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Make a donation to the Irish American Hall of Fame and help support our efforts to recognize the contributions of Irish Americans to the United States and the world!

Donate at www.iahof.org

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warmly congratulates the 2014 Irish American Hall of Fame Inductees

IAHOF Governing Committee

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Laura Coyle	Kathy O'Neill	Sue Suchy
Pat Feller	Mike Shevlin	Pam Taylor
Mimi Moylan		Tim Taylor

Introducing the 2014 Irish American Hall of Fame Inductees

Arts & Humanities

Michael Flatley, Irish-American dancer, choreographer and musician, is internationally known for his Irish dance shows *Riverdance, Lord of the Dance, Feet of Flames* and *Celtic Tiger*. Flatley was the first American to win the World Irish Dance Championship and won numerous All-Ireland Flute Championships. In 1991, Flatley was declared a "national treasure" by President Ronald Reagan. He is featured in the *Guinness Book of Records*, as he twice broke the world record for tapping speed. He first broke the record in 1991, when he tapped at a speed of 28 taps per second, and then again in 1998, when he tapped at the rate of 35 taps per second.

Business & Industry

George Meany led labor union federations in the United States. He served as President of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and proposed and managed its merger with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Known for his personal integrity and opposition to corruption, he served as the President of the AFL-CIO from 1955 to 1979.

Education

Mother Mary Frances Clarke, BVM, founder of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was born in Dublin, Ireland, and after a plague outbreak in 1828, she and a group of friends began a school for girls as a way to help in this desperate time. A Catholic missionary priest from Philadelphia convinced Clarke and her friends, Eliza Kelly, Margaret Mann, Rose O'Toole and Catherine Byrne to come to America. The young women set off for America in 1833 to teach the poor girls of Irish immigrants, supporting themselves by working in a garment factory. They were encouraged to form a pious society to strengthen their commitment and to attract others so that they might expand the work they were doing. On November 1, 1833, the five young women pronounced private vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This action brought into existence the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVMs). Nearly 5,000 women over the past 170 years have entered the Sisters of Charity, BVM to carry on the spirit of Mary Frances Clarke. The BVMs have staffed U.S. schools in 109 cities in 21 states, (194 elementary schools and 67 secondary schools/academies) and have established two colleges – Clarke University and Mundelein College, now part of Loyola University Chicago. They have missioned in 16 foreign countries.

Congratulations to the 2014 Inductees

to the Irish American Hall of Fame

and

The Irish American Hall of Fame Committee

on another job well done!

— Rick and Denny Singel —

Steelers

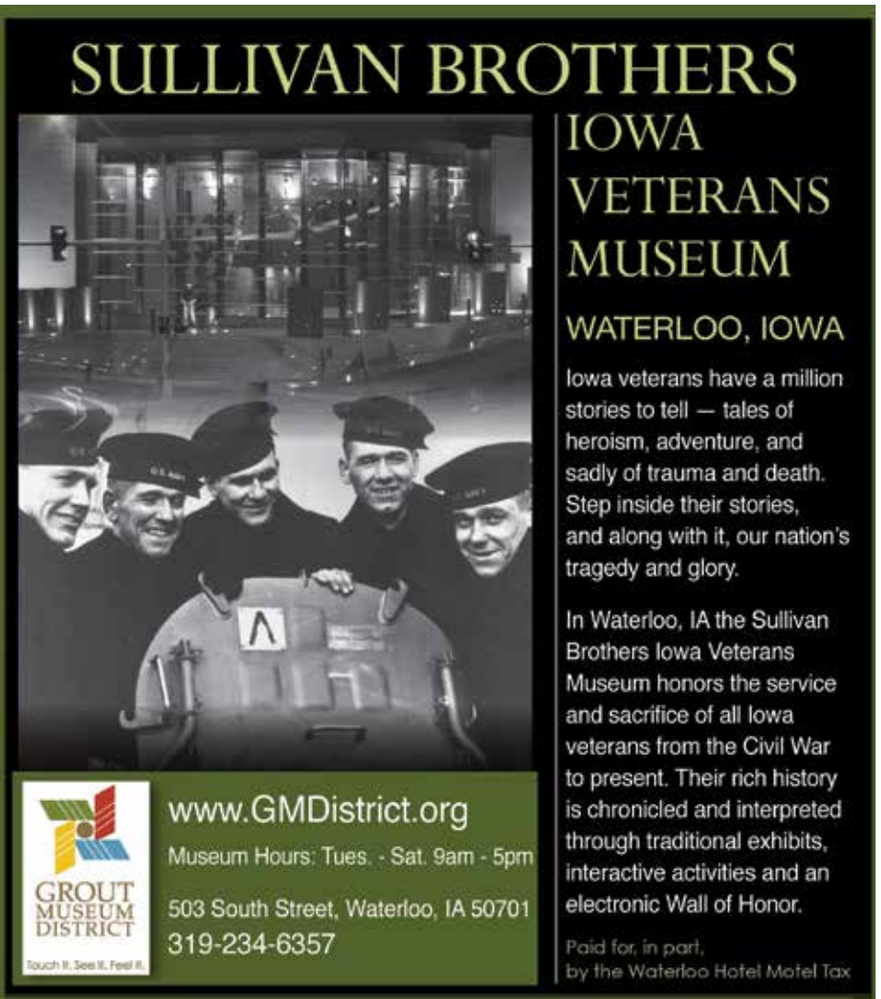
Congratulations to the 2014 Awardees

Public Service

Commodore John Barry, credited as the "Father of the American Navy", was an officer in the Continental Navy during the American Revolutionary War, appointed a Captain in 1775 in the Continental Navy and later the U.S. Navy. He was the first Captain placed in command of a U.S. warship commissioned for service under the Continental flag. Barry was a native of County Wexford, Ireland.

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones was a labor activist, teacher and community organizer born in County Cork. Once called the "grandmother of all agitators" on the floor of the U.S. Senate, Mother Jones was a tireless advocate on behalf of children and is best known for her "Children's Crusade" in which she led child workers on a march from Pennsylvania to President Theodore Roosevelt's home in New York. The campaign slogan was "We want to go to school, not the mines." Mother Jones revolutionized the way America treated its child workers.

Ronald Reagan was the 40th President of the United States and the 33rd Governor of California. As President he was known for supply-side economics or "Reaganomics", taking a hard line against labor unions, and foreign matters such as ending the Cold War by negotiating with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and creating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty which culminated in both countries decreasing their nuclear arsenals. Prior to his political career, Reagan was an actor whose most notable films included *Knute Rockne, All American, Kings Row* and *Bedtime for Bonzo*. He served as President of the Screen Actors Guild.



Master of Ceremonies: CATIE KEOGH

Catie Keogh is the Host and Executive Producer for *24/7 Chicago* on NBC. Keogh has a total of 4 Emmy nominations to her credit, including 2 Emmy nominations as the Executive Producer and Host of *24/7 Chicago* and 2 Emmy nominations as the Executive Producer and Host of the 2009 and 2010 Chicago Auto Show (aired on CBS in 2009 and FOX in 2010). She is one of the original creators of *24/7 Chicago* and is currently the managing partner of REI MEDIA and Key to the City Productions. Keogh was recognized as one of Chicago's Bold and Beautiful Women in 2010 by *Chicago Magazine* and was featured as one of the top Chicagoans to watch in 2008 by *CS Magazine*. She trained with Second City and IO (formerly Improv Olympics) for 6 years and worked with FOX in Baltimore as a Correspondent before coming back to Chicago to start 24/7. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, with a Bachelors Degree in Communication.

Religion

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen is often referred to as the first televangelist who used TV to spread the Gospel and impact people's lives in a positive way. He won an Emmy Award for Most Outstanding Television Personality. He was consecrated a bishop on June 11, 1951, and served as an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York from 1951 to 1965. He held this position until 1966 when he was made the Bishop of Rochester. Sheen held that position for three years before resigning and being made the Archbishop of the Titular See of Newport, Wales. For 20 years he hosted the night-time radio program *The Catholic Hour* (1930–1950) before moving to television and presenting *Life Is Worth Living* (1951–1957). Sheen's final presenting role was on the syndicated *The Fulton Sheen Program* (1961–1968). His cause for sainthood was officially opened in 2002 so he is now referred to a "Servant of God."

Science

Michael Collins, Major General, U.S. Air Force (ret.) and former NASA astronaut, served as command module pilot on Apollo 11, July 16-24, 1969--the first lunar landing mission. He remained aboard the command module, Columbia, on station in lunar orbit while Neil Armstrong, spacecraft commander, and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, lunar module pilot, descended to the surface of the moon in their lunar module Eagle. Collins was one of the third group of astronauts named by NASA in October 1963. He served as backup pilot for the Gemini VII mission and as pilot on the 3-day Gemini X mission, launched July 18, 1966. He was presented the Presidential Medal for Freedom in 1969 and is a recipient of the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, the Air Force Command Pilot Astronaut Wings, and the Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross. After leaving NASA in 1970, he was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. Collins became Director of the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian Institution in April 1971 and was promoted to Under Secretary of the Smithsonian in April 1978. He became Vice President, Field Operations, Vought Corporation, Arlington, Virginia, in February 1980 and later formed Michael Collins Associates, a Washington, D.C. consulting firm. He has written numerous articles and two books, *Carrying the Fire and Liftoff*, as well as a children's book, *Flying to the Moon and Other Strange Places*. In 2009, Collins was recognized along with his Apollo 11 crew members by President Barack Obama on the 40th anniversary of their lunar mission.

Sports

Connie Mack (born Cornelius McGillicuddy) was an American professional baseball player, manager, and team owner. As the longest-serving manager in Major League Baseball history, Mack holds records for wins (3,731), losses (3,948), and games managed (7,755), with his victory total being almost 1,000 more than any other manager. He managed the Philadelphia Athletics for the club's first 50 seasons of play before retiring at age 87 following the 1950 season, and was at least part-owner from 1901 to 1954. He was the first manager to win the World Series three times, and is the only manager to win consecutive Series on separate occasions (1910–11, 1929–30); his five Series titles remain the third most by any manager, and his nine American League pennants rank second in league history. Mack was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1937.

Congratulations, George Meany!

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I also wish to thank my parents, Michael and Eilish Flatley, and the people of my hometown, Chicago, for all the support and well wishes throughout my life.

