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Judge Eve Marie Reilly with Kevin Nallon at Northcenter Irish Christmas Market on Dec. 12, 2015.

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Words With Melody

By Melody Gallagher



Dancing in the Heather

Ireland, 1912. Life is not easy for the inhabitants of Great Blasket Island where most make their living fishing on the rough Atlantic waters. Despite her poor upbringing, Aeylish, known as Beauty throughout her hometown, loves the island and the people who call it home. When Aeylish saves wealthy American David Summerland from almost drowning, he believes an angel was sent to save him. Aeylish brings the man back to her home where she and her family take care of him. The people of the island embrace the newcomer and welcome him into their lives. David finds a second home in the beautiful Irish town and the angel who saved him. Over the following weeks, Aeylish and David spend most of their time together, and like a fairy tale, it's not long before the two fall for one another. However where most fairy tales end, Noirin Mele's story is just beginning.

As is custom in Aeylish's town, having turned eighteen, she must help provide for her family. Like many of the other sons and daughters of the island, Aeylish decides to move to America where she can earn enough money to send back home to her parents and siblings. What's more, Aeylish has been promised to her childhood friend Maurice whom she plans to meet in America. She cannot risk the shame she would bring upon herself and her family should she break her promise.



David himself is engaged to a woman back home, but he knows he can never love his intended as much as the Irish girl who saved him. Determined to be with Aeylish despite all odds, he tells her he will meet her in New York after first breaking off his own engagement.

When the times comes for Aeylish to leave Great Blasket, the lovers say their goodbyes. On her journey over, Aeylish ponders her choice until a single terrible night changes everything. She knows she now can never be with David. When her ship lands in America, she and a fellow friend find work as maids in an upper class household despite the various signs posted by businesses that read "Irish need not apply." Her plans are simple: save money to send home to her family and move on from the last few weeks. However the consequences of that night on the ship threaten her plans, and Aeylish is left wondering if this is her punishment. Is a chance at a happy life possible?

Noirin Mele's book begins like a familiar story- a rich boy falls in love with a poor girl despite cultural and class differences- but it grows into something more. Despite all that life throws in their path- distance, tragedy, class and cultural discrimination- Aeylish and David prove that with kindness, determination, and a little faith, life can be as beautiful as we choose it to be.



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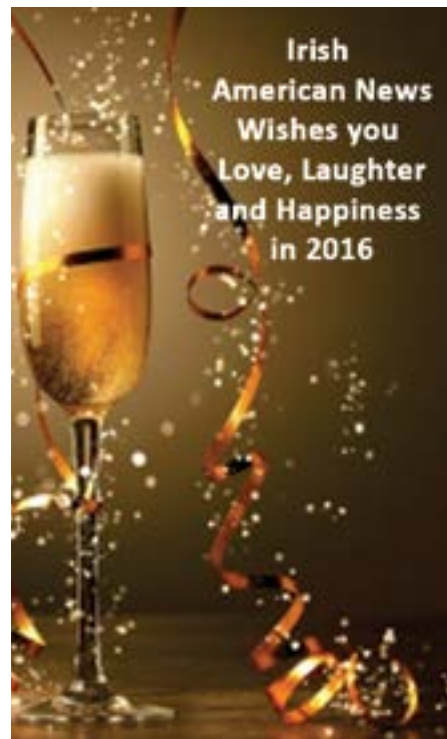


Clancy's Irish Heritage Scholarship

Clancy's Pizza Pub in Oak Lawn is once again offering scholarships to students for involvement in Irish activities. In 2015, four scholars were selected with Luke McGinnis receiving a \$1000.00 scholarship to Brother Rice High School. Luke, a St. Catherine of Alexandria graduate, is active in the community and performs Irish music. Four other students received



awards for involvement in Irish dancing, sport and Irish music. Applications for the 2016 scholarships can be downloaded at the website www.ClancysScholars.com and submitted with brief essay by February 15th, 2016. Students interested in learning how to get involved in Irish activities to nurture their Irish heritage can also visit the website for a list of instructors or stop into Clancy's Pizza Pub, 4624 W103rd St. Oak Lawn 708-422-1110.



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Culture Corner

Winter is a busy time at the Center for friends and family. We have many activities and programs for lovers of the arts. Programs include:

Shapeshifters Staged Reading: *The Shadow of a Gunman*

Shapeshifters Theatre continues its monthly staged readings this winter in the Fifth Province. Kicking off the series on Monday, January 4 is *The Shadow of a Gunman*, the first in Irish playwright Sean O'Casey's *Dublin Trilogy*.

The drama centers on the mistaken identity of a building tenant who is thought to be an IRA assassin. The play is followed by *Juno and the Paycock* on Monday, February 1 and *The Plough and the Stars* on Monday, March 7.

The Fifth Province opens at 6pm and readings begin at 7pm. The audience is invited to stay after the reading for post show discussion with director Elizabeth Ellis and the cast. Local musicians will provide live music before and after the performance. Tickets for the reading are \$10.

Sheila Doorley, Patrick Quinn and Frank Quinn Salon Concert

Sheila Doorley, Patrick Quinn and Frank Quinn return to the Fifth Province in January 2016, as part of the monthly Salon Concert Series.

Sheila Doorley on button accordion is from Tullamore, County Offaly, and



started playing at age four. She has toured extensively with Daithi Rua and the Davey Arthur Band. Now based in Chicago, Doorley has played with Gan Bua, the Barry Fagan Band and at sessions throughout the city.

Doorley is joined by Patrick Quinn, a multi-instrumentalist on banjo, flute,

whistles, mandolin and guitars, and Frank Quinn on guitar, a veteran of the Irish music scene in Chicago

The concert is Friday, January 8 at 8pm. Tickets are \$15 for adults and children 18 and under are free. The opening act is the Academy of Irish Music.

St. Brigid's Day Celebration

Celtic Women International and the IAHC Cultural Committee celebrate St. Brigid's Day with a multimedia presentation. Often referred to as the "Mary of the Gaels," St. Brigid is one of the most venerated saints in Ireland, with churches and holy wells named for her found all over Ireland. The program features history, poetry, music, favorite stories, reflections and readings. The St. Brigid's Day Celebration: Brigid's Journey is Saturday, January 30 from 1pm to 4:30pm. Tickets are \$10 for IAHC or CWI members and \$15 for general admission.

Tea with Eleanor Roosevelt

Enjoy tea with first lady and stateswoman, Eleanor

Roosevelt at another of our Saturday Morning Teas. The monthly teas offer the opportunity to enjoy sandwiches, scones, tea and performances by local actors and historians portraying renowned women in history and literature.

Leslie Goddard portrays one of the most fascinating and influential public figures of the twentieth century. Born into the wealth during America's Gilded Age, Eleanor Roosevelt grew from a shy orphan into a confident, driven woman who championed progressive causes. Drawn from Eleanor's letters, diaries and newspaper columns, this

engaging performance captures the warm, honest, and passionate American first lady.

Tea with Eleanor Roosevelt is Saturday, February 6 at 11am and tickets are \$25.

To purchase tickets to all programs, visit www.irish-american.org, call 773-282-7035, ext 10 or buy at the door.



Thursday Night Music Sessions

Thursday night Irish music sessions come to the Fifth Province this January. The IAHC's Fifth Province inaugural Musical Director, Kathleen Keane will host a new weekly traditional Irish session, Chicago's only Thursday Irish night music session, beginning on January 7. This session will be a gathering of musicians, most with national and even international acclaim, to meet and play tunes, sing songs and dance in a relaxed, informal setting.

The January session schedule with session leaders is below.

January 7: John Williams on accordion, concertina and piano, Jimmy Moore on

guitar and vocals and Katie Grennan on fiddle, whistle and dance



January 14: Jimmy Keane on piano accordion and Dennis Cahill on guitar, mandolin and vocals

January 21: John Williams on accordion, concertina and piano and Brendan Bulger on fiddle

January 28: Sheila Doorley on accordion and Patrick J. Quinn on banjo, flute and whistles

Sessions begin each Thursday at 6:30pm where musicians and students can learn a tune. Sessions begin at 7pm. For more information, contact Kathleen Keane at business@kathleenkeane.com.

Annual Appeal Continues

Our Annual Appeal campaign continues this December. We have received many generous donations from our members and friends and will continue this campaign into Spring 2016. Each year, Pat and Peggy Burke pledge to match up to \$25,000 for the Appeal. We thank you for your anticipated generosity and will list donors through the March 2016 issue.

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President's Message

There is nothing like the smell of a nice turf fire on a brisk day. Nothing reminds me more of Ireland than that wonderful aroma coming from the chimney. Christmas came early for me last month. I truly believe in Santa Claus because every year I get an unexpected gift from somebody. Santa Claus was played by Alex McGrath from Donegal



members filled the Auditorium for mass with Fr. Mike Madigan. We were then treated to a wonderful Irish breakfast from Harrington's Deli. I would like to thank all of our vendors and volunteers, especially the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians for your assistance in ho-ho-hosting the event.

Join us in the Fifth Province starting Thursday, January 7 for our first Thursday Night Irish

Imports when he sent me a box of Irish Turf for my wee humble cottage up in Wisconsin. Never saw it coming, but I could not wait to toss one into the fire. Thank you, Alex.

On December 6, Christmas came early to the Center as well. We held the annual Christmas Bazaar. Hundreds of

Music Session hosted by Kathleen Keane. You can also tune in to our radio show *The Craic with Cooney & Keane* on Saturday nights from 8-9pm on WSBC 1240AM.

Happy New Year from all of us at the Irish American Heritage Center.

Eugene M. Cooney
President



Save the Date for Our March 2016

St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

The Wearing of the Green Dance Sunday, March 6, 5pm

St. Patrick's Festival Saturday, March 12, 1pm

St. Patrick's Day Celebration Thursday, March 17, Noon



Tickets go on sale Monday, February 1



The Craic with Cooney & Keane

Tune into our new weekly radio show, *The Craic with Cooney & Keane* on Saturday nights at 8pm on WSBC 1240AM. As of January 7, we will tape the show at the weekly Thursday Night Irish Music Sessions. All are welcome!

BECOME A MEMBER

Chicago boasts one of the finest Irish Centers in the world. Become a part of it. Running, maintaining and upgrading the Center is a big job that takes big commitment. Your membership helps make the Center happen. To join call 773-282-7035 x10, visit www.irish-american.org.

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-no annual dues

\$500 • Bard - 5-year membership



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the fifth province

IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

JANUARY ENTERTAINMENT

- 1/2 Jeff Ward
- 1/8 Sheila Dooley, Patrick Quinn and Frank Quinn Salon Concert - 8pm*
- 1/9 Mulligan Stew
- 1/15 Joe McShane
- 1/16 The Dooley Brothers
- 1/22 The Tooles
- 1/23 Cash for Kids Johnny Cash Festival* Seamus O'Kane
- 1/29 In Spite of Ourselves

*cover charge

1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28 Thursday Night Music Session at 7pm

January Drink Special Guinness Blonde Draft \$5

Valid for the month of January 2016 only.



January 2016

January 1	New Year's Day	Building Closed	
January 2	Shamrock American Club Card Party	Sham Am Room	7:30pm
January 3	Chicago Bears Football Game	Fifth Province	Noon
January 4	Staged Reading: <i>The Shadow of a Gunman</i>	Fifth Province	Music 6:30pm Performance 7:30pm
January 6	Tara Club Meeting	Room 304	10am
January 8	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili Mor Sheila Doorley, Patrick Quinn and Frank Quinn Salon Concert	Room 111	8pm
January 9	St. Patrick Fathers Social	Fifth Province	8pm
January 16	Quiz Night	Fifth Province	8pm
January 19	Celtic Women International Program: <i>Old Stories form the Whole World of Imaginations</i>	Room 109	8pm
January 20	Tara Club Meeting	Room 304	7pm
January 22	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Room 304	10am
January 23	Cash for Kids Johnny Cash Festival	Sham Am Room	8pm
January 30	St. Brigid's Day Celebration	Auditorium and Fifth Province	6pm
January 31	Genealogy Workshop Great Irish Books Club - <i>A History of Loneliness</i>	Room 111 Library	1pm 1pm
		Library	1pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Mon-Fri	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	4pm-8pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Tues	Set Dancing	Room 111	7:30-9:30pm
Tues	Traditional Celtic Art Class	Art Gallery	7pm
Tues, Thurs, Fri, & Sat	Golden Diners Lunch Program	Kitchen	12:30pm-2pm
Wed	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
Thurs	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsals	Room 304	7pm
Fri	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili	Room 111	8pm
Sat	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	10am-8pm

Library Hours

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

The Heritage Line Staff Kathleen O'Neill, Editor

Contributors: Shelby Baron, Theresa Choske, Gene Cooney, Elizabeth Ellis, Michael Gibbons, Catherine Kelly, Natalie Miller, Mary Morris, Sheila Murphy

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Quinn Is In 162 Years Later

By Scott Powers

Closure, it can be something special. Rick Barrett felt that recently rush over him as received a letter from the Chicago Police Department and then saw a picture of Constable James Quinn's star resting in its rightful place -- first in line in the memorial case at police headquarters.

Barrett fought with the assistance of others to get the Chicago Police Department to initially recognize Quinn, who died on Dec. 5, 1853 from injuries he suffered after being attacked while on duty, as the first Chicago officer killed in the line of duty. That occurred in 2009.