Best wishes for a wonderful evening!

— Michael Flatley

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Peter O'Brien

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Jump into Ireland

Crowley on Kells

By Frank Crowley

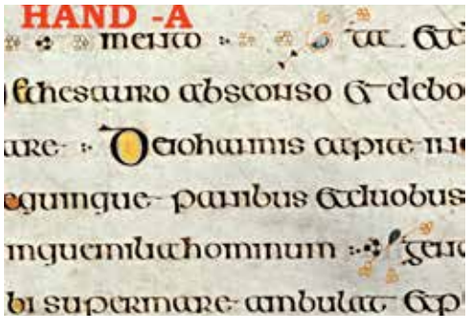
Book of Kells Scribes

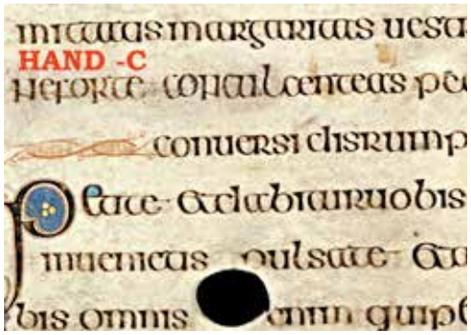
The script the Romans chiseled into their temples and monuments was the origin of what we call "uncial" script.

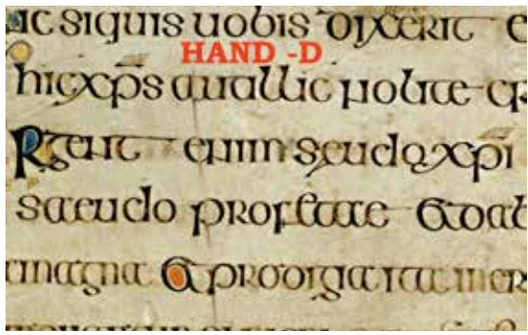
When it was written by hand with a quill, this script was characterized by broad, single strokes and simple round forms. Quills worked even better on the smooth material such as parchment and vellum (prepared animal skins).

The letters were capital forms, but eventually lower case forms were added. Over the centuries, the style was increasingly used by Irish and English monks and developed into a style that is called Insular half uncial or Insular majuscule. Insular Gospels written during the period of 600 to 850 CE used this script.

It will be no surprise to you, but the script use by the monks used in the Book of Kells is, perhaps, the finest example of this style that has survived.







In discussing the scribes of the Book of Kells, we first must bring up a few issues.

For all scribes, various skills were required. For example, the knowledge of Latin grammar, vocabulary and syntax was basic. The ability to read and see clearly what other scribes wrote was very important. However, many errors in the Book resulted from an insufficient level of these skills. But that will be another column.

Over the years, scholars have tried to determine the number of scribes that worked on the Book of Kells. The fact that there is no definite, documented, information regarding the number of scribes results in scrutinizing every minor variation in the text.

This is a sampling of the scholars' conclusions of the number of scribes based on the styles or "hands."

"…several scribes."

"…two scripts, same scribe."

"…one great scribe" using different styles".

The distinctions between styles in manuscripts where it is known that there were more than one scribe strongly suggests the same is true in the Book of Kells.

Leading modern scholars, such as Bernard Meehan, say that there were probably at least 4 scribes with distinct styles. To go further, we would have to say that there were many well-trained scribes who printed in very similar styles and could match different styles when needed.

Meehan, the current Keeper of Manuscripts at Trinity College Dublin, notes it is "hazardous" to consider "a manuscript so full of caprice with any sense of absolute certainty."

General description and example of 4 hands/scribes:

Hand A, f16v

Letters are smaller and more compact

Used brown ink made from iron gall

Folios are ruled for 18 or 19 lines of text

Hand B, f21v

Scholars characterize Hand B as flamboyant

Used purple, red and carbon black inks

Used decorative flourishes

Hand C, f48r

Wrote most of the text

Used freer style

Slightly higher script

Hand D, f104r

Larger, strong strokes

Slightly more angular

(Black oval is a hole in vellum)

Questions and comments welcome

fcrowley@windycityarts.org

Piping It In

Jack Baker

It was my privilege last month to be invited to see the last performance of the Irish Rovers in this area. The Rovers, after 50 long years a'rovin, have decided to hang up their touring boots while they can still reach the hook and enjoy the home life. Their farewell tour is taking them all over the US and a goodly part of the world. I remember buying their first album (vinyl) in the late 60's at a time when "Irish" records were few and far between. I remember when their single of Shel Silverstein's "Unicorn" went shooting up the charts and added that song to Irish repertoires everywhere. The Irish Rovers joined that small group of Irish artists that everyone knew, whose fame extended beyond the "Irish community" becoming one of the most recognized "Irish" bands ever.

The last concert I saw was very much like every other Rovers concert I saw, packed with fans who knew most of the words to most of the songs. Always a happy crowd, they were banging their hands together and singing along with cousins George and Ian Millar, the lead voices of the Irish Rovers, while Wilcil McDowell played the accordion, Sean O'Driscoll played banjo, Fred Graham handled percussion, Morris Crum manned the keyboards and Geoff Kelly played whistle & flute. Their fans were legion and extend into every part of the populace. They were the first Irish band to crossover into popular music, even before the Chieftains.

Their most recent release, timed to coincide with their final tour is a three CD mega collection called "50" and crowned with a piece of artwork to dazzle the eye. The cover is a copy of an original painting called "The Life of the Rover" by Hamish Douglas Burgess. It was created in the style of the "Book of Kells" and combined with a modern twist to tell the story of the Irish Rovers, from their origins in Ireland, through forming the band in Canada, noting significant songs through their long career and right up to present day. Within the piece there are 26 historical references and 11 song references. To get the full story on what's what in the painting and more details on the art, you can visit Hamish's website at mauiceltic.com (yes, he lives in Hawaii!). The painting is available as an art poster from the Irish Rovers website (TheIrishRoversMusic.com) or as a 2'x2' limited edition Giclee print from Hamish himself through his website. Hamish has furnished many of the band's CD covers in recent years, plus has artwork on the Irish Rovers website, staging and other merchandise, and a trip to his website will give you a glimpse of this fascinating artist's work.

The beautiful big 3 CD collection has music from all phases of the Rovers career, some of which were previously only available on vinyl and at least one that is brand new for this tour "Rovers Farewell". It has not been released for general distribution at this time but is available through their website and, of course, at their concerts. Their tour schedule is also available on their website.

The band plans to continue recording and may play the odd date here and there but, for the most part, they will be taking a very well-deserved break from the intensity of the tour. They are, after all, getting on into middle age.

One more quick note on a fantastic CD that just came in as I was writing this. Leonard Barry, one of the finest, most innovative uilleann pipers I've ever heard, has released "New Road". If you like the pipes as I do, you'll sit slack-jawed as you listen to the music this man draws from his pipes. It is stunning.

Find me at the store, 630-834-8108 or online at jack@rampantlion.com

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA

Do You Assess Your Audience?

While listening to a homily in church recently, I was struck by my realization that the priest did not appear to have given his audience any thought while preparing or delivering the homily. He had decided that the subject of his homily had to be given to the attendees. Up to that point, he was doing just fine. But his presentation would have been far more appropriate to a class of seminarians due to the scholarly nature of his comments. I could not bring myself to stay with him for more than the first couple of minutes. The homily was simply boring to me. I found myself looking around the congregation and saw a lot of other bored people. He had lost his audience in just those couple of minutes. You could almost hear people turning off.

When I tuned out after a few minutes, I confess that I found myself thinking how often many of us do the same thing, whether at home, school or work. We do not consider how our audience is likely to receive our thoughts.

Professional speakers will tell you that to give an effective speech you have to know your audience. Is it a friendly audience? Is it an audience likely to be receptive? Are they likely to know a fair amount about the subject of the presentation? As the speaker you need to think careful about the content, tone and length of the presentation.

The next time you are in an audience note how long the presentation lasts and when you stopped listening. It seems to me that our attention span keeps getting shorter all the time. Think of "important" stories being covered by the 10 o'clock news; they only command 4-5 minutes of "air" time. Some years ago, I heard a speaker say that it is very difficult to hold an audience's attention for more than 8-9 minutes.

There is a broader application of this concept that needs to be considered. For example, when you meet your new boss, do you instantly think you can share any confidential information with her simply because she is now the boss? In my career, I have seen people decide to share "classified" info with another person simply because that person is on a higher rung in the hierarchy of the company. You need to realize that because a person is in a superior position to yours, you are NOT obligated to share privileged information, at least until you have gotten to know them better.

The failure to assess your audience can be a fatal mistake in the corporate world. I just saw a TV commercial where the boss says to his team that we have developed a great plan, but one person disagrees adamantly by saying the plan is stupid. In the next moment, you see that individual leaving his "former" employer's facility with his box of personal belongings in hand. As they say, he is history. Why? He clearly failed to assess how the boss might react to his hardnosed and negative criticism.

Many of us have probably experienced a similar situation in our own jobs or school. As an executive coach, I am regularly surprised how commonly some of us do not assess our own surroundings. We fail to recognize how the boss has reacted in various situations over the last several months. A client recently told me that when his department meets on a regular basis, it is basically a one man show. In this case, everyone in the department has learned that disagreement with the boss is a career-limiting if not a career ending move. So in this particular group everyone has learned to keep their own (quiet) counsel.

Those of us who were raised in a normal family situation, where disagreement with parents or siblings was common, perhaps even acceptable, may have to take some time to learn how the world (school, work or home) works. Maybe the motto ascribed to President Reagan can be modified somewhat and used by us. Rather than "trust but verify", we should consider "assess carefully, then trust, but also verify."

Many of us do plant the seeds of our own demise. My counsel to you would be to reserve your trust for those who have earned it. Do not simply grant trust to someone who just happens to sit close to your cubicle. Carpe Diem.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: "Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability." Author unknown.

James F. Fitzgerald is the president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc. an Oak Brook-based senior executive coaching and outplacement firm. Web-site: jamesffitzgerald.com; jamesffitz37@Hotmail.com #630-684-2204

Nine Ideas That A Smart Job Seeker Should Know

I have been an outplacement/career transition consultant for a long time. I have learned some of the important issues that get in the way of job seekers. We are continuously bombarded with statistics about the difficulties of the search process. Although some of those difficulties are real they can be overcome by following some basic ideas. Here is a brief review of NINE IDEAS that a smart job seeker should know.