Quinn's star was placed in the memorial case in 2010, but the tradition of the officers' stars being presented chronologically wasn't followed. Quinn's star sat out of order for years, and it irked Barrett. He

kept on striving for what he believed was right and just. Eventually, the Chicago Police Department agreed with him.

On Nov. 18, 2015, Chicago Police Department Human Resources

Division director Donald O'Neill wrote to Barrett, "At this time, I would like to inform you that after review of the documentation related to Constable Quinn's death in December 1853, it was determined the star honoring the passing would be placed in the first position within the Honored Star Case, thereby acknowledging his as the earliest document Line of Duty Death in the Chicago Police Department. The star has been moved from its prior location and is now positioned in the first space at the beginning of the display."

What began with Barrett accidentally discovering that Quinn's death hadn't been properly acknowledged by the Chicago Police Department while he

had been researching his own family led to nearly a 15-year pursuit of the truth.

Barrett obviously never knew Quinn nor had ties to his family -- he's since communicated with many of them. Barrett could have quit countless times over the years when he was met by people who just didn't care, others who sought to disclaim his information and even others who came to despise him. This wasn't Barrett trying use a sledgehammer to break down a wall. This was him having to use a Fisher-Price hammer to do so.

"When you claim the first in anything with history -- first person to discover America, first resident of Chicago, first police officer -- the word first is a fighting word," Barrett said. "There will always be someone who claims ownership of the first. When you come along and find someone before that, even if innocently and don't have ulterior motives, people will dig in. They'll demonize you for the message."

"If I had not grown up in a police family, not had a love for the Chicago Police Department, not had known people who had died, I would have given up. I respect those sacrifices."

Barrett never lost his resolve. He pushed on. And when he opened that envelope and read those words, the end had been met. Constable James Quinn was finally recognized as the first Chicago Police officer killed in the line of duty.

"Wow, it was a combination of happy, relieved, unbelieving at first," said Barrett, a retired DEA agent, who lives in Virginia. "Oh, my God this is finally over. It kind of took your breath away. Being in a fight for 14 years and it was over. ... They didn't invite me to come. They didn't have pipes playing. They just very quietly did it. That's fine by me. That's all we wanted."

The "we" had become many people over the years. It was Brother Rice president Dr. Kevin Burns and the Brother Rice students who had written the Chicago



(l to r): Rick Barrett and Cliff Carlson at the funeral of Maureen O'Hara

Police Department on Quinn's behalf. It was the Chicago History Museum and its historians who also sought the truth. It was all of Constable's family members who voiced their support to Barrett. It was Jim Phillips, Quinn's relative, who reads Quinn's name annually at the Chicago Police Department's candlelight vigil at Gold Star Families Memorial and Park.

Many of those people commented on and/or liked Barrett's Facebook post when he shared the news after receiving the letter.

"I'm a native Chicagoan and my family has been there since they immigrated from Ireland in the 1840s," said Phillips, who is Quinn's great, great grandson. "So, it's been a wonderful experience really to see all the history being written about Constable Quinn and the fact he was the



first Chicago Police officer killed in the line of duty. For that, I thank Rick Barrett who uncovered all this information and brought it to my attention as a surviving family member. Another person who has been outstanding is alderman Ed Burke. He's really a historian for the city." Barrett planned to be in Chicago sometime in the near future. He'll then take a drive to police headquarters at 3510 S. Michigan Avenue and take in the sight of Quinn's star in person. He'll undoubtedly experience more of those overwhelming feelings.

"I'm very grateful that it's over," Barrett said. "I'm very happy for the constable and his descendants. It's like the guy can finally rest in peace." That's closure.

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Chicago Gaelic Park

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A Cháirde

2016 has begun, and this year Chicago Gaelic Park will be joining the world-wide Irish community in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising. Declaring the right of the Irish people to the ownership of Ireland, and seeking religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens, brave men and women of Ireland set in motion events which ultimately led to Irish independen-

dence. Our various events will include theatre productions, a youth living history exhibit, films, parade activities, a physical memorial and more. As we firm up the dates, we will post them on our website and include them in the *Irish American News*. We hope that you can join us as we commemorate the important events of Easter 1916.

**Slán go fóil,
Bill O'Sullivan, President**

The Gaelic Park Players are pleased to announce the Spring 2016 play as *The Shadow of a Gunman*. The play will be in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising. The play takes place in

a 1920 Dublin tenement where Donal Davoren is mistaken for an IRA gunman.

Performances will be April 8-10, 15-17, & 22nd - 24th at Gaelic Park in the Celtic Room. Please watch our website for audition dates and times at gaelicparkplayers.org. There are 8 male parts and 3 female parts that will be cast.



2016 CGP Calendar of Events 2016 JANUARY

1/10	Mass & Breakfast	10:00am
1/10	Classic Carvery - Gerry Haughey	3:00pm
1/17	Classic Carvery - Bernie Glim	3:00pm
1/24	Classic Carvery - Joe Cullen	3:00pm

SAVE THE DATE

2/13 Dancing with Our Stars

Monthly Musical Luncheons resume in March

Ladies Auxiliary.... No Meeting in January (Next Meeting Feb. 17)

Set Dancing Monday Evenings 7:30pm

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

*** Winter Break through February 16, 2016 ***

Pub Trivia Tuesdays 7:30pm

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



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The County Connection Corner



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Fri	Jan 8	Joe McShane	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 9	DJ John Gill	8:00pm
Wed	Jan 13	Frank Rossi	6:30pm
Fri	Jan 15	Bernie Glim	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 16	Tiernan Martin Band	9:00pm
Fri	Jan 22	Gerry Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 23	The Fabtones	8:30pm
Fri	Jan 29	Joe Cullen	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 30	Billy O'Donahue and Larry Nugent	8:00pm

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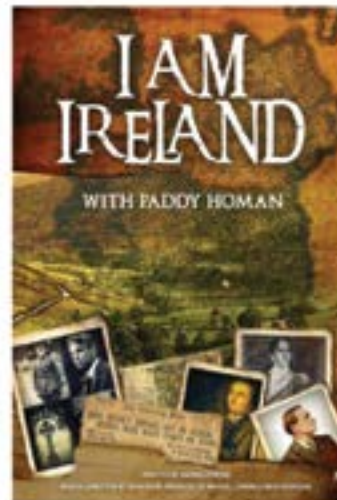
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**From the
Motherland**

By Sean Farrell



**Where
Motley is Worn?**

2016 promises to be interesting with the 1916 Centenary celebrations, the pending General Election and the June UEFA Soccer Championship Finals in France plus whatever else may come.

It marks the Centenary of the Easter Rising – which has made us what we are. Already books by the score have appeared or been signalled about every aspect of the Rising and its legacy. Expect more, as well as a calendar of celebratory events, on the ground and in the media. For if ever a poet got it right Yeats did so with his phrase "All changed, changed utterly." The Easter Rising certainly did that.

And if one thing is a racing certainty it is that the commemorations will be accompanied by an orgy of breast beating and navel gazing about whether and to what extent Ireland today has lived up to, or fallen short of, the ideals of 1916. Some of this, of course, is not new. For example, the phrase in the Proclamation "cherishing all of the children of the nation equally," has been used for years to attack successive governments for the evident disparities of opportunity between children of different wealth and class. Woe betide anyone who queries its literal meaning – surely metaphorical – or some of the other wording in the Proclamation, such as the reference to support from "gallant allies in Europe."

Arguably every History-of-Ireland book written about post-1916 Ireland has touched on the topic. Suffice to say here that "We are where we are," which is a reasonably prosperous and stable Western European democracy which has managed to exorcise over time most of its demons, historical, religious, social and societal. It's a long way short

of perfect, but I haven't noticed many perfect societies around.

This is also Election Year, with the centenary likely to add spice to opposition rhetoric. February seems the probable election date, with Enda Kenny overwhelming favourite to remain Taoiseach (nine to two on). Interestingly also the odds against the current coalition being returned have shortened significantly to nine to two against, though the odds on a Fine Gael/Fianna Fail government remain shorter.

What is indisputable is that Enda Kenny is one lucky general. He almost pulled off victory in 2007. Had he done so he would have been sunk without trace when the slump hit. In 2011 he got the Taoiseach's job, gift wrapped as Fianna Fail imploded, and with the bonus that most of the heavy lifting to sustain and revive the economy had already been done by the two Brians. Early on his government secured an improved deal from the ECB which gave it some wiggle room and it enjoyed a lengthy honeymoon period with considerable benefit of the doubt from the public.

The latest indicators are that the economy bottomed out in late 2010, grew slightly for several years and has now surged ahead at a pace far faster than anticipated by most economists. Partly this has been due to the recovery of the world economy, which has produced a wave of inward investment, generating jobs. The scale of the recovery, otherwise, suggests that, leaving aside the bank catastrophe, many elements in the economy were sound and in position to bounce

back rapidly, with the cuts imposed helping to improve the country's competitiveness.

But, again to demonstrate how lucky Kenny has been, important additional factors aiding recovery have been the sustained period of historically low interest rates worldwide and the decline in energy and commodity costs, all of which helped Ireland's recovery and, inter alia, made servicing the annual debt much less burdensome than in years past. In short the economies and cuts, though painful, could have been much worse.

The jury is still out on whether the government is getting its message across. Even with economic growth touching 7% - almost Celtic Tiger rates - the opinion polls don't demonstrate great enthusiasm for the Coalition. Fine Gael seems steady at around 30% but Labour has yet to sustain the 10% level most commentators consider essential to translate into a significant number of seats. The combined magic number is 80 and with Fine Gael currently looking at around 60 there is some way to go. Uncertainty still abounds. However, it is still the phoney war period. Electioneering will not begin in earnest until January when the New Year budget concessions will certainly do Labour no harm. The stability factor is incalculable but could also prove significant.

We will shortly be presented with the various party election

manifestoes and promises. Much of the middleclass anger of 2011 has gone but this time around expect a new edge to demands from the far left, targeting in particular disillusioned Labour supporters. The polls suggest significant dissatisfaction with the traditional parties but how that will play out in terms of actual voter support for independents and small parties is unclear. The Government will stand by its record, but perhaps it should consider a couple of sweeteners, which, given the buoyant state of the country's finances, it can well afford.

The Government has made mistakes – Irish Water being a prime example. Few doubt the need for overhauling and modernising an antiquated water system to bring it into the Twenty First Century but the quango that is Irish Water proved a political disaster from the off, rallying and focussing discontent, especially on the left and seriously damaging Labour in particular. Its future may be up for grabs with several opposition parties already shouting for its abolition post- election. There is surely a strong political case for the Government to limit electoral damage pre-election by finding a way to fudge, with the promise of suspending domestic charges while the system's chronic leaks are addressed, thus removing water as an election issue.

Secondly, there is the nation's

health. Here unfair and frankly immoral wrongs were done to the most vulnerable during the austerity years, ranging from cuts in home help and assistance to carers, deprivation of discretionary medical cards and other associated cutbacks, all adversely affecting the quality of life of the many affected. These were done in preference to increasing taxes or cutting benefits elsewhere on those better able to cope. The money to remedy this is now there. What is required is a manifesto commitment by the Coalition parties to restore the 2007 situation in those areas by the end of this year. Whatever about any political gain this is the right thing to do.

Finally in June there are the UEFA soccer finals. Ireland qualified after emerging from a difficult group. The main scalp in qualification was world champion Germany, whom Ireland tied in Germany and defeated in Dublin. Four years ago a poor Ireland team were outclassed in the last UEFA finals. This time around we face world number one Belgium and the always difficult Italy. Yet both underperformed at the last World Cup and there is a rising feeling that Ireland could cause a shock or two. There are inevitable comparisons being drawn with World Cup 1990 when Ireland achieved heroics at a time when the economy was on the turn after a difficult time. Perhaps history will do a repeat?

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A Father and Son Re-Union

The holiday season can be a mixed blessing of familiar faces and old hurts as families come together or reflect on how they've grown apart.

For Gary Fletcher Jr. and Gary Fletcher Sr. of Lake Geneva, the Christmas season is a celebration of a new relationship and an old hope.

Both men have had their share of hard times, much of

them spent separated from each other as an estranged father and son. Now both work together in food service for the Lake Geneva Youth Camp near Bigfoot State Park on Geneva Lake just south of downtown Lake Geneva.

LGYC was founded about 65 years ago by 5 men of faith who bought the farm from the Maytag family.

46-year old Gary Fletcher Jr. is Director of Food Services for the camp and also for its sister facility in Williams Bay, Con-

ference Point Camp. It's a big year-round job cooking for large groups from inner-city children needing a quiet getaway to couples and adult groups getting a retreat from the daily cares of life and a peek into what Gary Junior says a calm and peaceful way of life with his conversion to Christianity.

"Ten years ago I was homeless and living in Mexico while my dad was in San Diego...we rarely spoke," said Junior. Father Fletcher Senior, now working for his son as professional head cook at Lake Geneva Youth Camp, says "I was the kind of guy you didn't want to see after dark."

The mutual journey from darkness to light took different paths. Gary Junior sought help for his demons and gained what he couldn't have from a lifelong career in food service working at fast food chains, Denny's national chain and another camp, coming to Lake Geneva in 2005.