Idea #1. Have you as a job seeker really thought through where you want your job search to take you? Or are you simply continuing down the same career path as before your termination? Research says about 80-85% of people continue in their chosen career once they have been terminated. They seek and accept a similar job. Is this the time to kick back for a day or two and probe your mind for real clarity on the type of job you really want?

Idea #2. Once you are sure of your job target, you need to develop a plan of attack based on the organizations that you are likely to pursue. Develop a sharply defined sense of focus. Don't spend much time approaching organizations that you have absolutely no interest in, even if you have a contact at the company. On the other hand, you will want to talk to your contact and pick his brain about people in other organizations that he might know that really interest you.

Idea #3. Develop a resume that highlights your achievements. Too many job seekers prepare resumes that look like and sound like a job description. People will hire or reject you based on their perception of your accomplishments. Remember your resume is your advertisement; it must be neat, clean and organized, regardless if it is being sent electronically or by hard copy.

When you are preparing your resume, there are three golden rules; EDIT, EDIT, and then EDIT some more. Then ask a couple of trusted friends to review it and ask them to be as critical as possible. When this task is completed, you want to have a flawless resume. Remember that the achievements (aka the currency of successful job seekers) that you put in the resume should provoke an interest in having the company at least interview you.

Idea #4. The thorough and perhaps tedious preparation of your resume will be the basis of preparing your verbal presentation. You must be prepared to tell the interviewer why their company should be interested in you. And this presentation should be rigorously organized and presented. Think about when you go to a play or a professional athletic event; the individuals have practiced every move or line dozens, maybe hundreds of times. You should be able to stop and start your presentation without losing a step in the process. Again, those tough minded friends of yours can provide a great service to you. You should ask them to conduct mock interviews with you and hold you accountable for everything you say in those practice sessions.

Idea #5. You should consider how you will present yourself. Are you going to let them know that "you are the smartest guy in the room?" What clothes should you wear? Is casual okay? But remember suits seem to be coming back. And oh, by the way, give yourself plenty of time to get to the interview site. Be sure to take the phone number of the individual you are going to meet.

Idea #6. I already mentioned three golden rules in #3 but permit me to add three more essential rules: NETWORK, NETWORK, and NETWORK. You simply cannot network too much. People want to help you, perhaps for any one of a hundred reasons. Tell everyone what you have been doing, what you want to do, where you want to do it and how much compensation you would expect. The compensation piece unnerves a lot of people, but your contact needs to know if you are priced as a Chevrolet or a Porsche. How else is your contact (aka sales representative) going to discuss your circumstances intelligently with anyone if he doesn't know your approximate compensation goals?

Idea #7. As you were no doubt told by your parents, your siblings and your teachers, you must do your homework. You need to learn about your prospective employer; very few things should come in the interview that you don't already know. What are the future prospects for this industry? Ideally if you can find out something about your interviewers before meeting them, you can be a hit. We all like to feel that we are important enough that interviewees have taken the time to find out about us.

Idea #8. Stay focused on the job search. Many people feel that "they have time"; they are not working. That is a destructive attitude to have. Their job is to find a job. Don't paint the garage or rewire the house.

Idea #9. If you are not highly competent with the Internet, find someone who can teach you at least the basics. You need to be able to search out information on your prospective employers. The Linked In site can help you connect with people whom you have lost track of. The vast variety of web sites can be overwhelming, so find a few that appear to be good for you and stick with them.

Three other thoughts for you

- If you are convinced that you will succeed, which is a highly desirable attitude, take time to enjoy the "ride." Recognize that most people want to help you; you need to provide them with enough pertinent information about your career goals and achievements.
- Enlist a friend as your confidant or "conscience"; you need someone who will hold you accountable.
- Help someone else in the process. It will take some of the pressure off of your own search.

And of course, Carpe Diem (seize the day; seize the opportunity).

For Consideration: "Never, Never, Never Quit." Winston Churchill.

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Paddy Homan: The Hard Way Home

Launch April 19th
Chief O'Neill's Pub

Robert F. Lyons, contributor, teaches Irish Studies at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, University of Southern Maine.

The lyrics of the title track of Paddy Homan's new CD album, The Hard Way Home, reflect the Chicago Irish tenor's philosophy of life. This native born Cork man chose this title "because the words of this song - 'without a light to guide you, you will take the hard way home' - resonate loudly with me in terms of my own personal development and my career as professional who is engaged in programs for elderly citizens. They have universal meaning."

The Chicago launch of Paddy's new CD on Saturday, April 19th at 8pm is fittingly booked at Chief O'Neill's Pub & Restaurant, 3471 N. Elston, which is named after the celebrated song collector, Francis O'Neill, also a Cork man with an intense passion for the traditional music of his native Ireland. Paddy will be joined by some of the best of Chicago's musicians who collaborated with him on this outstanding recording. The Pub's hosts for the launch, co-owners Brendan and Siobhan McKinney-themselves All-Ireland award winning musicians-were recently featured on WTTW's Emmy-winning restaurant review series, Check, Please! Chicago.

Since the day he set foot in the windy city over a half dozen years ago, Homan has embraced Chicago with the same celebratory verve displayed by the city's poet, Carl Sandburg: "Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive." And music critics have responded in kind: "It was a wonderfully lucky day for all of us in the Chicago area when Paddy Homan landed in town and decided to stay," writes Jack Baker in his Irish American News review of this new CD. Bill Margeson of LiveIreland.com agrees. In announcing the 2014 Livies Irish Music Award to The Hard Way Home for Male Vocal Album of the Year, he said: "Paddy is absolutely the best. And this album is a pure delight."

This gem of a recording, produced by Dennis Cahill and Victor Sanders, features Paddy's voice accompanied by the finest of Chicago's talented musicians: Dennis Cahill on guitar, bass, and mandolin, James Moore on guitar and bouzouki, Maurice Lennon on fiddle, Ben Lewis on piano, John Williams and Sheila Doorley on accordions, Teresa Shine on fiddle, Steven Houser on cello and Sue Demel on backing vocals. A set of informative sleeve notes on the twelve tracks is available at paddyhoman.com.

The new CD album with its

handsomely designed jacket offers several ancient Irish ballads and brand new ones. A sprightly Reel in the Flickering Light leads the way and will move feet and hearts of all ages. The title track, The Hard Way Home, sounds a plaintive tone but with Paddy's passionate delivery, strikes a hopeful chord: "There's only grace and miracles, And learning how to dance the dance". John O' Dreams, set to a Tchaikovsky tune, portrays all people as being "equal in sleep". The Bonny Bunch of Roses - featuring Paddy and his bodhrán - is a ballad related to the old Irish Air, An Binsin Luachra (The Bunch of Rushes). Paddy's passionate performance of the folk classic The Voyage has inspired many brides and grooms. Cill Cháis – the moving 18th century lament for Kilcash - "Cad a dhéanfaimid feasta gan adhmad? What will we do for timber, With the last of the woods laid low?" - finds poignant expression in the cadences of Paddy's delivery. Stephen Foster's Slumber My Darling never seems more tender than through this arrangement by Ben Lewis. The Gentle Maiden, an allegory of Ireland from the ancient canon of Irish songs is emotively sung. The popular Song of Bernadette is dedicated to Paddy's mother and to all faith-filled mothers. The album concludes with The Holy Ground, a lovely sea shanty from the singer's native Cork. All the collaborating musicians who make this CD a model of clarity and artistic delight are showcased in two sets of reels and jigs.

Paddy says: "I came to Chicago by accident to visit a friend of mine, and I ended up coming back here to study social work. I thought Chicago was the greatest spot to be doing both my day job and my music. And I'm getting closer to having just one career - a combination of both."

Reflecting on his current work as Foundation Regional Director for two Lutheran Life communities: St Pauls House, Chicago and Wittenberg Village, Crown Point, Indiana, Homan notes: "I am a huge advocate of the role of music in engaging with people who are on this journey. Many of our residents need a guiding light to be that beacon of hope by which they can live out their days with dignity and respect." This theme permeates his life's work. "Music", he says, "goes right down to the fabric of the human person. We all have a song that needs to be shared." Paddy's guiding lights have been John McCormack, Seán Ó Riada who revived Irish traditional music, and his mother, Lizzie who says: "Paddy's been singing since he was bawling in his crib." paddyhoman.com.

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I admit, readers, that Irish lamb is not something I've cooked. I happily indulge in my Dad's BBQ lamb chops and even ate my entire plate of lamb and potatoes at my County Down wedding dinner. My Northern Irish mother-in-law serves up a mean lamb too, but I never got on the wagon, until now.

"I like lamb with sweetness … carrots, parsnips, sweet baby turnips or peas or even green garlic," said Abra Berens, owner of Bare Knuckle Farm and alumna of the Ballymaloe Cookery School in Shanagarry in County Cork, Ireland. "I like the gaminess to it. I like a big roast cut, such as leg of lamb or the shoulder so that you get some of that fat in the dish, because it smells and tastes more barny."

She had me hooked, almost. I couldn't get past the word 'barny.' I felt better when she said, "As far as lamb goes, people are either lamb lovers or haters." I decided to give it a try.

Berens has done more than try - she has flourished - bringing Ireland back to the Midwest, where she is the co-owner and chef at Bare Knuckle Farm in Northern Michigan. She attributes the way she approaches food and farming to her childhood experiences and to the three-month program at Ballymaloe.

She had an expert teacher, the legendary Darina Allen. Some call Allen the Julia Child of Ireland. Allen is the founder of the cookery school, a farm activist and huge promoter of farmers markets (she reinvigorated the farmer's market movement in Ireland in the late 1980s).

Many great chefs have passed through the doors of Ballymaloe, including Berens' mentor Rodger Bowser. He was the one that encouraged Berens to look into Ballymaloe.

Once Berens arrived at the school, she was not disappointed. She dove in headfirst, immersing herself in the opportunity to learn from a master, just like Darina Allen did many years before from Myrtle Allen, the farm's original Irish mother, home cook and a farmer. (Darina married Myrtle's son, hence the shared Allen surname.)

Back, in the Midwest though, Berens' learning experiences with Allen inform her farming and cooking. Berens and her business partner, Jess Piskor, dedicate themselves and their business to small-scale agriculture that supplies a healthful, delicious and diverse array of vegetables to their friends and neighbors. In 2013, they started private farm dinners using the finest Leelanau County ingredients.

At Bare Knuckle, just like at Ballymaloe, you will find chickens escaping and hogs misbehaving. "We had two naughty hogs at Bare Knuckle. A pig was walking straight to the barn where our farm dinner was happening. I quickly had to divert them. The pigs know they aren't supposed to be out," she said.

And once at Ballymaloe, a well-to-do London classmate of Berens' found a freshly lain egg in her kitchen shoe. "Blame the constantly escaping chickens," said Berens. "Working on a farm, you get used to animals getting out."

Escaping animals aside, Berens remembers her time in Ireland with great fondness, and it's clear the experience deeply impacted her on a personal and professional level. "It's a lens through which I view my food. I have a tendency to use Irish dishes¾brown breads, rich butter¾as ingredients in their own right," she said.

We both laughed over our shared experience with America's attitude toward road trips and the contrasting difficulty of navigating Ireland in a single day.

Upon her arrival, when Berens asked how she could get from Belfast International Airport to Ballymaloe, everyone insisted she take two buses, not one. "'You have to stop in Dublin, it's too far to go in one trip,'" she reminisced. "A busload of people was diverted to Ballymaloe to drop me off. People took time to be open and hospitable."

Berens misses Ireland and stays in touch with Allen, exchanging emails now and then, but she hopes to go back to visit soon. "It's been too long," she said. "Before you arrive, you have an image of what a place is going to look like. After you've walked the road into town every day for two months, it changes," she said. The more familiar the path became, the more at home she felt in Shanagarry.

In the meantime, here's her Midwest take on an Irish Easter lamb. "Thank Myrtle for the cumin," said Berens. Myrtle Allen added cumin to the legendary Irish lamb pies and now Berens always associates that spice with lamb. We will too.

Roast Leg of Lamb
with Cumin, Garlic and Herbs
Recipe by Abra Berens

Note: Berens recommends buying lamb at The Butcher & Larder or Publican Quality Meats.

Ingredients
1 leg of lamb, 8oz raw weight per person
4 cloves garlic
1 T cumin seed
½ C olive oil
½ C chopped fresh herbs; parsley, rosemary thyme, chervil, mint, chives, tarragon etc.
salt and pepper
potatoes, 4-6oz raw weight per person
fresh or frozen peas, 2oz per person
carrots, 1 per person

Cooking Instructions

In a small saucepan, toast the cumin until it is fragrant and begins to pop.

Remove from the heat and add the olive oil to cool the seeds and steep the flavor.

Smash and chop the garlic until into a fine paste.

When the oil has cooled, add the garlic, herbs, a good pinch of salt and pepper and whisk to combine.

Season the leg with a healthy amount of salt and pepper. Pour half of cumin oil over the leg of lamb and rub into the meat. Allow to sit for several hours or, better, overnight.

A couple of hours before serving, remove the lamb from the refrigerator if necessary and bring to room temperature.

Heat oven to 350F.

Cut the potatoes into large pieces and scatter over a large roasting dish.

Rest the leg of lamb on top of the potatoes and roast for approximately 18 minutes per lb. of lamb.

Wash, peel and cut the carrots into bite size pieces.

Remove from oven, cover with tin foil and allow the leg to rest for 10-15 min before carving.

While the potatoes are still hot, toss them with the peas and raw carrot and more fresh herbs, whatever you have around.

Carve the lamb and serve with the potato salad and reserved cumin oil.

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A Slice of Ireland

By Cathy Cooney-Millar

Sharon Corr

Sharon Corr is no novice when it comes to song writing, singing and musicianship. Her hugely successful career began as a member of the Irish family group The Corrs and now as a solo artist touring worldwide. My brother Jimmy and I were lucky enough to spend some time with Sharon while she was in Chicago on tour and her love of music and song writing is evident as she says music touring all year gives her energy!

The Corrs with their popular Celtic-Pop sound rocked the music world as they have sold over 45 million albums over 15 years starting in the early 1990's. The family harmony and song writing brought a unique style and artistry that had never existed. This all started when Sharon was growing up in Dundalk, Ireland. Her parents, also musicians, played in local pubs. Sharon began playing violin at age six. Even at an early age she was song writing. Little did she know that she was on her life path at such a young age.

As the Corrs took time to focus on their families, Sharon continued songwriting and so did her success with her incredible solo career. She is currently on a worldwide music tour promoting her first solo album, "Dream of You". It's a collection of organic, beautiful ballads. Her second solo album is titled, "The Same Sun" and as Sharon quotes, "it is a very vulnerable album, that comes from my heart and soul". She draws her earliest musical influences from Joni Mitchell, Eagles, Dusty Springfield, Police and Simon and Garfunkel. The second solo album is a raw mix of emotions while being playful. Some of her songs are inspired by her touching experiences with spending time in Tanzania as an Ambassador with OXFAM Ireland. She is helping to end poverty and Sharon says, "It starts with women". She wants to quit talking and take action. Sharon explains how the album, "The Same Sun" explores how people can be so different around the world, yet experiences the same sun as it is a global experience. Sharon says, "Music brings people together".

Sharon Coor

While in Chicago, Sharon's solo tour brought her band to the City Winery. Her mix of beautiful singing kept the audience captivated. She sang a mix of soft and upbeat melody's and graced us all with her amazing violin playing. Her confidence with the audience had everyone engaged and clapping throughout her sessions. She sang songs from both solo albums with a mix of traditional Irish music. Her violin hung on her mic and she would pull it out intermittingly during different songs while doing a couple solo's that had the audience on their feet! This is one concert experience, you don't want to miss!

Sharon is also a Grammy nominated/Brit Award Winner. She has been a coach on the Voice for two seasons.

Sharon states she is on a journey of discovery and she is only beginning. I say, if she is only beginning her journey, I can't wait to hear what comes next for us!

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Band of Sisters Documentary Screening About Catholic Nuns and Their Work for Social Justice

Band of Sisters, a documentary about the journey of Catholic sisters in the United States from sheltered "daughters of the church" to citizens of the world, is scheduled to screen at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church in Naperville, IL on Wednesday, April 30 at 7:00 pm.

The film premiered in Chicago in September 2012 at the Gene Siskel Film Center for a sold out week, and since then has screened in over 60 cities, from New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, Scottsdale and Houston to Cincinnati, Rochester, Boise, Cape Cod, etc.

From "one-off" (one show only) screenings to full week runs, Band of Sisters has drawn audiences at churches, retreat centers, convents, art museums, colleges, and independent film venues. With no advertising and no marketing budget, the film is that rare indie hit that has succeeded based on word of mouth and grass roots outreach alone.

photo credit Christian Molidor, RSM

The two main characters, Sisters of Mercy Pat Murphy and JoAnn Persch, are well known in the Chicago area and across the country for their efforts to secure basic human rights for immigrant detainees and deportees. The film weaves the story of their 4-year struggle with the fifty-year history of sisters in the U.S. who were called by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s to serve where there was the greatest need. Fascinating scenes of convent life prior to Vatican II contrast with those of nuns in the tumultuous and exciting years after the Council, when sisters became engaged with the great social movements of our day.

In Band of Sisters, director/producer Mary Fishman follows nuns across the U.S. in their mission towards social justice and the transformation consciousness as organic farmers, environmental attorneys, holistic health care practitioners, low-income housing developers, podcasters, and more. Other local women in the film include Kathleen Desautels, Sister of Providence, a peace activist with Chicago's 8th Day Center for Justice for over 25 years, and Avis Clendenen, a former Sister of Mercy and professor of pastoral and practical theology.

With poignancy, drama and humor, the film fosters well-deserved recognition for the thousands of sisters who, in the face of obstacles and threats cast by government agencies, the military, and the hierarchy of their own church, insist on an unstoppable mission of love, justice and social change. The sisters in the film and those they represent have been living out for years the message of the Gospel and of the new Pope Francis, seeking out and being with the poor and the marginalized.

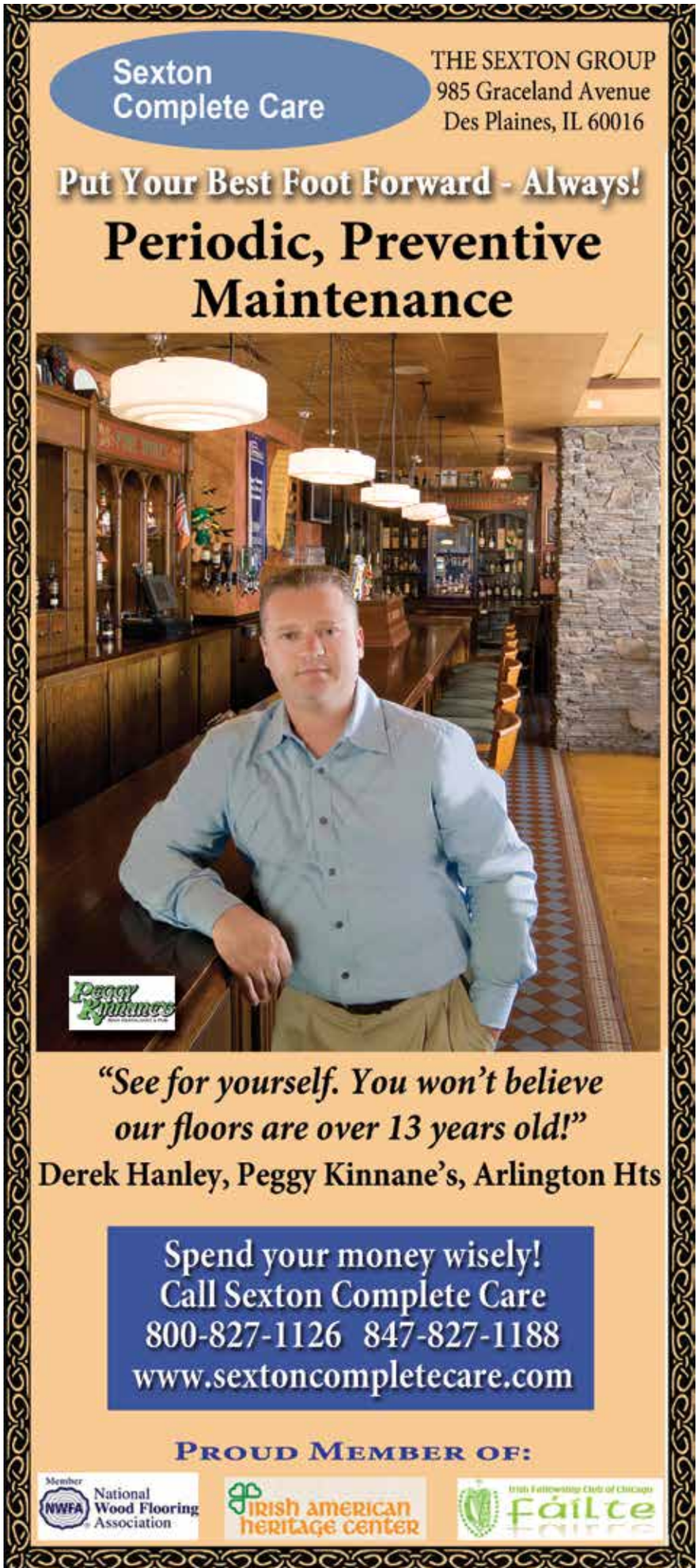
Mary Fishman, the producer/director of Band of Sisters is a Chicago native and the granddaughter of immigrants County Armagh. She was educated by the Springfield Dominican Sisters in elementary school and the Sisters of Mercy in high school. After graduating from the University of Notre Dame, she led a career as an architect and urban planner before switching to filmmaking. She began work on Band of Sisters in 2004.