"Food service was my whole life, but working here gave my career a purpose," says the younger Fletcher, whose professional black chef uniform has the slogan "Cookin' for Jesus" on his right arm. "I'm not just making a burger I'm working for the Kingdom."

He says he's had the opportunity to influence hundreds of kids that pass through the facility, both as an employer of teenagers and a server of large buffet style meals that involve more than just a few loaves and fishes on a Wisconsin Friday.

"We feed 600, 500, 400 all the time," says Gary Fletcher Junior. Traditionally the camp caters to inner city youth, many of whom have not experienced family closeness or a church experience before. Typically a seven day stay features "good food, counseling, really fun recreational activities, and daily chapel" Gary explains, noting they also have the option to pursue the Christian way of life.

"Those that don't still have a great time and want to come back...there's a Joy here," he notes.

Gary's dad recognized that



The Irish Rover

By James McClure



joy and peace in his son in the years after his offspring took the job in Lake Geneva. When major illness struck not once but twice over the course of 2007 and 2008, Gary Fletcher Senior, whose San Diego cooking track record included stints with the Bob's National Big Boy chain and finer club restaurants, saw his son's changed life and began

my side and to have a dad again" says Fletcher Junior. "He's my best friend now," says Fletcher Senior with no tears, just a glow of joy he once recognized in his son and wanted for himself. "We go on 'Daddy dates' together on a regular basis enjoy the things a father and son should over a lifetime." Gary Senior adds.

The slogan of the Lake Geneva



a change of his own.

"I told Gary, 'Son, I want to apologize for what I've done,'" says Gary Fletcher, Senior who at the age of 64 has a youthful smile and joyful attitude that makes the two men in black look more like two brothers than father and son.

The father eventually made the same commitment to Christ when praying with a friend convinced him that belief in Jesus as the son of God meant salvation from a previously wasted life. Gary Senior moved to Lake Geneva to be with his son where they both worship at Mt. Zion Christian Church.

In September, after time spent cooking at the sister facility at Conference Point, father joined son where they now work together on a daily basis.

"It's great having my father by

Youth Camp is to "provide a life-changing experience in Christ."

For the Fletcher men, that's no slogan but a living, breathing reality. And no regrets over time, even decades lost.

"It's all back now, everything we could have had but lost," reflects Gary Fletcher Junior, before excusing himself to work with his father in the kitchen and the teens they mentor. "Every single bad choice I've made, every bad experience, God has transformed it into doing something good. That's what 'cooking for Jesus' is."

Today it's a just simple fare on the menu as the sun sets over Geneva Lake. But as the father and son happily laugh together amongst the pots and pans and happy children, the meal is as rich as any holiday feast could provide.

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Piping It In

Jack Baker



Good Music Continues To Roll On In

The new year is here and the torrent of outstanding CDs continues unabated. Frankly I'm gobsmacked at the amount and the quality of the recordings that pop up in each days post.

I look at this outpouring of musical abundance as a tribute to the resilience of the human spirit in our musical brethren, that they continue to create such beauty when sales are down and piracy and outright theft of musical recordings are up.

I've received a fistful of great new recordings guaranteed to lift your post-holiday doldrums and fill you with renewed spirit and happiness.

The first of this mitt full of fun is a delightful offering from County Tyrone-based Brid Harper (www.bridharper.com). The self titled CD is a collection of danceable tunes performed by Ms Harper and a collection of fine Irish musicians, including John Doyle on guitar, Trevor Hutchinson on double bass and John Joe Kelly on bodhran. She leads off with as sweet a version of "The Flower of Sweet Strabane" as



I've ever heard. The album is loaded with solid fiddling that is a joy to listen to and it takes a conscious effort to keep your feet still. Unfortunately, you'll have to obtain your copy of this CD from Ms Harper's website, mentioned earlier.

Maryann Keifer of WDCB radio is one of my personal heroes in the music industry for the work she does to spread the word about all the wonderful music available to

us and her efforts to educate us about all the great musicians we have the ability to hear. She recently gave me a copy of an album by Nathan Gourley & Laura Feddersen (www.nathanandlauramusic.com) which I have enjoyed immensely. "Life Is All Checkered" is the album's title and in it, accompanied guitar wizard Brian Miller, these two Boston-based fiddlers take us on a musical journey thru all the many and varied types of fiddling that two highly skilled fiddlers can create. I admit to being a fan of Nathan's since I heard his work on the classic Two Tap Trio album "A Night at the Fair" that he recorded with Brian Miller and Norah Rendell a couple years ago. The new CD, in which Nathan shares center stage with Laura Feddersen, sets a high bar for fiddle duos and lays out track after track for fiddling fans. Another classic CD, privately produced and as fine as any you've ever heard. Grab it quick.

There are days when the mail carrier's arrival is akin to Christmas morning with new and wondrous packages for me to open and enjoy. Such was a day recently when I got a package from Dan Possumato (www.danpossumato.com) containing his new CD, "Mostly Melodeon".

The album is a compilation of tracks from his first three albums and if you've never heard him, you're in for a treat. It doesn't hurt that he's joined by a bevy of talented musicians and together they crank out 16 tracks of some of the finest music you could ask for. Mostly instrumentals with a couple of delightful songs thrown in so your feet can take a break from the dancing. The album is a gem, especially for those of us enamored of melodeon music.

Last recording for this lot is a real delight. I have been privileged to be able to follow the exploits of Burning Bridget Cleary (www.burningbridgetcleary.com) for a long time now and I have watched Lou Baldino on guitar, Rose Baldino on fiddle, vocals & banjo, Amy Beshara on fiddle & vocals and last, but not least, Peter Trezzi on djembe and percussion, build a sound that is uniquely their own. Not trad, not pop, but with elements of both and ultimately listenable. I love their vocals, clear and sweet and blended together perfectly. I'm nor too worried about putting this group in a pigeonhole to define them, they define themselves, and part of that definition includes the words "damn good". Do I sound enthusiastic? Well I am. This band has worked hard to create their niche, and I

have been lucky enough to watch them and it is impressive. Their newest CD, "These Are The Days" has just hit my desk and it is the best they've ever done. I love it and encourage you to give it a listen, you will not be disappointed.

Last note, hot news...Kathleen Keane, new musical director at the Irish American Heritage Center has instituted a Thursday night session in the 5th Province (bar). Hot dog! This bar has cried out for a session for years but it took Kathleen to get down to business and get it started. Get there, buy a pint, open your ears, close your mouth and enjoy. I will join you as soon as I can.

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Daly Investor

By John P. Daly



Comprehensive Financial Planning

As you invest and save for retirement, you will no doubt hear or read about it – but what does that phrase really mean? Just what does comprehensive financial planning entail, and why do knowledgeable investors request this kind of approach? While the phrase may seem ambiguous to some, it can be simply defined. Comprehensive financial planning is about building wealth through a process, not a product. Financial products are everywhere, and simply putting money into an investment is not a gateway

to getting rich, nor a solution to your financial issues.

Comprehensive financial planning considers the entirety of your financial life. Your assets, your liabilities, your taxes, your income, your business – these aspects of your financial life are never isolated from each other. Occasionally or frequently, they interrelate. Comprehensive financial planning recognizes this interrelation and takes a systematic, integrated approach toward improving your financial situation.

Comprehensive financial planning is long-range. It presents a strategy for the accumulation, maintenance and eventual distribution of your wealth,

in a written plan to be implemented and fine-tuned over time.

What makes this kind of planning so necessary? If you aim to build and preserve wealth, you must play “defense” as well as “offense.” Too many people see building wealth only in terms of investing – you invest, you “make money,” and that is how you become rich. That is only a small part of the story. The rich carefully plan to minimize their taxes and debts, and adjust their wealth accumulation and wealth preservation tactics in accordance with their personal risk tolerance and changing market climates.

Basing decisions on a plan prevents destructive behaviors when markets turn unstable. Impulsive decision-making is what leads many investors to buy high and sell low. Buying and selling in reaction to short-term volatility is a day trading mentality. On the whole, investors lose ground by buying and selling too actively. The Boston-based

investment research firm Dalbar found that from 1994-2013, the average retail investor earned 5% a year compared to the 9% average return for U.S. equities – and chasing the return would be a major reason for that difference. A comprehensive financial plan – and its long-range vision – helps to discourage this sort of behavior. At the same time, the plan – and the financial professional(s) who helped create it – can encourage the investor to stay the course.

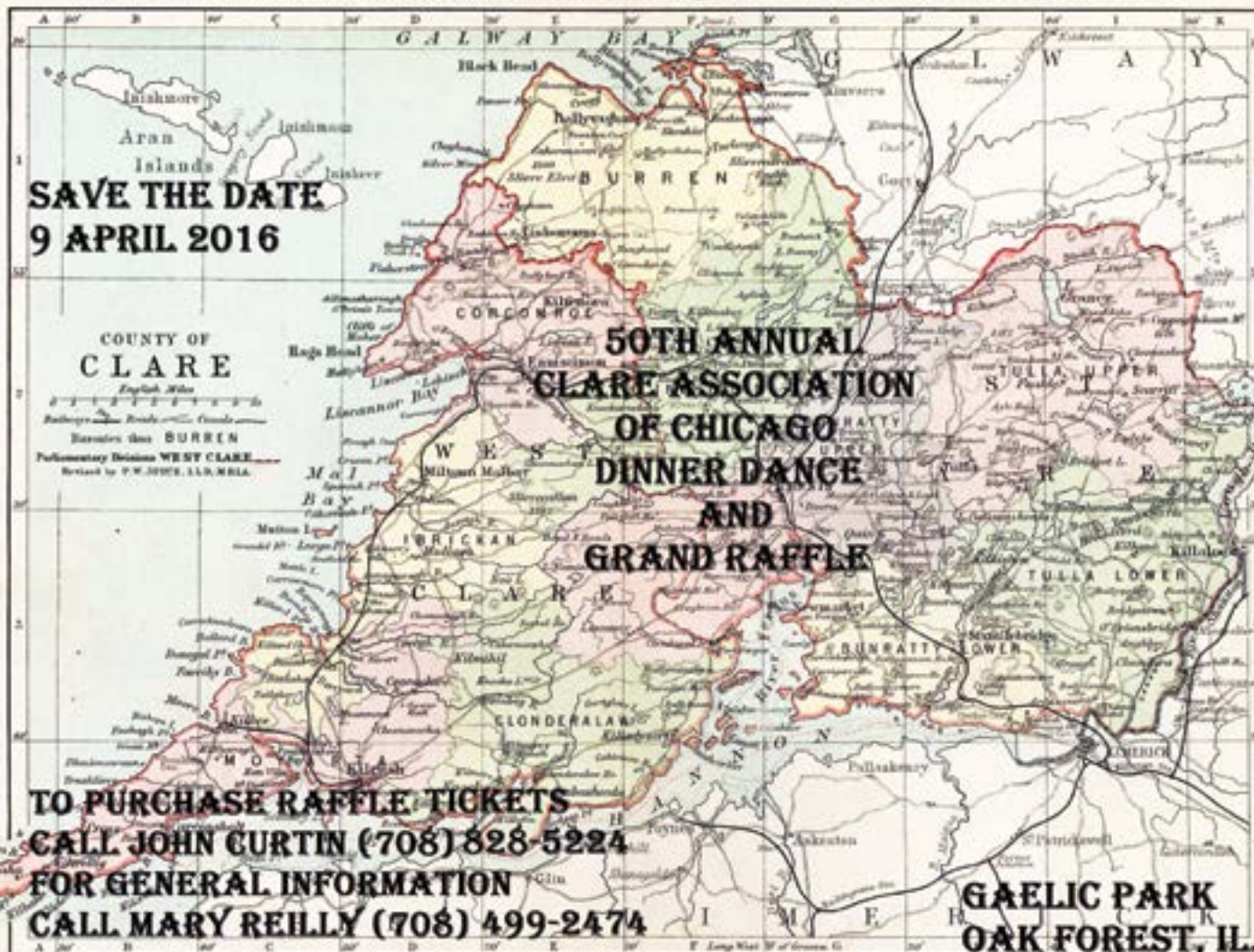
A comprehensive financial plan is a collaboration & results in an ongoing relationship. Since the plan is goal-based and values-rooted, both the investor and the financial professional involved have spent considerable time on its articulation. There are shared responsibilities between them. Trust strengthens as they live up to and follow through on those responsibilities. That continuing engagement promotes commitment and a view of success.

Think of a comprehensive financial plan as your compass. Accordingly, the financial professional who works with you to craft and refine the plan can serve as your navigator on the journey toward your goals. The plan provides not only direction, but also an integrated strategy to try and better your overall financial life over time. As the years go by, this approach may do more than “make money” for you – it may help you to build and retain lifelong wealth.

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. 180 N. LaSalle St Suite 3700 Chicago, IL 60601. Phone: 312-239-1317 www.dalyinvestment.com

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Boy, Are Doughs Guys Sweeeeeet!

For sweet treats, breakfast pastries, and delicious pick-me-ups, you can now swing by the new location for Doughs Guys Bakery, in Palos Heights!

Locally owned and operated, Doughs Guys started off in February of 2013 in Chicago Ridge, but due in large part to a hike in the store's rent, they moved to the new location this past September. It was a decision, says owner Sharon O'Neill, who started the business with her husband Sean,

in Orland Park, and Rock Island Station in Oak Forest), allowing commuters to grab something to-go on the way to work.