The film was funded by a combination of grants, donations, and Ms. Fishman's personal investment. More than 40 congregations of sisters contributed through grants and donations to support the film's production and post-production costs, including a major grant from the Sisters of Mercy Agatha O'Brien Ministry Fund. Additional funding came from the Illinois Humanities Council, from the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, and from almost 600 generous individual donors.

Band of Sisters was completed in 2012 and is 88 minutes long. For more information please visit http://bandofsistersmovie.com

Band of Sisters will be shown at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, located at 1450 Green Trails Drive, Naperville, IL, 60540, on Wednesday, April 30 at 7:00 PM. The screening will take place in the Upper Room, which can be accessed through the main entrance of the church. Admission is free and open to the public.

Director Mary Fishman will introduce the film and and answer questions from the audience after the screening. Limited edition DVDs for home-viewing will be for sale exclusively at this event.



View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick

A Threat to Economic Recovery

Morgan Kelly belongs to that very rare breed of Irish economic analyst to have emerged in the public eye since the crash who does not seek to hog the media limelight; indeed he positively shuns celebrity status, which partly explains the near three year lag since he last entered the fray—he has not written about the Irish economy since May 7th, 2011. Kelly's forecasts had become increasingly resonant from the late noughties onwards, in proportion to his proven ability to consistently call the game correctly.

Back in 2011, he predicted national ruin if Irish finances were permitted to run their natural course. In other words, if the collection of mortgage and business loans was enforced with any rigour, mass default would be the only option open to a great number of people in debt, and the entire economy would tank. Shivers spread across Ireland's four provinces when Kelly wrote of ruin and its political consequences.

Kelly has just broken his silence by delivering a public lecture on March 4th, and this time his subject was Mario Draghi. Draghi, who succeeded Jean-Claude Trichet as President of the European Central Bank in November 2011, set himself the task of doing 'whatever it takes' to save the euro. Over two years on, the ECB seems to have picked the right man at the right time. Nobel-prize winning economist Paul Krugman, lecturing also at UCD this February, heaped praise on Draghi for managing to steer a path past European austerians to enable growth. With his focus on enabling investment flow to the periphery, Draghi has heralded, in the words of Krugman, an 'institutional culture at the ECB [that] is now substantially more open-minded'; and that is 'a good thing for Europe'.

While Kelly acknowledged that Draghi and his ECB colleagues have indeed gone easy on Irish debtors, he also warned that without such leniency a swathe of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) could not survive. Therein lies a problem. We know too little about the SMEs' ledgers to make a proper estimate of how many of them are genuinely sustainable, but undoubtedly a great many are burdened with large property portfolios and would not survive stern pressure to repay their debts. Given that seven out of ten Irish employees depend on SMEs for their livelihood makes this matter very serious. What happens if the ECB ceases to be understanding and starts to call in its debt?

Mario Draghi

When such a question is posed in Ireland, a standard reflex of our politicians is to insist that that could never happen. Yet this time, perhaps because of Kelly's past record, our Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, immediately responded to Kelly's comments. Noonan suggested that the Central Bank of Ireland should welcome consultation with Kelly and stated that Kelly's arguments will be taken seriously: 'I still would like to examine Morgan Kelly's views in detail, and maybe if the Central Bank, who have the primary responsibility here, would contact him [to] have a conversation about his concerns, that might be helpful'.

But the Central Bank will hesitate to contact Kelly. The suggestion that it should reach out to him will have rankled the Central Bank's governor, Patrick Honohan, who was the butt of a rather personal philippic of Kelly's in 2011.

What can we make of all of this? It is certain that Noonan does not, like his predecessor, wish to ruffle feathers in the eurozone's core; but, surely, neither does he wish to be undermined by his central bank governor in the manner in which his predecessor was at a crucial moment in deciding the future of Irish finance. Creating a major role for Kelly in the Central Bank would suddenly throw fat in the fire from Europe's point of view—they are not used to Irish negotiators being tough and realistic—but it would a good appointment for Ireland, and for Europe in the long-term too.

Kelly's preference for a low-key profile has ironically heightened his attraction to the people who control the levers of power, insofar as there is any real governmental power, in Ireland. And Kelly has emerged once again as evidently the best brain to negotiate our position in Europe. He is aware that Irish banks need to grasp a stinging nettle—the volume of people and businesses that are effectively insolvent because of their boom time loans—sooner or later. When the Irish banks do that will depend on the European Central Bank, which so far has blithely let Irish debt flutter in the wind. Under what other circumstances would almost 20% of a country's mortgages be underwater and an untold amount of SME debt go unpaid without the imposition of a resolution? As Kelly put it, the ECB keeps 'pumping sweet, sweet credit into our veins and we haven't had the real crisis yet'. But that could change at any minute and, as Kelly suggested, more powerful European countries may opt to use Ireland as a guinea pig to witness what happens to a peripheral country when the current of credit is switched off.

Draghi is not stupid and plotting to bring disaster to any eurozone country (above all one that was held up as exemplary, a people who took pain which was the making of them) would be a bad move for him too. So in what scenario, if any, would he allow that to happen? Embarrassing as it is to admit, Ireland's economic survival depends on the forbearance of Central European bankers since we cannot survive without the artificial financial floor provided for us. Draghi needs to sell continuous leniency and, ultimately, a significant measure of debt forgiveness to his ECB colleagues and backers who do not all, by any means, agree with that approach to managing the eurozone. Kelly's iceberg on the horizon is a very real one and a definite swerve to avoid it is required at the European level for us to pull through. Until that happens, Ireland remains trapped in the endgame.

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It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane and Margo O'Donnell

Hello everyone,

I spoke to Margo today and she is feeling a lot better but still not 100% after her unfortunate fall back in February. She says hello to everyone and looks forward to doing the column next month. We will be doing a special feature in our next column.

I hope everyone had a great St. Patrick's celebration in March. What a great get together for everyone in Chicago and a great tribute to our Irish heritage. We may have left Ireland but it certainly didn't leave us. You can feel the love and respect for the Irish tradition all around and it makes me feel very proud to be part of such a wonderful, family community.

After years of being a fan of Margo O'Donnell, in 2009 I was blessed to meet her as a friend and now a writing partner. Margo came to visit me, along with Michael and Cathy Boyle in November 2009. While she was at our house she listened to the song "Erin Tennessee" that I had written with a friend of mine from Nashville called Forrest Lee Jr. She immediately called her brother Daniel and he had a great idea with the song and so the song was recorded in Nashville's Ryman Auditorium by PBS. I also got to visit Erin, Tennessee and was treated like royalty. The Mayor and Chief Of Police greeted us and everyone gave Daniel, Forrest and I a great reception. Two years later, the one who is really responsible for getting the song recorded is Margo, of course. Took a visit to Erin along with Shirley Jones and myself. Margo recieved the keys to the City and was made an honorary citizen of Erin, TN. I was also made an honorary citizen, even though my green card didn't come till a year later Ha! Ha!.

Well since then Margo and I have written dozens of songs. Our latest endeavour was to write a song for Charlie Pride. Margo played the song for him on the Gertrude Byrne cruise and he was delighted. Margo said he beckoned his wife over to listen to the song with him and he said "Hey sweetheart they wrote a song for your Charlie." He took it with him and said he intends to record it. So we were so delighted. We will make it our song for this month. The title of the song is "Thanks". And thank you Charlie Pride!

Song writing tip of the month - When you are writing especially in the early days, be very aware of using vowels. Vowels are very much a part of shaping a song and making it unique. When you have been writing for a while it should be an automatic thing. You will find yourself using vowels and musical accents subconsciously.

Till next time be good to one another,

Margo and Joe

"Thanks"
Written by Margo O'Donnell, Joe McShane and James Thacker
Verse 1
Grew up picking cotton in a little delta town
Working from daybreak till that mean old sun went down
Out there at an early age I was singing from my soul
No idea what the future had to hold
Verse 2
A sharecroppers son from Sledge Mississippi
Pitched a lot of baseball then I left for music city
Pickin' my guitar for 2 years you didn't see
That all I have to offer you is me
Chorus
Thanks for these many years of happiness and joy
Thanks for a dream come true for this old country boy
From singing on the Opry, that circle as home base
To standing here with you my friends all I can say is Thanks
Verse 3
I love to sing those country songs from when I was a boy
And as the years go rolling by, they still bring me joy
From the heart of Mississippi to Nashville Tennessee
To all my fans I sing once more just between you and me
Bridge
You're the reason I've been singing with love in every breath
I want you all to know ---- you're too much to forget
Chorus

An Immigrant's Musings

Fr. Michael Leonard

Becoming A U.S. Citizen

On Ash Wednesday March 5th, I was sworn in as a Citizen of the USA. It was a day of celebration for me and I was proud to have three close friends join me for the occasion.

Assembled in the auditorium at the USCIS office on W. Congress Parkway with me, were 135 other individuals young and older from 45 countries in all. (I was the only candidate from Ireland present).

It was a very moving ceremony and I felt blessed to be part of this great nation that I am proud to call home. I will never forget my Irish roots and the folks I hold dear back in Co. Clare. I plan to stay in County Cook for the foreseeable future, but when "the clash of the ash" is heard and seen in this years hurling championship, I will as always shout for and cheer on "The Banner County".

As I looked around the room waiting for the ceremony to commence, I was struck by the great variety of faces and distinctive garb of many of my fellow citizens. The thought struck me, this is truly a real slice of the America that I know and love. Here around me were Christian and Jews, Muslims and Sikhs and no doubt people who practice no formal religion. And that is part of what makes the USA such a special place to live. When I took the test to become a citizen, the first question the officer asked me was; what is freedom of religion? Surprise, surprise I answered correctly, it is the freedom to practice any religion or not practice a religion. I thought wouldn't our world be much more at peace if every nation signed on to that fundamental principle.

On leaving the ceremony I stopped to fill out a voter registration card and I look forward to exercising that right in local, state and national elections. Over the past thirty years I have lived, worked or studied in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and since 2003 made Chicago home, so for me now there is no going back I'm proud to call myself a citizen of the USA and look forward to what this new chapter will bring.

What Goes Around Comes Around

One day a man saw an old lady, stranded on the side of the road, but even in the dim light of day, he could see she needed help. So he pulled up in front of her Mercedes and got out. His Pontiac was still sputtering when he approached her.

Even with the smile on his face, she was worried. No one had stopped to help for the last hour or so. Was he going to hurt her? He didn't look safe; he looked poor and hungry. He could see that she was frightened, standing out there in the cold. He knew how she felt. It was those chills which only fear can put in you. He said, "I'm here to help you, ma'am. Why don't you wait in the car where it's warm? By the way, my name is Bryan Anderson."

Well, all she had was a flat tire, but for an old lady, that was bad enough. Bryan crawled under the car looking for a place to put the jack, skinning his knuckles a time or two. Soon he was able to change the tire. But he had to get dirty and his hands hurt.

As he was tightening up the lug nuts, she rolled down the window and began to talk to him. She told him that she was from St. Louis and was only just passing through. She couldn't thank him enough for coming to her aid.

Bryan just smiled as he closed her trunk. The lady asked how much she owed him. Any amount would have been all right with her. She already imagined all the awful things that could have happened had he not stopped. Bryan never thought twice about being paid. This was not a job to him. This was helping someone in need, and God knows there were plenty, who had given him a hand in the past. He had lived his whole life that way, and it never occurred to him to act any other way.

He told her that if she really wanted to pay him back, the next time she saw someone who needed help, she could give that person the assistance they needed, and Bryan added, "And think of me."

He waited until she started her car and drove off. It had been a cold and depressing day, but he felt good as he headed for home, disappearing into the twilight.

A few miles down the road the lady saw a small cafe. She went in to grab a bite to eat, and take the chill off before she made the last leg of her trip home. It was a dingy looking restaurant. Outside were two old gas pumps. The whole scene was unfamiliar to her. The waitress came over and brought a clean towel to wipe her wet hair. She had a sweet smile, one that even being on her feet for the whole day couldn't erase. The lady noticed the waitress was nearly eight months pregnant, but she never let the strain and aches change her attitude. The old lady wondered how someone who had so little could be so giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Bryan.

After the lady finished her meal, she paid with a hundred dollar bill. The waitress quickly went to get change for her hundred dollar bill, but the old lady had slipped right out the door. She was gone by the time the waitress came back. The waitress wondered where the lady could be. Then she noticed something written on the napkin.

There were tears in her eyes when she read what the lady wrote: "You don't owe me anything. I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, here is what you do, do not let this chain of love end with you." Under the napkin were four more $100 bills.

Well, there were tables to clear, sugar bowls to fill, and people to serve, but the waitress made it through another day. That night when she got home from work and climbed into bed, she was thinking about the money and what the lady had written. How could the lady have known how much she and her husband needed it? With the baby due next month, it was going to be hard… She knew how worried her husband was, and as he lay sleeping next to her, she gave him a soft kiss and whispered soft and low, "Everything's going to be all right. I love you, Bryan Anderson."

There is an old saying "What goes around comes around."

Author: Unknown

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

Gadabout Travel Earns Top Sales Award

Gadabout Travel was recently honored for its sales achievement in 2013, among 210 travel agency members of the MAST Travel Network, at an awards ceremony held recently in Chicago, Illinois. Gadabout Travel was a recipient of the Top Producer for CIE TOURS in the entire Midwest Region & 3-time Winner of Preferred Supplier sales of more than $1Million for highest sales in 2013 with 45 nationally-known tour and cruise companies.

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A Word With Monsignor Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Monsignor Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO

On April 27, Divine Mercy Sunday, Pope Francis will canonize two of his predecessors: Blessed Pope John XXIII and Blessed Pope John Paul II. These great leaders are two of the most beloved Popes of all time. Their contributions to the Catholic Church, and indeed to all of Christianity, are enormous.

At Catholic Charities, we are particularly reflecting upon what the "Good Pope" and the "Pilgrim Pope" taught us about the care of the poor and vulnerable. Both Popes reinforced and greatly expanded upon the previous social teachings of the Church, highlighting inequities of the times and urging Catholics to respect life, foster peace, serve the poor and needy, and work to change the social and economic structures that prevent each person from realizing their God-given dignity.

Blessed Pope John XXIII is best known for summoning the Second Vatican Council in 1959. His joyful style, tremendous love of Christ, and devotion to the Gospel brought a great hope to the Church. He initiated a renewal of the Church with a spirit of ecumenism, and brought the entire world a message of love, unity, and faith that remains with us to this day.

One of the beautiful images that arose from Vatican II is the idea that the Church is walking with the People of God, not behind them or in front of them. The Church is on a journey with its people. The joys, hopes and struggles of each individual are the joys, hopes and struggles of Christ, and therefore, shared with all of humanity. The documents of the Council urge Catholics to go out and serve others, for we are one human family and we must be concerned with the well-being of all of our brothers and sisters.

During his 26-year pontificate, Blessed Pope John Paul II also continually reminded us that we must care for all of our brothers and sisters, especially the least among us. He was a prolific and eloquent writer, penning 14 Encyclicals, five books, and numerous other official teachings.

John Paul II emphatically proclaimed the dignity of each individual and urged the defense of life in all its forms and all its stages. Any threat to human life or human dignity—whether through abortion, euthanasia, war, the death penalty, poverty, slavery, or injustice—is unacceptable. He particularly highlighted that all manifestations of poverty—hunger, homelessness, joblessness, abuse—threaten human life and human dignity. He encouraged us to promote the good of all before our own personal gain, for our society is judged by how our least members are faring.

While their writings were certainly magnificent, Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II were also men of action and example. They convened, traveled, visited, evangelized, advocated, listened, forgave, cared, helped. Sometimes they took enormous risks to show their followers the way of Christ. They practiced what they preached and were powerful role models for how we are to live our lives.

Following their proactive example, Catholic Charities will be honoring their canonization by offering special meals to the hungry and homeless at several locations on Divine Mercy Sunday. We are sincerely grateful to the generous restaurants, volunteers, and donors who are helping Catholic Charities make a fitting tribute to these two beloved Popes.

Blessed Pope John XXIII and Blessed Pope John Paul II leave behind legacies that are meant not only to be admired, but to be lived to the fullest. As we celebrate their canonization, let us be inspired by their heroic lives to love one another deeply, and journey with our brothers and sisters through the joys, hopes, and struggles of life.

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Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady

That would be a Whole Other Conversation…

Mary Lou McDonald, Sinn Fein: "What would your expenses run to on average?"

Angela Kerins, Chief Executive of the charity Rehab: "I don't have that with me."

McDonald: "You don't have that information with you? It's just that I was alarmed to hear…now I'm sure, I'm confident… you'll tell me that this is not the case, but that you were a regular commuter by helicopter to different locations."

Kerins: "Any time I've ever been in one, it hasn't been mine and it's cost me nothing."

McDonald: "OK. Well, that could make a whole other interesting conversation."

Yes, quite: a whole other interesting conversation. Whenever the appallingly arrogant Angela Kerins makes one of her increasingly pointless appearances before the Public Accounts Committee, it makes for any number of different tangents that we could go off on. And if any one person was able to make me think of a reason to vote for Sinn Fein (unlikely) it would be Mary Lou McDonald.

Her single-minded pursuit of trying to get anything out of Kerins that approaches something resembling a sane answer is admirable in itself. There's a sheer tenacity there that I'm not entirely sure I would have the stomach for. It would just wear me down.

But it's when it is combined with her looks of sheer disbelief that I believe McDonald captures the bewilderment of the person in the street who is looking at Kerins and, sadly but understandably, saying to themselves: Why would I ever give to charity again, when I see that it's going to the likes of this vain, inexplicably preening woman---and her family.

Let's not forget them, because between the brother, the husband and the rest of the shower, nepotism is alive and well in the grasping, insular world of Angela Kerins.

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I have no problem with paying a person what they are worth; but it's not exactly as If Angie & Co. have really given much value for money. And dare I say it, but on so many levels—not just the horrendously small return on their Rehab scratch cards—they are a dismal failure. On top of that I mean, seriously: in a world where people tend to die just as part of living, who would have thought that anyone could make such a spectacular mess of trying to set up a coffin-import business with the Chinese? After all, people are always going to need coffins at some stage… you'd think?

I wonder if in months to come we won't have a whole new batch of catch-phrases coming into existence. For example: "She made a right old Kerins-up of that one, didn't she?" Or:

"He did a bloody great Angie-misstep there, didn't he? Call himself a Hurling player? Angie Kerins would have played that one better!"

Look, I made a New Years' Resolution that I would try to be kinder to people during 2014, so I'll put it this way: the world of Angela Kerins is…odd. On what planet do you instruct your lawyers to contact the Irish-American website Irish Central and order them to remove an article? I don't live in the States but the last time I checked they still had this troublesome little thing called the First Amendment. In my innocence I've always thought of that as a pretty good idea. Angela doesn't agree-- that is her right; but it's kind of a daft thing to do since tens of thousands of people who had never heard or could care less about her, now have and do.