The menu ranges from coffee cakes and donuts to pies and breads, and everything is made in-house. Special occasion cakes are also available, with special orders needing a 3-day advance notice for design and creation.

Stop by daily, along with some of the community regulars, between 6am and

Co-Owner Sharon O'Neill



that has been excellent for business. "We're very happy to be here. We looked at another location, but (this place) is just awesome. It was a very good, positive move for us!" She gushes.

And the community seems to agree with her. Since the opening of the new location, their customer base has doubled, if not tripled in just a couple of months. The bakery, which took over the shell of the long-closed Baumann's, offers a more desirable venue, more traffic, and more parking than the previous spot, and Doughs Guys has settled into the community nicely. And although this is now their main hub, samples of goodies are also sold at three different train stations in the mornings (143rd Street Metra Station and 153rd Street Metra Station

6pm Monday through Friday, Saturdays between 6am and 5pm, and Sundays from 7am and 2pm.

Doughs Guys Bakery's new location is at 12248 S. Harlem Ave., Palos Heights, Illinois 60415

Or you can check out what they have to offer at

www.doughsguysbakery.com

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



St. Ernan's Blues-An Inspector Starrett Mystery

By: Paul Charles
DuFour Editions

St. Ernan is a tiny island off the coast of Donegal, near Donegal

Town. It is reached by a causeway. There are eleven priests living here in a large house. They have been sent here from nearby dioceses.

Garda Inspector Starrett is investigating the murder of one of them. He is interviewing Fr. Pat-

rick O'Connell and asks him why he and the others were sent here: "...let's just say they'd enough on me to have me expelled to St. Ernan..."

"Does each of the others know why they are here?"

"we all know we are here due to our own...our own..."

"Transgressions..." supplies the detective.

"Yes indeed, transgressions covers it."

Paul Charles has written 19 novels, most of them police procedurals like St. Ernan's Blues. I have reviewed several.

He was born and raised in County Down. As a delivery boy there he came to know well the drama and intrigue in his village.

Charles became a professional music promoter and moved to London where that business is centered. He lives in London with his wife.

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 brought peace to Northern Ireland after a 30 year civil war. That peace produced a new generation of crime writers. Paul Charles is one of those writers, along with Brian McGilloway, Adrian McKinty, Stuart Neville and Colin Bateman.

Of the many possible quotes, I think you'll especially like these.

As the Inspector and a Ban Garda interview one of the priests, they notice that he talked almost exclusively with the female detective. Afterwards, she says had he, "...not been wearing a very expensive dark blue suit with snow-white clerical collar, she would have considered him a ridiculous flirt."

During the inspection of the murdered priest's room, the inspector opens the medicine cabinet. "He had never seen as many male pampering products (17 in all). There were two large boxes of Lemsip (cold medicine), one on top of the other...the detective was surprised because...the top box was still in cellophane, the one underneath was minus cellophane and appeared much used." Inside the older, well used box was another box "...emblazoned with the Durex logo (condoms)."

The reader of St. Ernan's Blues will learn a lot about the priests at St. Ernan's and a lot about human nature.

The 1916 Diaries Of an Irish Rebel and a British Soldier

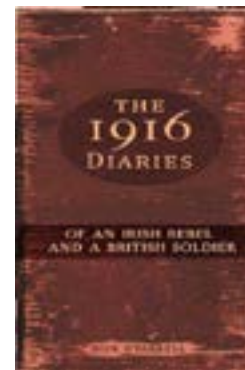
By: Mick O'Farrell
Mercier Press and
DuFour Editions

"I believe I was fated to be here....I could not have escaped it."

This was written in the diary of an Irish Volunteer during the Easter Rising. His name was Seosamk de Brun.

"This book isn't an account of the 1916 Easter Rising as a whole... Instead it's a tightly focused look at events as happened to two individuals....an Irish Volunteer in Jacob's factory and a British soldier in Dublin's city centre."

Jacob's was one of the positions held by the Volunteers during the Rising. The diary was found in Jacob's factory after the Rising by an employee who turned it into Jacob's lost and found. Its existence was only recently learned, "it was rediscovered in the last few years." What an amazing story!



The diary was meant to be pocket size and was only three inches by 2 1/2 inches.

De Brun kept the diary from 1915 until the Saturday of Easter week, when the garrison surrendered.

In it described his union activities and joining the Volunteers. Later, he describe his life as one of the soldiers holding the Jacob's position.

The other diary was kept by Samuel Lomas. He was a Company Sergeant Major in one of the British army units that was hurriedly sent to Dublin. His unit was a battalion of The Sherwood Foresters.

Lomas kept the diary from a hurried leaving from England on Tuesday, April 25, 1916 and for the next fourteen days. Only "a typed transcript now exists held by the UK's National Army Museum." Fortunately, that copy was made. About the unknown typist, O'Farrell says: "we can be extremely grateful to him or her for helping preserve CSM Lomas' works."

"Lomas was involved in some of the most intense fighting of Easter week."

Sgt. Major Lomas "supervised the building of barricades across several streets...and he led storming parties to break into buildings."

For those actions he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. The commendation says he received this medal "For conspicuous gallantly and devotion to duty. He erected barricades under heavy fire..."

Sadly, he was killed a year later during army service in France.

Lomas and de Brun were ordinary men "who got caught up in extraordinary events in 1916." They were like "all the other ordinary men who found themselves...on both sides of the rebellion."

Frank West is a retired teacher and has written book and play reviews since the paper's inception in 1977. Many are online at irishamericannews.com

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pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



Poor Words on Fallen Fireman in Full Ascent

I don't believe for a minute;
no, not a bit of it,
That a Shaft presumes a
full stop,
Like a period at the end of
some line.

At my desk, safe and snug
in doors,
With Leo's clacking of boiler
just below me
I read of the Fall of a
neighbor of mine.

An east side fire on
Baltimore Ave. and a Dad,
A husband, a Halligan-fisted
friend in full drop
Down an unguarded shaft to
a stop malign.

I'm not buying, not for one
minute; no, not a bit of it.
Christ ER had a go at deny-
ing gravity's plea
For one more ascent
to Christ's arms
Icarus enshrine.

There was no Fall.
This was ascent.
The shaft is on on us,
expecting full stop.
A fireman was winged high;
not as we opine.

Words fail me, you see I am
limited and
Limiting runs us off the se-
cured . . . unguarded
Smoke fogged level line

Not our Call; not our Bell;
not our say so,
But His who draws up and
in the True.
I do what what I can here -
Dan is fine.
By Pat Hickey

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Top TIR Awards 2016

Here they are! The Annual Chicago Irish American News Top TIR Awards, honoring the best of the best for 2015 in real Irish music. Chicago is the best city for Irish music in the States, and possibly the world. Major market, major clout, major Awards! Congratulations to all!

Instrumental Cut of the Year: Tartare Frigate – Dallahan



From the dramatic guitar opening to the wonderful arrangement and the tremendous musicianship, this brilliant quintet scores as big on this cut as the rest of their tremendous album, When the Day Is On the Turn. The Tartare Frigate is a tune that has been around a while and recorded by others—but never like this! This cooks big time, and is an obvious choice for Instrumental Cut of the Year. Really hard to get out of your head!

Vocal/Instrumental Album of the Year: Jeremiahs

Surprisingly, the Jeremiahs with their self-titled debut album are one of the easier picks this year. Usually, it is a toe-to-toe battle for this Award, but the Jeremiahs must be recognized. This



Dublin-based quartet is easily the most revolutionary group in The Top TIR this year. Throw out your idea of what an Irish "ballad" group sounds like, especially if you are thinking about the groups of yesterday. No one has ever sounded like the Jeremiahs, nor could they. This group is brilliant, absolutely fresh, and can be around as a major force in Irish music as long as they want to be. You read it here first. The Jeremiahs are tomorrow. Incredible.

Male Musician of the Year: Tom Byrne



From the first notes of Tom Byrne's self-titled album you are stunned. You are in the presence of a master musician and you may well have never heard anything like this before. It is not enough to say that Tom Byrne plays the harmonica. He is the Paganini of the harmonica. Think we're exaggerating? Get ahold of this cd after tracking him down on the net, listen to it all in one sitting, and you

will be speechless. As were we. Our pal, Paul Brock told us about this musician, and we owe Paul a big debt of gratitude! Be it Larry Adler, Toots Theilemans, Brendan Power, Charlie McCoy, The Murphys or anyone else---you have never heard harmonica like this. Throw away any preconceptions. Unforgettable.

Female Musician of the Year: Máire Ní Chathasaigh



She is the best harp player in Irish music. There are several great Irish harpists—we think of Michelle Mulcahy, Catriona McDonald, Ailie Robertson, and Emer Mallon. There are more. They are all uber-fab. But, then there is Maire. Her new album is called Sibling Revelry. Really, there are no words. Just know this. This was an extremely easy pick this year.

Male Singer of the Year: Joe Gibney



He is the lead singer for the sensational and aforementioned Jeremiahs, and he is from Dublin. Joe may well end up changing the way Irish groups sound. For years, producers and festival organizers have sought the "next step" for vocally based groups, following up on the likes of the Clancys. Many have tried, almost

all have failed. The ground is littered with them. Most of these groups utterly collapsed because they were derivative and had little talent, while sounding like pub drunks. Not Joe Gibney. Not the Jeremiahs. He is unique and a blessing! The Jeremiahs album this year proves it. Just listen to King of Rome or The North Sea Holes. The future has come to call.

Female Singer of the Year: Norah Rendell



No one has ever won Female Vocalist of the Year three times. Wait. Norah Rendell just did. We first became aware of her with Outside Track, and since leaving the group sometime back, she has gotten better-as if that were possible. Her voice is as true as are her musical values. We can listen to Norah sing all day. Wait. We have. Her new album, Spinning Yarns, is a project of which she can be proud. Keep your eyes out for her musical pals, Norah Rendell and The Lost Forty, on tour. She somehow finds time for family AND running one of the most successful music schools in America, The Center for Irish Music in Minneapolis. She is wonderful. End of statement, end of story.

Song of the Year: Cold Missouri Water.

My radio partner, Imelda Bhroga and I



became aware of this song just this year when we heard it sung by the brilliant Paul McKenna. It is about the Mann Gulch Forest Fire of 1949 in Montana. It is a bit of creative genius from Ontario in Canada by James Keelaghan. He wrote this quite a few years ago. Very seldom have we been more moved by a ballad regarding a real incident. Another easy winner. James Keelaghan is a sort of national treasure in Canada, and this proves why. It is on his The Recent Future album. There is something in the air or water supply in Canada that produces these magical talents. The song is an emotional AND historical revelation.

fiddler for the iconic, Lunasa in their American gigs, and others around the world. That SHOULD tell you how good he is, but it doesn't. It is his virtuosity on both instruments that sets him apart. He is magic, and so is this album. Can it be done better? Doubtful. Highly doubtful. A master of his instruments and the music.

New Group of the Year: Connla

Connla is a quintet out of Northern Ireland, and a creative explosion. This brand new group released only a self-titled ep disc this year, yet took the international trad music scene by storm. Their calendar is filling faster than anyone's in the music, and you will see them soon. Brilliant. Wondrous singing, incredible musicianship, modern, trad, altogether. As with all the best, they are improving the music while honoring it. They are set for a VERY long run, and we will all be the beneficiaries! Up Connla!

Album of the Year: Buttons and Bows

It is called Return to Spring. The reason that it is the Album of the Year is easy. It is perfect, and the best album released this year. Manus McGuire, Garry O'Briain, Jackie Daly, and Seamus McGuire have put out several albums as Buttons and Bows (this is their fourth). No instrumental group, with the possible exception of Brock-McGuire or Lunasa, is more treasured among musicians. Whether it



Connla



be Liz Carroll, Colin Farrell, or Michael McGoldrick, just mention the name, Buttons and Bows. Watch them smile. The music cannot be done better than this. Return to Spring is a treasure, and if you love the music, you must have it

album this year, Make a Note. What is it about Manchester, England? Here is yet another brilliant musician from that city, playing both flute AND fiddle! He is based in the States now, and is the

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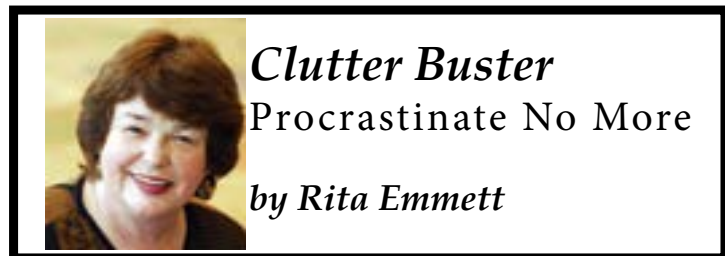
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- DAY 2 TUESDAY** - Golf at The Island Donabate links
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 Lunch after golf with Free Guinness included
- DAY 4 THURSDAY** Golf at Portmarnock links
 Lunch at the golf course included
- DAY 5 FRIDAY** - Golf at Baltray Co.Louth
 Lunch at the golf course included
- DAY 6 SATURDAY** - Golf at Seapoint links
 Dinner and Presentation at Club
- DAY 7 SUNDAY** - Breakfast at Hotel;
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Clutter Buster Procrastinate No More

by Rita Emmett

Are You Procrastinating About Fun and Relaxation?