Then there was Rehab's decision in 2012 to lay off fifteen intellectually disabled staff—many of them in Galway, where I live, and who had been with Rehab for twenty years-- by way of this letter:

"The company identified the posts and individuals for redundancy [how I hate that word 'redundant', like you're nothing]. The criteria was based on what the company believes are essential skills to ensure the future survival of Rehab Recycle, Galway."

It's a shame that it took, in some cases, two decades to identify that these workers weren't up to Rehab's high standards and had been guilty of a 'failure to meet expected productivity targets.'

That's harsh, at best; especially since they were being paid a princely €1.14 an hour over the €7.95 state subsidy. And I may not be the world's most caring person, but if I had been sending out that letter to intellectually disabled workers, I know in my heart that I would have checked first to make sure that they could read.

In this case, many could not. So it was left to their families to read that nasty little dismissal to them. To tell them that they were 'redundant'.

I don't like that. That's the kind of thing that has my teeth grinding. And I don't like it when my teeth grind. It makes that New Year's Resolution all the harder to hold on to. I mean, the one about losing weight went to the wayside around January 2nd; but that kind of heartless carry-on makes me want to reach for the red-hot tongs, the tongue-pincers and forget all about being nice.

Now, I was never the best with Math and so I'll leave it up to you to work out how Rehab would have been better off, financially: getting shot of these workers, or getting shot of Angie Kerins, her helicopters that were laid on by wonderful benefactors; and particularly her quarter-of-a-million-a year paycheck.

Of course, that paycheck is where she really made the public sit up and take notice. She refused,—a charity worker, where transparency as to where the loot is going, is everything—flat out refused to divulge it. Then she announced, as if she was Queen Muck of Chuckle Island, that she would deign to tell us in a month's time what she earned…well, call me an old cynic and you'll be right; but in Brady's Big Book of Home Economics a month puts aside a whole lot of time for some creative accounting.

Still, as of this morning (March 14th), Rehab has made it clear that they will simply be refusing to answer certain key questions in the future, unbelievable though that may sound to someone who doesn't actually live here. In fairness, the Public Accounts Committee has been going after this as much as they can within the parameters of some of our more ridiculous guidelines; but you know what?

It's just not good enough. The damage that these people have done to charities as a whole is really yet to become known. That is a bloody disgrace.

On March 5th, Hand in Hand, the children's cancer charity that I have the privilege of working alongside Jennifer Carpenter with (and she is the real, unsung, motivating force behind it), was invited to Leinster House by Senator Fidelma Healy Eames. The Senator was gracious enough to host a coffee morning for us; and I must say that no one could have put herself out more than she did. We'll never be able to thank her enough.

Although this tiny charity has traditionally served the West of Ireland, the increase in children being diagnosed with cancer has risen enough that our assistance is being constantly asked for by many other counties. The hard truth, though, is that it's tough enough for us to stay on the black side of the ledger; nor are there helicopters (paid for or otherwise) laid on for us to travel in. Strangely enough, not being Angie, we wouldn't expect it. So this was a wonderful opportunity for us to take our case to the TDs and Senators of Ireland.

We were gratified that so many turned up, which I suspect was down as much to the spirit and enthusiasm shown by Senator Healy Eames as to our own considerable efforts.

I think that anyone who has read my columns over the years knows by now that I don't shirk from giving credit where it's due, just as I'm never afraid to throw abuse at those politicians who have forgotten that they work for us. In this case, however, I have no hesitation at all in sending our thanks to the Senator on behalf of Hand in Hand and children who have been diagnosed with cancer. The amount of work that she has put into supporting us has gone far beyond anything that we could have hoped for.

Anyway, I'm going to leave you with Mary Lou McDonald and the…uh, confused, Angela Kerins and her doomed coffin-importing business:

McDonald: "So when did…in what year did Rehab decide to try out this coffin-making enterprise?"

Kerins: "I really…I just can't remember that. I can't recall it. It was…it was some years ago…Deputy, I just can't remember…"

Again, and this is just me being weird, I've a feeling that if I ever went into the coffin-making business for charity… I would remember it. And I wouldn't need a notebook to jog my memory.

By now you know that you can always email me at chasbrady7@eircom.net. But please also feel free to check out www.handinhand.ie

Tradition In Review

Bill Margeson

St. Pat's is over and I assume you have recovered. Was on LiveIreland Radio from Dublin with Imelda on THE day when we got a chat room visit from Tadaka Simafune from Japan and Christina from St. Petersburg in Russia at the exact same moment. The power of the internet. And Irish music!

Speaking of powerful, we have a couple treats for you this month. Donal Clancy of THE Clancys is out with a great bit of business, Songs of a Roving Blade. Everyone knows Donal is a great guitarist and has been in demand for years as a recording guy with other artists. Here he is on offer with his playing AND his glorious singing. The Clancy tradition is in the best possible hands. This sounds so much like all the Clancys, you would know it in a moment in a dark room. "That's a Clancy!" And, indeed it is.

Donal Clancy

Donal is Liam's son. Liam, as you probably know, was the last of the iconic Clancy Brothers. I suppose Donal will have that all his life. "Oh, you're Liam's son!" Something like that can be rejected and stupidly fought against—you ARE Liam Clancy's son. Or, it can be embraced, nurtured, improved and taken even further. Donal has chosen the latter, thanks be to heaven. Donal was a founding member of Danu, leaving the group to tour with his Dad and some other family members, such as another icon, Robbie O'Connell. Donal has returned to Danu and all is well there, for sure. He also did time with Solas. He is backed on this cd by a bunch of really great musicians. If you think of it, Donal is in a perfect place to have gotten to know the best of the best, and then take his pick of backing artists for this album. Liam had the most pleasing singing voice of The Clancy Brothers with Tommy Makem, and Donal has inherited much of it. Of course it is not exact. But, it is a beautiful voice. We waited a long time for this album. The varied song selections, approaches and interpretations bring to the fore the entire musical legacy come down to, and centered in, Donal. He uses these tools perfectly. While still young, this album shows Donal to have the experience and taste of a much older man. I suppose it doesn't do to say, "His Father would be proud." Cliché. But, clichés are clichés because they are endlessly repeated. They are endlessly repeated because they are true. So. His Father would be proud. A great album by a thoroughly wonderful entertainer.

Let's jump the track here. Boldly going into literary reviewer, Frank West Territory, we have to tell you of a brilliant piece of business which combines a magical book and great music. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin is one of Ireland's great composers and musical gifts to the world. He is also the Founding Director of the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in Limerick. He founded the school in 1994, and it has since blossomed. We should write an entire column about it and will. Fab. Well, he has written a suite of tunes around a wonderful book by a woman named, Page Allen. It is called, Madison's Descent. This is tough. It is a book for children. Wait. It is a book for all of us. It is a lovely way to explain to a child the answer to the age old toddler's question, "Where do I come from?" Wait. It is a beautiful book explaining where we all come from and where we are going. It is new agey. Wait. I know. When I first saw it, (and before I read it) two thoughts occurred simultaneously. This art is lovely. (Author, Page Allen did it.) This is New Age crap. Bzzz. Wrong. WRONG. It is wonderful in every way. Were my daughter of the age, I would read this to her every night. It is a magical view of Madison's travel through the heavens, stars and universe before arriving here. Well, that is my favorite part of the book. It reads beautifully, but it should be read aloud to get the mystery and wonder of it. Assuming you are a parent, or know one of a child of the right age, this is a gem. Google it. Amazon it.

The neat part is that Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin agrees and has written lovely music, themed on Madison's Descent. It HAS been recorded, but is not yet commercially available. It should be. Page sent us a copy of the album. Gorgeous. You ARE going to be able to hear at least a few of the tunes this summer and fall in Ireland at The Carrick on Shannon Festival in July, and the NCH in Dublin on Sep 4. You heard it here first. The album is going to be special. Very. The book IS available now. This book is descended through the stars for your family. It is lovely. You know it is. When was the last time you saw us write about a book? Allen meets Ó Súilleabháin. Magic. *Ta!

17th Tionól 4-11, 12, 13

Featuring Liz Carroll, Cathie Ryan and more!

Its time to come to St. Louis for a weekend of music, song, and dancing with some of the best traditional Irish musicians in the Midwest. For the last 17 years, St. Louis has played host to the Tionól (pronounced CHUN-awl). We bring in the best musicians and then get out of the way to let things take their course. This year the dates are April 11, 12, 13 and the music goes mostly non-stop.

Tionól (pronounced CHUN-awl) is the Irish word for a gathering for the purpose of sharing. It's a word often used to describe gatherings of uilleann (irish bagpipes) pipers. Since it was two pipers who initially hatched the idea for the event, it seemed like a good description for what we wanted to do. When it all started, no one imagined it would still be going 17 years later.

Friday night is the kickoff with a concert followed by a céilí. The emphasis is on easy dances that are fun so everyone can join in. It's a chance let your feet do more than just keep time. Most traditional Irish music is dance music so this is a great chance to experience the physical side. No previous experience required.

Traditional Irish instruments, including the fiddle, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, bodhrán (a round drum made of goatskin), and flute, will be heard playing jigs, hornpipes and reels. For those unfamiliar with the name, uilleann (pronounced "illin") pipes are responsible for the haunting music from the sound tracks of the movie "Titanic" and popular shows such as "Riverdance" and "Celtic Women". Since the event was started by pipers, there's always a strong emphasis on pipes and piping.

A vital component of the weekend are the sessions. They're informal and have an ebb and flow of their own as the evenings progress. Getting a chance to meet and talk with other musicians and the teachers in an informal setting is a key element of the experience. So there are ample session opportunities throughout the weekend. Following the concerts, on both nights and on Sunday, the sessions will get underway with toe tapping music coming from every corner.

The workshops are a focus of the weekend. They offer a chance to learn a new tune or technique or discover "how do you do that?" moments from the teachers. There are workshops for most all levels with opportunities for "never-evers" to learn the whistle or the bodhrán as well. So get that whistle you bought out of the drawer and bring it along.

The concerts provide a chance for our guest musicians to showcase their talents. The Friday, April 11, concert is moving to Focal Point, 2720 Sutton in Maplewood, starting at 7:30. tTickets are $15 (under 12 – free) available at the door. Sessions will follow.

On Saturday, April 12, at 8 the second concert will be held at The Sheldon Concert Hall, 3648 Washington Blvd. Tickets are $15 and children under 12 are free. Tickets for Saturday night are available at Metrotix (314-534-1111 or Metrotix.com) or at the door.

Workshop attendees get admission to the concerts and ceili plus a discount on companion concert tickets.

This year Uilleann pipers Tommy Keane and Padraig McGovern will be here. Concertina player Jaqueline McCarthy and harper Sabina McCague will be here as well. Also teaching pipes will be Sheila Friel and Brendan Collins.

We are delighted to have Liz Carroll back. She'll be joined in teaching fiddle by Sean Cleland. Kieran O'Hare, who's lovely album, "Double Barreled" with John Skelton, established his bona fides as a flute player will be here to teach flute.

Cathie Ryan is coming to teach the ballads class. And she's bringing Patsy O'Brien and Matt Mancuso along too. Patsy will teach the accompaniment class while Matt will focus on a new topic, at least for us, of accompanying a singer.

The inimitable John Skelton will be back to teach the whistle class with Bryan Kelso Crow doing the beginner class. Mairtín de Cogain will be here teaching bodhrán along with our own Chris Weddle.

The St. Louis Tionól hosts the only multi-day reedmaking intensive for uilleann pipes outside of Willie Clancy week. This class is Thursday, April 10 and will be conducted by pipemaker and reedmaker, Jim Wenham assisted by Brendan Collins. Class size is limited so everyone gets individual attention. It's a great opportunity to hone your reedmaking skills or just to spend some quality time with other pipers. Your vitually guaranteed to leave with a working reed. And you can switch to a music workshop on Saturday if you wish.

The workshops are Saturday, 4-12 at Nerinx Hall High School, 530 E. Lockwood, Webster Groves. Check-in at 9 a.m. with classes running from 9:30 to 4 with a break for lunch.

www.tionol.org. to pre-register or to obtain a mail-in registration form. Class attendees receive free admission to both concerts and may purchase additional concert tickets at a discount.

On Sunday, April 13th, the weekend will finish up with breakfast and more music beginning at 10:30 a.m. at John D. McGurks Pub at 12th and Russell.

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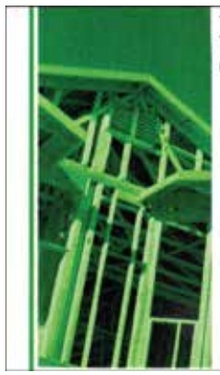

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Chicago Debut of Juno, and the Paycock Musical Version

Juno is a musical based on the 1924 classic Irish play Juno and the Paycock by Sean O'Casey (pictured). Originally produced on Broadway in 1959, Juno has never been produced in Chicago, until now. This epic story is a humorous and heartbreaking chronicle of the Boyle family, a destitute household struggling under the strain of the Irish Civil War in 1922. Juno Boyle, the fearless matriarch, holds her family together in the face of war, betrayal, and her husband Jack's drinking problem. When the family learns of an inheritance from a distant relative, it seems that all their problems will be solved. But as they fight to rise above Dublin's political and social unrest, they must face the tragic truth of their lives. This tale of survival is told through honest and powerful anthems such as "I Wish It So," "We're Alive" and "One Kind Word."

Book by Joseph Stein, music and lyrics by Marc Blitzstein, based on the play Juno and the Paycock by Sean O'Casey, directed by TimeLine Associate Artistic Director Nick Bowling, musical direction by Doug Peck and Elizabeth Doran

April 23 – July 27, 2014 at TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington Ave.

http://timelinetheatre.com/juno/index.htm 312.565.4623.

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Look of The Lass

The Celtic Complexion

For years I have struggled with my very sensitive Irish skin. There was something wrong with my skin, but I couldn't quite put my finger on it. I would use lotions and would break out immediately in a rash. It was annoying and would sometimes just make me want to put nothing on my face and just deal with the dryness.

I am happy to say that I have come across something that really works and I am so excited to share this product with you all! Are you ready for this! The product that I am so excited about and that is working for me is called "CELTIC COMPLEXION!" Can you believe it, there is actually a skin care line specifically for Irish skin!

Jennifer Devlin from Raleigh, NC is the Founder of Celtic Complexion and has created a product that is truly meant for our delicate, sensitive Irish skin. She sent me a sample packet and of course, I was using it immediately.

Here is what Jennifer has to say about her product:

Most commercial creams and lotions are predominately water. Their moisture is quickly absorbed into dry, wrinkled skin. As the water enters the skin, it expands the tissues, like filling a balloon with water, so that wrinkles fade away and the skin feels smoother. But this is only temporary.

As soon as the water evaporates or is carried away by the blood stream, the dry, wrinkled skin returns. No matter how hard you try people will never be able to permanently cure, dry, wrinkled skin with any commercial body lotion or body care products. Besides the water, most lotions have an oil of some type. This oil is almost always a highly refined vegetable oil devoid of all natural protective antioxidants. Or worse, it is a petroleum derivative such as mineral oil.

These petroleum products coat the skin like plastic-clogging pores and creating a build-up of toxins. They can slow cellular development, creating earlier signs of aging.

Celtic Complexion cream does not contain water and only uses unrefined, natural ingredients which the skin readily accepts as its own. This product is hand blended the moment the order is placed and is rich in essential fatty acids, vitamins, vital nutrients and therapeutic-grade essential oils. Made without water, parabens, synthetic chemicals, GMO's, dyes or chemicals, vegan, gluten-free.

My favorite product in the line is the winter skin balm bar. It is a portable rescue balm for dry, chapped winter skin. It provides instant relief and soothing hydration to the face, neck, lips and cuticles.

I highly recommend Celtic Complexion. It is a wonderful product and can be found on www.CelticComplexion.com. And if you use coupon code: ROSE you will receive 25% off your first order!

All the 2014 Chicago Roses for the Chicago Rose of Tralee will be receiving goodie bags of Celtic Complexion the night of the selection – April 5th at the Irish American Heritage Center! Don't forget to get your tickets to the Chicago Rose Selection night and see the crowing of our 2014 Chicago Rose! Tickets are $10.00 for adults and $5.00 for children. Tickets are available on our website: www.chicagoroseoftralee.com and on the Irish American Heritage Center website: www.irish-american.org.

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Tickets: $40.00

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T.D. Sean Crowe

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Honoree Thomas Looney

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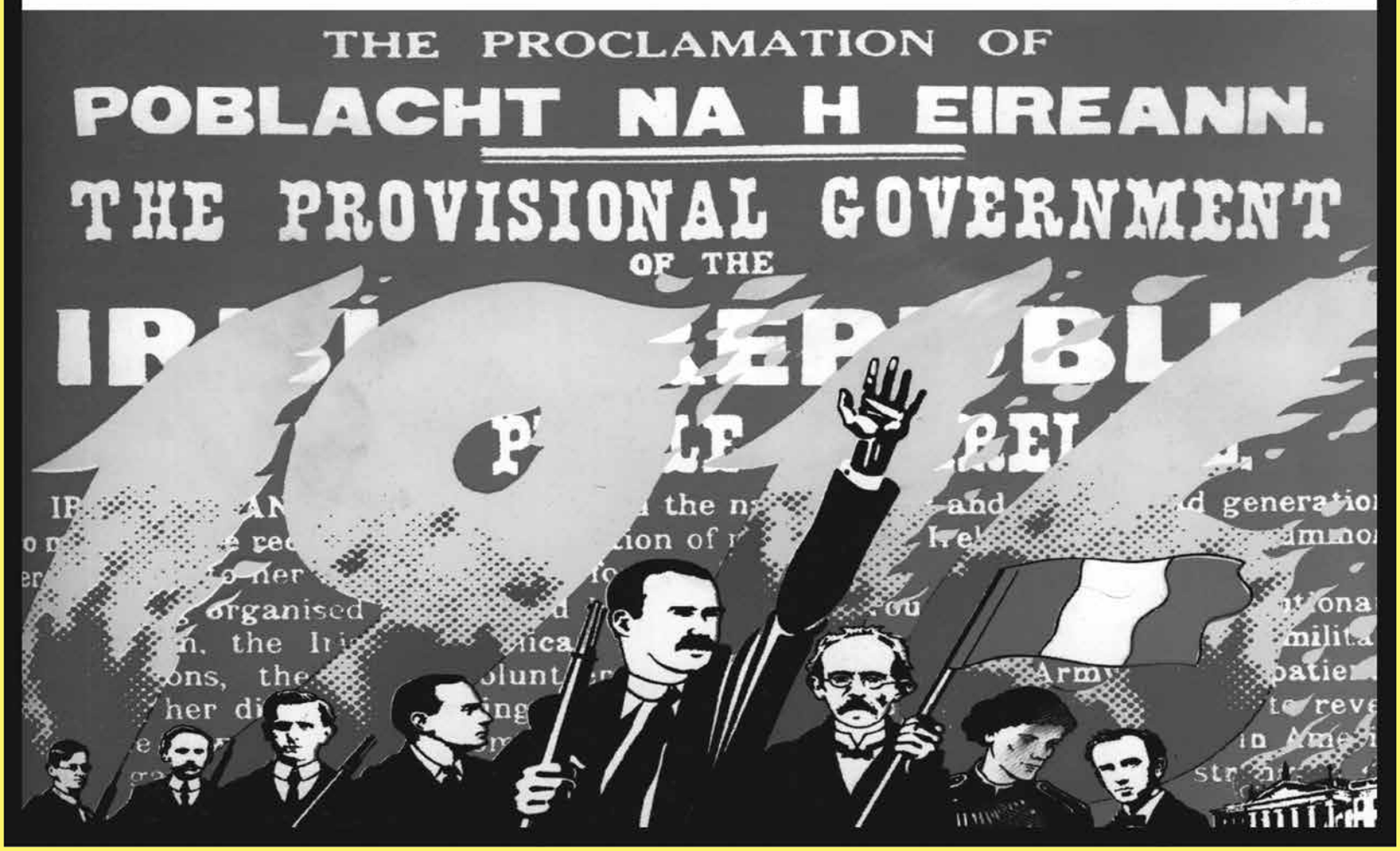
REMINDER: Easter Sunday Mass at the Irish American Heritage Center

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