When I first began talking about procrastination, people put off those things they hate to do. Now people still put off what they hate to do, but the biggest change I've seen over the past 18 years, is that people these days also put off what they love to do.

Over and over I hear:

"I love reading novels, but I have so much professional reading to do, I don't have time for it."

"Our family (or a group of friends) used to get together frequently. Now we're all so busy, it's just a few times a year."

"I love going to plays, museums, movies, zoos, live concerts (of Irish music) but...well.. it's been months (or years!!) since the last time I went."

"No time for fun."

In addition, we often believe that if I kicked back relaxing, experiencing joy, having fun I'd probably feel guilty. Yet we all know that fun, joy and relaxation are important for our mental and physical health, help alleviate stress and prevent burn-out.

Would you believe someone as busy as U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower said:

Unless each day can be looked back upon by an individual as one in which he has had some fun, some joy, some real satisfaction, that day is a loss.

When was the last time you had fun? That you actually felt joy? Do you procrastinate about having fun, joy and relaxation in your life?

The stress, busy time and crisis never ends, does it? Are you simply too busy to think about fun, AND if you DID, you wouldn't know where to start?

Instead of waiting for a doctor to tell you to get rid of stress, do this. Once a day or AT LEAST once a week, add some fun to your life.

If you have to, write it on your "List of things to do" or schedule it in your calendar.

Need some ideas to get you started?

1. Do you know a certain friend or group of friends who always gets you laughing? Set a date to get together.

2. What did you love to do as a kid? Ride a bike? Finger-paint? Whistle? Do it!

3. Invite a gang over (or go out) to watch your favorite comedy, and laugh your head off. Call it

an anti-burnout party.

6. If there's a live concert of your favorite music anywhere in your area, (maybe at the 5th

Province??) MAKE time to attend. If you wait till you GET the time, it'll never happen.

7. Learn one new great joke and tell it all month long.

8. Declare a "Day of Rest" on your day off - no commitments, no work, no chauffeuring people

around, no housework, no paperwork. If you were sick in bed you wouldn't be doing these

things. Well ... take the day to recharge your battery without waiting to get sick.

Watch old reruns on TV. Read trashy magazines. Do something fun.

9. Dance!

10. Start or get back to a hobby, activity, musical instrument, or sport that you passionately love.

No, no, no - don't put it off till you get time. Make the time. Don't procrastinate.

Rita Emmett is a "Recovering Procrastinator", a Professional Speaker, and best-selling author of *The Procrastinator's Handbook*; and *The Clutter-Busting Handbook*.

Go to www.RitaEmmett.com for info on Stress Management, Procrastination and Clutter. You will find books, CDs, and DVDs.

Because people learn in different ways, she also produces 30-day online courses where you receive a 3 minute message from Rita every day for a month helping you break the Procrastination and Clutter Habits.

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From the Executive Director of Chicago Irish Immigrant Support

By Michael Collins

Healthy Communities Cook County

CIIS is proud to be working with over 26 other community organizations, policy groups, and labor unions across Cook County to ensure that the remaining 180,000 undocumented immigrants in Cook County can have access to health-care. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) does not provide coverage for undocumented immigrants residing in the US. As a result of this enormous gap in health coverage, CIIS has joined a coalition that is making a push to make access to health care a reality to everyone regardless of their status. It is also important to note that there are a lot of citizens who still simply cannot afford the market place coverage that they receive through the ACA. The HC3 (Health Communities Cook County) coalition is fighting to get coverage for these people also.

HC3 aims to establish a county health program that is available to those who are ineligible for affordable health coverage. This program seeks to have better care coordination, provide better screening for state/federal benefits, reduce disparities in coverage, and ultimately reduce long-term health care costs. The undocumented and uninsured includes people from all backgrounds and nationalities. It is important that CIIS work diligently to assure that all undocumented immigrants get adequate health care coverage.

O'Malley Event

CIIS had the great privilege of attending an Illinois Immigrant Business Coalition (IBIC) event early December which featured Presidential candidate and ex-Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley. This event was part of IBIC's presidential candidate series and was hosted at DePaul University. Governor O'Malley has consistently been one of the strongest voices for immigration reform and continued to reiterate his progressive stance on immigration at the December IBIC event. Governor O'Malley has once again made the link between a strong economy and comprehensive immigration reform. He stated "I firmly believe that our country succeeds when we include more people, more fully, into the economic, social and political fabric of our country. We must strengthen our economy and hold true

to our values by taking eleven million of our neighbors out of the shadow economy and into the full light of our

American economy." CIIS commends the governor's stance on immigration, especially considering the unfortunate anti-immigrant rhetoric that has been circulating around this presidential election. IBIC has already hosted presidential candidate Lindsay Graham as part of the presidential candidate series. We hope that many more candidates will participate and give the community a clear vision of their immigration beliefs.

Fr. Mick Introduction

CIIS is extremely happy to announce that Father Mick Madigan has decided to come on board and become our part-time chaplain. Fr. Mick has been volunteering with CIIS since January 2015, conducting our senior masses and taking any pastoral referrals that we receive. Fr. Mick has been a tremendous help to CIIS over the past 11 months and we are very pleased that we will be seeing a lot more of him.

Fr. Mick is a native of Limerick, Ireland. Ordained in 1987, he belongs to St. Patrick's Missionary Society (St. Patrick Fathers) and has spent over 25 years working in various parts of Africa (Zambia, Nigeria and South Africa). Fr. Mick was assigned to Chicago in 2012 as Director of Mission Awareness and Promotion for the U.S. Since coming to Chicago, he has become increasingly involved with the Irish community. As chaplain he is available for counselling, baptisms, funerals, marriages, visitation to the sick and prisoner support. He can be contacted through Chicago Irish Immigrant Support or at:

St. Patrick Fathers: 8422 W. Windsor Ave, Chicago, IL 60656 Tel: 773-887-4741

Mobile: 773-501-2973

E-mail: mgmadigan87@gmail.com

CIIS Update

I would like to send a special thank you from the CIIS staff and the CIIS board to all of everyone who has donated to our Annual Thanksgiving Appeal. The funds we raise through fundraisers like this are essential to the work that we do and the services that we provide. Thank You!

CIIS is continuing to host legal clinics for anyone who might have immigration questions. These clinics are currently being held once a month by appointment only. Each clinic provides a client with a 30-minute face-to-face consultation with a fully qualified immigration attorney. Our

next legal clinic is being held on Thursday January 14th from 5:30pm-8:30pm. We host these clinics on the second

Thursday of each month. Please call (773) 282-8445 or email mcollins@irishchicago.org to schedule your appointment.

An Immigrant's Musings

Michael Leonard



ISIS & IMMIGRATION

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris and more shooting of innocent civilians in the US by people who had pledged allegiance to ISIS, I have been asked, how should the US Department of Homeland Security act to keep such extremists out of our country?

Donald Trump's answer is to ban all people from Muslim countries from entering in to the US. And this would include refugees that are fleeing the war in Syria. The Republican candidates for 2016 have accused President Obama of being soft on ISIS and of having no real strategy to deal with the extremists.

The fact is I think that the Obama administration has been slow to reveal a comprehensive plan to deal with ISIS. This should not be taken to mean that Obama is soft on terrorism. I am convinced that our President is very committed to doing everything in his power to counteract the influence of extremist groups, not just in the Middle East but also in Africa and other places where such groups are finding support.

The best response to Trump's unreasonable proposal I have read came from Senator Bernie Sanders: "Demagogues throughout our history have attempted to divide us based on race, gender, sexual orientation or country of origin. Now, Trump and others want us to hate all Muslims. The United States is a great nation when we stand together. We are a weak nation when we allow racism and xenophobia to divide us," Sanders said in a statement reported by the AP.

Without doubt, these are challenging times and in such times it is easy to react driven by fear and the temptation to "tar all Muslims with the one brush." Those who are willing to stop and think about the issues involved and how to respond in a mature and reasonable manner will conclude that Sanders is right. We, and indeed all those living in our World who value democracy and the rule of law based on Justice and equality for all, need to hold firm to the principles on which our

nation was built. We need to work harder to engage our allies and in particular Muslims within and without America who pledge their support to the freedom of religion and the cause of democracy, promoting everything that unites us as brothers and sisters who together will defeat the actions and beliefs of ISIS and its allies.

And my personal response to the original question is: the U.S. immigration department in conjunction with Homeland Security carries out a very rigorous check on all persons seeking asylum or refugee status in the US. We need to trust our nation's agencies and all elected officials on both sides of the isle to work together and do everything in their power to keep the homeland safe from further attacks.

FEAR V FREEDOM

There once was this criminal who had committed a crime. (Because, hey, that's what criminals do. That's their job!) Anyway, he was sent to the king for his punishment. The king told him he had a choice of two punishments. He could be hung by a rope or take what's behind the big, dark, scary, iron door. The criminal quickly decided on the rope. As the noose was being slipped on him, he turned to the king and asked, "By the way, out of curiosity, what's behind that door?" The king laughed and said: "You know, it's funny, I offer everyone the same choice, and nearly everyone picks the rope." "So," said the criminal, "Tell me. What's behind the door? I mean, obviously, I won't tell anyone," he said, pointing to the noose around his neck. The king paused then answered, "Freedom, but it seems most people are so afraid of the unknown that they immediately take the rope."

My wish for all our readers is: may the New Year be one in which we choose to confront our fears, face them, go beyond them and live with the freedom of the people of God. Have a blessed and prosperous New Year.

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

View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



Hume: From Politics to History

On Sunday 21st November, John Hume's wife, Pat Hume, appeared on Miriam O'Callaghan's "Sunday with Miriam" programme, on RTE Radio 1, to speak about her husband in advance of the launch of a book on his life and work. Of all the issues covered in the conversation, the one that caused most comment in Ireland related to John Hume's health condition. He has, Pat Hume explained, been suffering from dementia for many years and his memory has now deteriorated very considerably. Pat Hume praised the people of Derry City for their compassion and support for her husband: taxi drivers who see him wandering in the streets stop and ensure that he gets home safely. Derry, she stated, is a dementia friendly city. The public outpouring of sympathy for Hume's health, however, is more a reflection of Ireland's view of Hume than the fact that he suffers from a relatively common affliction.

Hume is a figure of rare stature in Ireland, both North and South. In the North, he is inevitably associated with the party he co-founded, the SDLP (Social Democratic Labour Party), and seen as

the dominant nationalist political leader of the latter part of the twentieth century, albeit one who was also largely accepted by unionists as a sane and sensible voice throughout his career. In the South, Hume was for four decades an enormously authoritative political figure. National newspapers, the national broadcaster and successive governments looked to Hume far more than to anyone else as a touchstone for Northern affairs. An interpreter and educator, Hume's authority on the Northern Irish crisis outstripped that of anyone else on the island.

It is fitting, given his older age and the indebtedness that Irish people feel towards Hume, that an insightful and wide-ranging collection of essays on Hume should issue just now. Editors of John Hume: Irish Peacemaker, Sean Farren and Denis Haughey, assembled an illustrious group of politicians, diplomats and academics to assess John Hume's work and legacy in this book.

President Bill Clinton, in his Foreword to this book, praises "John's unwavering willingness to elevate principle and peace over person and party". Hume belongs to that rare species of politician who create a mandate based on conviction rather than the

impulse of self-advancement. It is consistent therefore that when the moment came to "bring the IRA in from the cold" he was willing to do so even at great expense to his party electorally. Along with the Ulster Unionist Party, the centrist parties' hold in the North hollowed out in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement (1998) and more especially after the St Andrew's Agreement (2006). Those resolutely opposed to compromise and power-sharing for decades, did just that when the prospect of holding power in their own hands presented itself.

For a sweep of clearheaded analysis of the Troubles and the Peace Process, Sean O hUiginn's chapter is outstanding. A former Irish Ambassador to the USA, he touches on the importance of US involvement in this book; Nancy Soderberg's chapter develops this theme. Soderberg staffed Irish affairs for President Clinton, as she had done for Senator Ted Kennedy before. She traces US Congressional support for an equitable agreement in the North in tandem with the support of the White House, from President Jimmy Carter's 1977 promise of support through to the Presidency of Bill Clinton. Full awareness of the work that legislators did, and the uninterrupted commitment of Speaker Tip O'Neill in particular, is unfortunately all too often airbrushed out of history now, supplanted by a simplistic reading of the Peace Process as having begun with the "Adams visa" (1994). Soderberg's

historical markers serve as useful correctives against that perspective.

Amid the rostrum of these well qualified commentators on Hume, it may be churlish to identify the absence of other contributors, particularly since all of the dimensions of Hume's career and achievement are certainly impossible to fully encompass in one volume. Still, the testimony of his deputy leader during the 1980s and 1990s, Seamus Mallon, could have given this book an added clarity. Mallon's commentary on Hume in recent years has been critical of his "narrowness" and "selfishness". Does Mallon hold Hume responsible for the increasing marginalisation of the SDLP in Northern Irish affairs? Mallon's criticisms aside, he continues to fulsomely acknowledge Hume's extraordinary capacity and achievement. In their implacable opposition to violence and their commitment to constitutional politics, they always remained united.

This book ends with a chapter by Pat Hume detailing the human and familial side of her husband. Mother to his five children, Pat Hume held down a job as a teacher and yet also managed to be her husband's political manager all her life. (She generously acknowledges the support of friends, family and neighbours in achieving that balancing act). She also credits astute police work which alerted her to the worst attacks and threats to her home: it was repeated bombed, the threat that members of her family

could be kidnapped or harmed was constant, and occasionally the family had to evacuate. When her health started to suffer in the late 1980s as a consequence of this harassment, a weekend house in Donegal became a haven from the chaos of Derry and a succour to the family. In Donegal, after a life of extreme stress, international travel and an exhausting schedule, John Hume is now enjoys peace. As Auden wrote of Melville:

*"Towards the end he sailed into an extraordinary mildness,
And anchored in his home and reached his wife
And rode within the harbour of her hand..."*

Hume is a familiar figure in local restaurants and bars and it is not unknown for him to walk into a restaurant—either in Donegal and Derry—and for everyone to stand up.

Historical figures emerge more slowly than political ones, but when they do their permanence is far more secure. Hume's political career concluded more than a decade ago and the delicate shift towards seeing his place in Irish history as distinct from his presence within the contemporary political landscape will become more pronounced as time passes. This book plays an admirable part in the ordering and chronicling of Hume's role in Irish history. Time itself will do the rest.

John Hume: Irish Peacemaker, Edited by Sean Farren and Denis Haughey is published by Four Courts Press

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Sharing a Pint

By Scott Powers



I'm German. I'm Polish. I'm Swedish. I'm Irish.

Like a lot of Americans, I'm a bit of everything. My great grandparents, grandparents, parents and everyone else down the line crossed many European borders to build my family tree. I couldn't tell you ethnic percentages at this point. I may even be missing a heritage. I can't imagine what the Powers family will look like a few generations from now. Sure hope we can add some athleticism along the way.

But of all my roots, I obviously embrace the Irish side much, much more than any other. It's not as if I'm penning "Sharing a Pierogi" for the Polish-American News as well.

Maybe everyone goes through this, but I feel like I'm at a stage in life where I'm analyzing myself more than ever. Such as, where in life did I become fearful of talking in group settings or why do I like the music I like (I can listen to almost anything except for country). There are life's bigger questions and the smaller ones. Something that would certainly fall under the latter is why I have embraced my Irishness?

It all began, I think at least, in Mr. Brennan's car listening to "All for Me Grog" and other such pub classics when I was in eighth grade. Mr. Brennan was my good friend Graham's father, and they were from Ireland. (Side note, be on the lookout for Graham Brennan. He's one of the brightest up-and-coming college soccer coaches.)

Maybe it's as simple as the accent being easy on the ears and the music was fun. Who can argue with? "Well it's all for me grog, me jolly jolly grog, It's all for me beer and tobacco. For I spent all me tin on the lassies drinking gin, Far across the western ocean I must wander."

In high school, the music and the drinking – sorry, I may have had a few drinks while underage – at the South Side parade, Gaelic Park fest and similar Irish party atmospheres were what my friends and I took to. We wore tweed caps, listened to Black 47, The Pogues and The Saw Doctors and often over-served ourselves. That was what being Irish meant at that time.

Fortunately, it means more now. I was introduced myself to Irish history as I got older. The Easter Rising, the famine, the Troubles and everything else was so interesting. I had never been into U.S. history, but Ireland's history did it for me. I think part of that was because the history wasn't that old; maybe also because I didn't associate it with my elementary school teachers.

With the years, I delved more into each part of the culture. I feel like I received an Irish education every Sunday night I attended Fast Eddie's pub on Northwest Highway. There was nothing like a Sunday there. I read more about Irish history and added books to my collection. I got more into soccer and became a fan of Roy Keane and Shay

Given. I moved beyond the Irish bands I knew.

My first trip to Ireland came in 2002. I can still remember sitting beside the window overlooking all the green fields as we made our descent into Dublin and wondering if this was really happening. I was only 23 then, but I somehow thought I'd never get to Ireland. Since that first trip, I've been Ireland six other times, including once to get married in Spiddal. That obviously added another layer to the significance Ireland had for me.

This column has also enriched my love for all things Irish. I've met some incredibly interesting people and been exposed to great art, music, movies, books, theatre, food and drink from writing this column. I didn't get enough of that when I wasn't writing it.

On my mind lately has been a possible trip to Dublin for the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising. It's something I wanted to do for a long time, but then stopped thinking about it because I assumed I'd be covering the Blackhawks and another playoff run this season. Well, that's since changed, and now I'm starting to ponder the trip again. I should just make it happen, shouldn't I?

Maybe I haven't been fair to my German, Polish and Swedish ancestors, maybe I'll write "Sharing a Bierstiefel" later in life. But I will forever cling to my Irish roots. I can't help it. It's all for me grog.



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New Rules For J1-ers

by Jen Shea

A new visa rule will cut summer visitors from Ireland, and imperil a cultural exchange program that endured for nearly 50 years.

"Students aren't following the rules, is essentially the way they put it," Irish immigrant support director Mike Collins said. "There's too many [people] without jobs. And therein lies a compliance issue for them."

While the agencies that announced the shift are separate from the State Department, they get most visas it issues and sell them to applicants. The J1 program is for summer work abroad. Many visitors – from 38 countries, for nine months or less – are students who go overseas for a summer.

The change affects citizens from Ireland, the Czech Republic, France, Germany and the UK. J1 applicants from those countries will have to find jobs in advance, and get them approved by the agencies, before they can buy a visa to the U.S.

"I think the pre-placement requirements [for] summer J1ers will affect the amount of people applying," said Claire Elliott, a 22-year-old intern. It "will put a lot of people off."

Elliott visited Chicago from County Armagh, in Northern Ireland. She worked at a suburban summer camp. "I wasn't sponsored by either CIEE or InterExchange," she added. She applied for her summer camp counselor visa from Queen's University Belfast.

"The program is really treasured in Ireland," said Consul General Orla McBreen. The Irish consulate in Chicago, where she is stationed, is one of six consulates beyond the Washington embassy. McBreen represents Ireland for the Midwest.

"It is certainly a significant change. There is going to be some kind of a drop," she said.

Irish Taoiseach Enda Kenny said the shift is "an abrupt ending to the J1 system as we know

it." The Irish government has projected a 60 to 80 percent plunge in J1 participation.

"Because of a series of issues that have arisen, the authorities that issue J1 visas seem to be bent on introducing a requirement for pre-employment for young people before they go," Kenny told the Dail, Ireland's parliament, this autumn.

According to the Irish embassy, more than 150,000 people have visited America from Ireland since that program began nearly 50 years ago. Miley said Ireland Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Charlie Flanagan discussed the issue in Washington with State Department officials.

"The State Department has met with officials from the government of Ireland to discuss the new [travel] policy," State Department spokesperson Nathan Arnold said.

At the Irish Immigrant Support (IIS) office, Collins pulled a chair over to a desk scattered with dusty objects – paperclips, a landline phone. An Ireland map was framed and propped against the wall.

"There are other agencies," he said, but they are very small. They have five to six visas each. "The State Department is not just going to give you 5,000 visas," he said. "Like, you can't start a business tomorrow, and get 5,000."

The Irish Institute of Pittsburgh is among those agencies. It sells summer J1 program visas, to people from Northern Ireland and Ireland.

"We've been capped at only 5 visas the past five years," Irish Institute of Pittsburgh president Jim Lamb said. "We recently were granted 5 more."

He said they thought the State Department set the preplacement policy, and the shift applied to everyone. State Department spokespeople had no comment before deadline.

The CIIC found out about the shift shortly before they went public, but the agencies had planned it since at least October. "CIIC continues to support this very important cultural

exchange program," Dibra said.

The IIS office is on the third floor of an abandoned schoolhouse on Chicago's northwest side. The Irish consulate sends recent arrivals from Ireland to them.

The CIIC found out about the shift shortly before they went public, but the agencies planned it since at least October. "CIIC continues to support this very important cultural exchange program," Dibra said.

The Irish consulate's McBreen said some smaller agencies had pre-placement requirements. The two main agencies have a list of prohibited jobs.

"On a small scale, in Chicago anyway, that was already happening," she said, of the likely result. "There's a whole range of places" throughout the Midwest where J1's might prefer to apply.

The traditional J1 program hubs are places like Yellowstone and Myrtle Beach. They get more J1 students from Eastern European countries. Irish students usually apply to visit major cities.

"This is not the J1 program of the past," CIIC board president Celine Kennelly said.

Students who find employment, for example in construction, sometimes ignore the sponsors' terms. The agencies' decision could help them charge to place students in jobs, but Collins said that might prove self-defeating.

People from those countries can visit America over the summer, and bypass the agencies' J1 program. The shift may prompt more of them to apply after they get to the U.S. on a tourist visa.

He has also spoken to businesses that employ J1 students. Many work in bars and restaurants, as the students who died in Berkeley did.

"As far as the quality of the program goes, I'm not entirely sure if I buy into" the agencies' argument, he said. "A lot of them weren't happy about it at all."

Collins said they expect it will have unintended consequences.

"It's all up in the air at the moment," he said. "Not everyone will be able to find a job."

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**David McDonnell:
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A Journeys End and a New Beginning For Ireland in 2016?

The Irish international soccer and rugby teams have plenty to look forward to in 2016, a year that once again promises to be a memorable year in Irish sport.

Let's commence with the former. The Irish soccer team finished 2015 in a whirlwind of romance. First they overcame the current World Champions, Germany to keep their qualifications hopes alive for next summer's European Championships and they went on to achieve this ambition by beating Bosnia and Herzegovina in a two-legged playoff.

It was a significant achievement for the players who had come through a decidedly tough group alongside the aforementioned

Germany, Poland and neighbours Scotland and it was a major feather in the cap for the management team of Martin O'Neill, and his assistant Roy Keane, to qualify for a major tournament in their first campaign.

It seems that the good old "olé olé" days of yesteryear are back to entice and inspire a new generation.

A Journeys End

In mid-December, the Republic of Ireland were drawn into a decidedly challenging tournament grouping alongside: the present number one ranked team in the world, Belgium, perennial European powerhouse, Italy and a Zlatan Ibrahimovic inspired Sweden.

Although it certainly characterises a tough draw for Ireland, there is undoubtedly reasons for hope.

If Ireland can take one lesson from the last major international tournament, the 2014 World Cup, is that there is currently no great

cohesion or the array of talent that is being housed at the very best clubs sides in Europe.

In my opinion, the last international side worthy of the 'great' depiction was the Spanish side that reigned from 2008-2012.



team in international football. I would concede that there are certainly great players but argue that no international team has the

In the last World Cup, teams with the better attitude and work-rate routinely overcame opponents with the greater reputations.

We saw the USA devour Cristiano Ronaldo and his Portuguese teammates, but no team epitomised this attitude more in that tournament than Costa Rica.

Grouped with England, Uruguay and Italy, they were viewed by many commentators as the least likely team in the entire tournament to make it to the knock-out stages. Many established football commentators had them losing every game. Yet they ended up topping the 'Group of Death' and made it all the way to the quarter finals, where they were a penalty shootout away from making the final four.

It was a heroic performance based on a competitive spirit and hard work added to a stellar belief in themselves.

These particular traits are what this Irish soccer team has in spades. So many times during the qualifying campaign, Ireland's never-say-die attitude earned them valuable points. There was Aiden McGeady's last minute winner away in Georgia, John O'Shea's

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injury time equalizer in Germany and Shane Long's late goal at home to Poland.

It has become the defining characteristic of this Irish team and one of the reasons why the Irish public are again taking the fortunes of their soccer squad to heart.

For a side that lacks its fill of high calibre technical players, their attitude is a strength that should serve them well in next summer's tournament.

A New Beginning

In contrast the Irish rugby team finished a four-year cycle, which culminated at last year's World Cup.

After a season that started so promising, with winning their second successive Six Nations championship, it ended with a whimper.

Harbouring ambitions of at least making it to the final four of the tournament, they won all their group games, and were particularly impressive against France, to progress to the quarter-finals as group winners. However, they were thoroughly defeated by an inspired Argentina in their last eight match-up.

Ireland's lack of strength in depth in key positions was of the reason for their undoing. Additionally, the absence of key leadership on the field also added to their defeat to Argentina.

For coach Joe Schmidt, it was his first significant professional disappointment since he arrived in Ireland as Leinster coach in 2010. At club level he won two Heineken Cups, two Pro-12 League titles and the European Challenge Cup. As the Irish international head coach, he won two Six Nation championships in his first two attempts.

However, losing in the RWC quarter final will be a noteworthy failure for Schmidt, but what will be of great interest

is how he will approach the beginning of another new four year cycle.

Will he go with the same tried and trusted group he took to the last World Cup or will he decide to blood new players into the side with one eye to the future?

There are many young players in Ireland with terrific ability that, as of yet, are not getting regular games with their provinces as the provincial coaches have tended to go with experience over potential. At Leinster Gary Ringrose and Billy Dardis have the capability to be international stars, while Stephen Fitzgerald of Munster and Sam Arnold of Ulster are two others with the capacity to succeed at the highest level.

Since the Heineken Cup was restructured to become the Champions Cup, the Irish provinces have lost much their attracting power to their European counterparts.

The television deals in England and particularly in France has seen even the lesser established teams being able to routinely outspend the Irish and the other Pro 12 sides in terms of wages to attract the best foreign imports.

After the recent World Cup, there was a mass exodus from New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, as players looked to earn higher wages in Europe. Munster, Leinster and Ulster, even up to two years ago, were popular stopping points for these foreign stars.

However, this has changed significantly. Over the last year, Munster made plays for Adam Ashley Cooper of Australia and New Zealand's Conrad Smith, both veteran players who wanted a new rugby experience in Europe before retiring. That Munster lost out on both targets to teams not competing for honours in the French League shows how far the Irish provinces have fallen in enticing the best foreign talent to augment their indigenous players.

At the moment, the thought of the top Irish players themselves leaving for better money in France seems almost inevitable.

Unless the provinces come together and fight for changes to better their plight, it could threaten, not just Irish sides competing for the top honours in Europe, the game itself in Ireland.

32 Inducted Into Boxing Hall of Fame

The inaugural Illinois Boxing Hall of Fame recently inducted 32 boxers, trainers, promoters and referees into the hall of fame. The HOF banquet was held at Abbington Banquets in Glen Ellyn before a sold out crowd of over 400. Among the

Superintendent of the park district and managed the parks and its thousands of employees. He has been named Man of the Year by more than 25 civic and private organizations. Dozens of rated and world champion boxers began their careers un-



inductees were several of Irish heritage.

John "Jackie" Collins is the son of a Chicago policeman who was a hugely popular middleweight with a pro record of 34-2-1. Collins had a reputation as a smart, tough middleweight who made the most of his talents. He had victories on national TV over fellow Hall of Famer Lenny LaPaglia and Ken Whetstone which moved him up in the rankings. He later won the USBA Middleweight Championship. As an amateur Collins won the Chicago Golden Gloves Open Division twice.

Mike Joyce is known for his work with the Celtic Boxing Club in the Mt. Greenwood neighborhood which accepts members of all races, ages and religions. Joyce is also the volunteer coach of the Leo High School Boxing Club and it is the only campus high school boxing program in the city of Chicago. His clubs have turned out Golden Glove Champions, a member of Team USA, an All-Army Boxing Champion as well as giving positive direction to hundreds of youths throughout the years. As an amateur Mike won the Chicago Park District Light Heavyweight Championship in 1988.

Joyce is an attorney and is married to Muhammed Ali's daughter, Jamillah.

Edmund Kelly is the noted politician who has played a long and integral role in Illinois boxing. After serving as a Marine tail gunner in World War II, Ed was the key person who revived the Chicago Park District boxing program in 1969. His teams have competed in International competition with teams from Poland and Ireland. In 1963 Mike became the General

der Mike's park district boxing program.

Martin McGarry took up boxing in his native Ireland when his brothers taught him how to punch. In 1969 he moved into the Beverly neighborhood and fought and won a Golden Gloves title, two Illinois State Championships and several pro bouts. He was also a sparring partner for Muhammed Ali and Ernie Terrell. Martin later became a top local trainer when he opened McGarry Boxing Club in Beverly. He has coached eight Golden Glove Champions, two Silver Gloves Champions and a Junior Olympics Champion. Olympians and world champions that have trained with Martin

James Ryan is best know as a successful politician who was the DuPage County State's Attorney, the Illinois Attorney General and a Republican candidate for Governor. As an amateur Jim won the Rockford Golden Gloves title and the Chicago Golden Gloves Championship a year later. He has trained his sons for years as amateur boxers and his grandson Joey won the 2013 Chicago Golden Gloves Junior Welterweight Championship. As an Attorney General he served on the National Attorney Generals committee on professional boxing which sought to combat corruption in professional boxing and to initiate national regulations to protect the health and safety of boxers.

The co-directors of the Illinois Boxing Hall of Fame are Mike McNamara and Pete Hoffman.

For further information contact Mike McNamara at 708 473-0682 or at macveg3@aol.com.

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Will You Need More Motivation in 2016?

We all need a shot of motivation at least occasionally. I got my 2015 vaccine over the Thanksgiving holiday. A dear friend of mine, Tova, let me read the opening chapter of a book she was reading *What The Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast?* By Laura Vanderkam. I found the book compelling and highly inspirational. I would recommend it to you as a great and easy read that might inspire or motivate you. You can buy this book, new or used, on Amazon.

Maybe this year rather than rework the same old resolutions, let me suggest that you seek resources that will inspire and motivate you as we start the New Year. In addition to the book mentioned above, let me suggest a few others for your consid-

eration. On Leadership by John Gardner is a favorite of mine. Almost any book by John Maxwell is an excellent place to start. Maybe you would like to add a book on Ethics which could be invaluable in our confused society. A walk through a library or a book store will surface a number of books that might speak to you.

If I had a specific recommendation for you in 2016, it would be for you to Commit to Lifetime Learning. I have become convinced that to function effectively in this bold new society of ours, one must keep ahead of the learning curve. It blows me away to watch small children manipulate I phones and other devices of varying sophistication. The incredibly fast development of such instruments of communication may well force us all to become more attuned to their use. If you don't learn how to use them, you will

Careers



By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



become the family dunce. Perhaps one of the best ways to learn is to embrace the technology by learning it from your grandchildren.

The "old" approach will not be successful in the future—we have to up our game to compete in our changing world. When I graduated from St. Rita High School, I did not envision a college degree. Two of my brothers insisted that I try college. Somewhat reluctantly I entered Loyola University of Chicago and immediately fell in love with its intellectual atmosphere. After four demanding years, I graduated as an accounting major. The obvious employment option for me was a major CPA firm. However, it quickly became apparent that having a CPA certificate was an expectation for professional growth. Given the difficulty factor of the CPA exam, a four or five month review course was highly desirable. After acquiring a CPA certificate I realized that having a Master's degree would position me better for a promotion. Four or five years of graduate work, at night, produced a MSIR. But still a good number of (younger) colleagues seemed to be ahead of me. They had been introduced into the new world of computers at a very early age, versus me as a 27 year old neophyte. I believe that a good number of my colleagues found themselves in the same situation.

The rate of change seemed to be racing along and out distancing us more and more. The challenge to keep up with the pace became very real, many of us, if not most fell behind. Clearly you must work hard to keep up with the ongoing changes in our work environment; and simply working harder would not get the job done. You must continuously be on the lookout for the latest innovations in your wheel house or you will fall even further behind the curve.

For example, one easily accessed tower of learning is the TED series. It is a vast storehouse of information; well presented. Their web site says that the presentations are distributed amongst about 300 to 400 subject areas. The subjects range from Advertising (11 talks), Life (57), Love (29), Medicine (115), Race (18), Entertainment (277), Science (449) and (Magic (17). Cer-

tainly any of us could find a worthwhile subject(s) that could interest us. Why not look into it? It seems to me that the vast subject base could provide an endless amount of pertinent data.

One of the other aspects of TED that intrigues me is every presentation is limited to 15 minutes. That seems to fit the short attention span that many of us manifest. The old expression "get to the point" is well taken under the rigidity of the required time allowed for any one presentation. Just think of it as another form of "speed dating" as applied to learning.

It's not like TED is the end all of the educational programs that are available. There are many other programs that are tightly crafted and very effectively done. For example, the Great Courses from the Learning Company is another. They use the best college lecturers in the US to present a wide range of subjects. If any of these programs spark your interest you can probe deeper.

Seek contact with older and wiser people. Attempt to learn what they can teach you. Of course, we all know that some older people are clueless, which requires you to properly vet your contact. Gray hair is not itself any proof of wisdom, but you don't find much wisdom amongst the younger folks; they are smart enough, but wisdom is a gift reserved for those of us growing wise (or old). Carpe Diem.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: What lies behind you and what lies in front of you pales by comparison to what lies inside of you. Ralph Waldo Emerson.

SPECIAL NOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS. Father James Moriarty celebrated his 90th birthday on December 11. Father was instrumental in the establishment of the Irish Heritage Center. He was also involved in the development of the four channel Catholic educational TV network here in Chicago. God bless you, Father-Moriarty.

James F. Fitzgerald is the president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc., a Naperville-based senior executive coaching and outplacement firm.

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Lauren Corry-2015
St. Patrick's Day Queen



Looking for the New Parade Queen

James F. Coyne, General Chairman of the 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade, announced plans for a city wide search for Chicago's fairest Colleen. She will represent the Chicago Irish community as the Queen of the 2016 Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Entry Information

Any girl of Irish ancestry, never married, 18-28 years old, is eligible to enter the contest.

Contest finals will be held Sunday, January 17, 2016, in the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers Hall, 1340 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, Illinois 60607.
Deadline for entries is Tuesday, January 12, 2016.

For more information see our website:

www.chicagostpatsparade.com

Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea

Tom Boyle



been taken into custody without guns. You can see the video on YouTube.

I talked to some of my

friends, one that was a special forces soldier in the West German Army said if a person wielding a knife was closer than 15 feet from you, you wouldn't be able to draw your weapon in time to stop them. A retired Racine County, WI police officer set the boundary at 17 feet and added that they would target the torso. All police officers are trained to follow this guideline. Seems to me there needs to be more training using tactics in situations that don't require deadly force.

1916-2016

To paraphrase the old song "Down by the Glenside," 'Tis 100 long years since I saw the moon beaming, on strong manly forms, on eyes with hop gleaming. I see them again sure, in all my sad dreaming

Glory O, Glory O, to the bold Fenian men!

It will be 100 years on April 24th since Patrick Pearse stood on the steps of the GPO and delivered the Proclamation: "Irish men and Irish women in the name of God and the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom."

Patrick Pearse once said at the graveside of O'Donovan Russa, "They think they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools! They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."

First generation Irish-Americans identify more strongly with the events in Ireland during the Civil War between the Irish Free Staters and the Republicans (Fenians) 1921-22.

Ireland became a Republic on April 18, 1949. Twenty six counties that make up the Republic, but the issue of Northern Ireland remains unresolved in the six counties that remain part of the British Commonwealth.

TRUMP

The Donald knows how to push the right buttons. Common sense tells us millions of Americans don't want anymore Muslims to immigrate to the USA.

So Donald says no more Muslims and all the politicians jump on his statement thinking they will come across as being more altruistic, more in tune with Emma Lazarus' quote on the Statue of Liberty, "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

Recently a study released the White's and Blacks will be in the minority in Chicago and the collar counties. By the year 2020 Asians

and Hispanics will dominate this region. I can't wait to be a minority so I can complain about how unfair it is to be White!

IFC Xmas Lunch

Friday December 4th the IFC Christmas Luncheon was held at the Chicago Hilton and Towers Grand Ballroom. During the cocktail hour I encountered former Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy. I caught his attention and we shook hands and I said "congratulations on getting out of there!" He laughed and said, "You are probably right." The best was yet to come. Mayor Rahm Emanuel gave his usual speech on how the Irish built Chicago. The room was noisy and table talk overshadowed the Mayor. Later in the program, luncheon Chairman Kevin Flood started introducing the politicians, like Toni Precwinkle; Cook County Board President, who was vocal in demanding that police Superintendent Garry McCarthy be fired and also called for States Attorney, Anita Alvarez's resignation. After all the politicians were introduced, Garry McCarthy was introduced and the crowd jumped to their feet and gave McCarthy a thunderous standing ovation. It was an unforgettable moment in time.

It also speaks volumes for the fact that Superintendent McCarthy had reduced crime in Chicago by 50% over the last four and a half years.

CHICAGO P.D.

The shooting of Laquan McDonald by Chicago police officer, Jason Van Dyke, was completely unjustified. The shooting that was seen on the video was tantamount to an execution. Laquan was shot 16 times, officer Van Dyke was in no way threatened.

The Black community is outraged, and justifiably so. The entire community is outraged! For a police officer who became judge, jury, and executioner, there can be no mercy.

Why do so many police officers always resort to the gun? In the case of Laquan they had other options... taser, beanbag shotgun, mace, or night stick.

WHY ALWAYS THE GUN?

A recent police shooting in San Francisco was unbelievable. As Mario Woods, a suspect in a stabbing was literally surrounded by at least 13 police officers. He was up against a wall and started to walk away. He was holding a kitchen knife in his hand. Suddenly the police opened fire. Not just one officer. Maybe six or more. This was another case where the offender could easily have

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Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



You Can Even Mime It: 'What's in it for Me?'

It should have been riveting television, and it was; but it was also depressing viewing on so many levels.

It should have felt like vindication for things that I've been hammering on about for decades, and it was; but there was also that empty feeling that you get when you suspect that it will change nothing -- absolutely nothing -- in this hideously and disproportionately corrupt little country of ours.

It should have called for the setting-up at the very least of an agency to deal with political corruption; and indeed those calls were already being sent out there by Catherine Murphy TD. But wait a minute... dealing

with political corruption? In Ireland? Hold on there, where would you start and what slugs would crawl out from the rocks that might be turned over?

Don't worry, bent councillors, TDs and Senators, you can continue to breathe easy: Fine Gael and Labour were quick to knock that nonsense into touch.

I am of course talking about the unedifying and yet unsurprising sight of one of our leading chancers, the egregious Fine Gael Monaghan man Hugh McElvaney, who was filmed and taped during an RTÉ Investigations Unit report in which he openly asked an undercover reporter, who was posing as a potential investor, to get herself ready to hand over some talking-care-of-me loot.

"Ten grand would be a start," said the bould McElvaney. Oh, yeah; and don't forget to make it in 'lovely sterling'.

That was on the phone. When they met up in person, he opened the proceedings with: "I have a question for you, Nina. What's in it for me?"

"What's in it for me?"

Bizarrely -- and to what must surely have been the reporter's delight -- he even began MIMING the lining of his pockets. It really had to be seen to be believed.

I hadn't realised that I had been waiting all these years to hear one single, simple phrase that would sum up in five short and sublime little words the mindset of the average Irish politician -- and there it had been hiding behind McElvaney's lips the whole time.

And I wonder how often he has uttered them, this wealthy and successful man, over his 42-years in the game:

"What's in it for me?"

Not a thought for his constituency, this nine-times-elected local councilor and four-times Mayor of Monaghan. Not a thought as to what it might do for anyone except himself; at least not unless it was very much a fourth- and even fifth-come thought. No; right out of the starting gate he was making his greed, venality and corruption as clear as he possibly could:

"What's in it for me?"

I've had little time for the biased reporting of RTE over the years. This certainly came to a head over the last fourteen or so months, due to their blatant twisting and even ignoring of the facts during the anti-water charge protests. There were times there where all semblance of objectivity seemed to go out the window in favour of reports that appeared to have been handed to them by the liar and fantasist Enda Kenny's government spin doctors.

This time, though, it is nice to compliment RTE for a change. Perhaps the likes of cynical creatures such as me won't have been overly surprised; but if even a handful of decent voters in Monaghan look twice at the obscene grasper that they have sitting on their council then the State Broadcaster might actually have done that State some service.

Of course, there were others who didn't emerge from the report looking the best, but I'm staying with McElvaney simply because he IS so perfectly out of the Central Casting from some episode of 'Father Ted' which would be thrown out as being too far-fetched. Because,

far from resigning on the spot, McElvaney showed utter incredulity and complete bewilderment that it could even be thought in the slightest bit likely that he would resign. After all, according to him, he had been aware of the filming and taping all the time!

Sure, wasn't he wise to RTE and only stringing them along for the craic and to show them up? You didn't think he was that much of an eejit, did you?

And actually, I don't think that Councillor McElvaney is an eejit at all. Far from it. I think that he has been simply getting away with taking bribes for so much of his 42-year career that he merely got lazy about checking the credentials of the fake investor. In fact, he had been a Fine Gael stalwart through and through at the time of the filming. It seems likely that it was only when he got wind of the RTE sting that he made his very dramatic, very public show of resigning from the party over that old warhorse, the Matter of Principle -- this time over the erection of some pylons. He got a standing ovation for being a decent man who was doing the right thing. Of course he did. What else would you expect in our open-air madhouse?

McElvaney, though, insists that he knew what those wide boys in Dublin were trying to put over on him. "I lured her ['Nina'] into my trap", he says. Now there's an image I'm not going to get out of my head for a long time: a big loudmouthed blowhard like this fella luring any woman into his trap. Ah, stop it! But he gets worse:

"It was a piss-pull. It was what we call 'taking the piss' out of RTE and I proved it."

He proved it? It's no wonder I'm confused. As excuses go this one is likely to give Bertie Ahern's 'I won all that loot on the horses' a gallop for the money.

"Are you going to pay me by the hour or by the job?" said Hugh as he led 'Nina' into his trap. Some trap, all right.

So: it was great stuff; but, as I also said, it was downheartening. And one of the reasons for that is I would not be at all surprised to hear that he was still a councillor this time next year -- or even in five years' time. There just seems to be no will here to do a damned thing about the corruption that is destroying the heart and soul of this country.

Even with the fact that FG told us blatant lies prior to the last election and makes no bones ABOUT the fact that they lied, it's not impossible that we'll see them in again. There is an apathy here that is stultifying. And yet when young (or older!) people tell me that they have no intention of voting 'because they're all rotten' it is hard to argue with them. Especially when I've come close to pretty much believing that depressing notion myself.

However, I'll leave the last world to (still) Councillor Hugh McElvaney. And I won't make them: "What's in it for me?"

No, we'll go with this utterance from him during a radio interview this week:

"Somebody somewhere thought that it was time to get McElvaney off the pitch."

Good Lord; he talks about himself in the third person. Do we really need any more reasons not to trust this guy?

You can email me at chasbrady7@eircom.net or find out what's in it for you at www.cbsays.com & www.charleybrady.com

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Galway Girl

by Maureen Conneely

"What does it feel like to be an Irish American girl?"

Well, it feels like being told that you are "weak," "timid," that "you will get bullied."

"Little momo," "but you're so small," or being laughed at when telling others of life plans.

It feels like all of the stereotypes of women--

--being weak, submissive, and obedient flooding into you, so you embody them. Like walking

down the street and being called "Little Red Riding Hood," "No disrespect but you have a nice body," "Irish Girl," "Queen of Scotland," and "Ginger."

But nobody knows your name. It feels like being sexy and rapeable in everyone's eyes and becoming that when you look in the mirror.

But you don't see yourself. You are gone. The real you becomes nothing. You are what they say you are--what they see you as. As they look at you from head to toe like you're a brand new car or a piece of cattle that a farmer is looking to purchase.

You are there for them and not for you. Your existence is for their benefit and not your own.

Your voice is quiet. You are screaming underwater, but nobody hears you.

You attempt, but no words surface.

You stay in your apartment, except to walk to class.

And when you do, the man in front of the church says he wants to marry you.

"Alright, let's go!" you joke and nod toward the church.

You begin to go out again with your friends only to be told, "You're the sexiest girl in this place." So you laugh and say, "I think that that's your beer talking. How much have you had?" and listen to him rant about the girl he likes who is ignoring him.

You tell the man on the bus that you are actually Irish, not Scottish, and pray he lets go of your hand.

You treat the calls as if they are not directed at you, but your

genetics, your physical traits that are beyond your control and have nothing to do with who you are, save your ethnicity, maybe.

You are Maureen O'Hara, Scarlett O'Hara, and Galway Girl rolled into one--the Holy Trinity.

You are all the stereotypes and more.

Even-tempered, not fiery-tempered; calm unless made angry; a lover unless challenged to a fight, an arm wrestle, or a push-up contest, which you will undoubtedly win.

You are as strong as your aunt who saved your life when you were born as well as your fire-fighting uncles.

You imagine people saying, "Watch out for that Colleen! She's merciless."

But don't make her another Molly Malone, selling cockles and mussels.

She can sing like Celtic Women, the Corrs, Sinéad O'Connor, and all the angels and saints.

She can "jump over mountains" and is "as Irish as the day is long" as someone once told her on St. Paddy's Day.

She listens to Taylor Swift, but would much rather an Irish rebel song--by Flogging Molly or The Pogues.

And can belt out the "Field of Athenry," as if Michael were her Michael being taken away.

She is the stuff of Irish myths and legends.

So treat her well or she'll put an Irish curse on you and summon the banshee to take you away.

"Cause when she was good, she was very, very good. But when she was bad, she was horrid."

So get her a drink and leave her alone. Or let her entertain you with her funny tales and exaggerations.

Because she is all the male writers that came before her: James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, and Oscar Wilde.

Writing, not fighting, until her knuckles bleed green.

She can beat you in a free throw contest, outrun you in a marathon, and Irish dance circles around you.

She can row and lifeguard and hold her own in any debate.

She'd be the sole survivor in a shipwreck, swimming her way back to shore.

Her hair frightens people, making them fall down on their knees in awe, like Moses witnessing the burning flames and being handed the 10 Commandments.

But don't be frightened, she is kind.

Her grandpa Conneely taught her to be so.

She is the gentlest person you will meet, if you don't cross her.

So be good to her and let her Irish Eyes take you back to the old country--the fields of green, the stinging bagpipes, the wild rover, and the rainbows after an Irish rain.

The land of the Conneely's, Geraghty's, Caulfield's, and Cunningham's.

The land where she belongs. Sláinte.

My Home, My Heart, My Ireland at Bauer Theatre

For one weekend only, February 19-21, 2016, the Beverly Theatre Guild (BTG) will present the original musical: My Home, My Heart, My Ireland. The production location is in the historic Beverly neighborhood in Chicago at Morgan Park Academy Arts Center's 425-seat Bauer Theatre, 2153 West 111th Street, Chicago. Parking is convenient and free!

My Home, My Heart, My Ireland is a heart-warming show that takes place in a small Irish village pub and Bed & Breakfast where a group of American tourists mingle with the eccentric locals. There are many memorable characters and a special appearance by Irish step-dancers. Along with a beautiful medley of traditional Irish tunes, the show contains original songs are stirring, sentimental and pure Irish fun.

MHMHMI is the revival of an original musical written by beloved BTG member, Carol Kearney, and originally produced by

BTG in 1996. Carol's warm and generous spirit will shine through this heart-warming production.

Tickets will be available soon. To purchase tickets, visit our

website at www.BeverlyTheatreGuild.org or call 773-BTG-TIXS (773-284-8497) and leave a message on our hotline.



Pictured Left: Three Generations Of Lawless Enjoy Christmas at the White House: Billy Jr., Kieran & Grandad

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Make a New Year's Resolution and Enter the 2016 Chicago Rose of Tralee Selection!

THE hot topic for the next few months will be the news that whoever is selected to be the next Chicago Rose will be guaranteed a place at the 2016 Rose of Tralee International Festival.

Taking place from 17th to 23rd August, the 2016 Rose of Tralee International Festival will run for seven days featuring 70 Roses, more entertainment and an extra night's TV coverage.

For the past 11 years the Chicago Rose had to travel to the Midlands at the end of May to take part in a qualifying event to try and make it through to the televised stages of Ireland's top festival.

Only 32 Roses can be accommodated on live TV and, until now, it wasn't feasible for the organisers to accommodate the full inclusion of the other 38 Roses at the Festival in Tralee.

The Executive Director of the Chicago Rose of Tralee event, Mary Kay Gavin-Marmo, said: "This is great news for anyone who considers entering the 2016 Chicago Rose selection. Whoever is picked as the 2016 Chicago Rose will travel to Tralee in August. Such is the continued success of the Rose of Tralee on TV, RTÉ are introducing a third night of Rose of Tralee TV coverage from next year onwards. The Festival itself has also been extended from five to seven days and 68 Roses will travel to Tralee to enjoy the full festival."

All the Roses who travel to Tralee will take part in all the parades, Rose Ball, public engagements and a qualifying event over two nights in the Dome from which 32 Roses will be chosen to appear in the live selection



broadcasts.

There's an incentive for more women to enter the Chicago Rose event this year in the knowledge that once she is selected, she will travel to Kerry in August to enjoy the full Festival.

So, now that the holidays are over, make a New Year's Resolution to enter the Chicago Rose Selection in 2016.

Never before has it been easier to enter the Chicago Rose Selection and young Irish women aged between 18 and 27 are being encouraged to fill out a preliminary application form at www.chicagoroseoftralee.com.

The 2016 Rose of Tralee will be crowned live on RTÉ 1 TV in the Dome on Tuesday 23rd August.

The dates for the Chicago Rose Selection are not yet set, but please fill out a Preliminary Application as soon as possible. Once the 40 spots are filled, we will not be able to take any more applications! For more information contact Mary Kay Gavin-Marmo or our 2015 Chicago Rose, Maeve McSweeney at info@chicagoroseoftralee.com.

Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle



Waiting On The Muse

For most people who write or aspire to write the hardest thing to work in collaboration with the idea or inspiration in order to create a thing of beauty, or at least effort. I was recently chatting to a friend who writes, and we were discussing our experiences of approaching an idea that refuses to be moulded into what we want it to be. For me it was my first attempt at a play. In my mind the plot, the structure, and the story all made sense. I had a reading, which went well, but did not

feet while you feed them interesting asides and plots. But there is always one thing that will not conform to your will, and refuses to acquiesce to your impatience.

Every work of fiction is a different animal, and as such needs to be treated in a way that makes it want to give up its complete autonomy. I was reminded of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's story 'The Little Prince'. When the little prince encounters the fox he assumes that they will establish a quick and sudden rapport. He has determined that the fox will become a friend without having spent any time or effort; a mis-

patience. Sometimes the best friendships are not the easiest to establish. The 'stone sharpening stone' effect has more permanency and affects us at a much deeper level.

It is only when I was sharing with my friend my frustration with this play that I thought of the dialogue between the fox and the little prince. I began to realize that this animal was not as compliant as domestic pet, but was something else, and my efforts to pet and cajole it as I would a tame animal would never work. I was faced with something unfamiliar, untamed, and therefore my approach, if I were to be successful in capturing its essence, would have to change.

I would love to finish this musing by commending my patience, and pat myself on the back for understanding the finer nuances of the muse, but I can't. The metaphorical fox refuses to give up its freedom until I understand that it's a two way process. The waiting, which appears to be a waste of time, is invaluable. When

through this experience is not for naught. We are not immediately gratified, but if we are prepared to travel with the idea or the person on a less familiar path, the effect is transforming.

The fox waits each day, watch-

ing, as we learn to wait until we are given permission to come closer. Each must learn to trust the other, and this is not without patience and fortitude. Eventually, the two become secure, and mutually tamed.



quite satisfy my expectation for the dramatic piece. There was something wrong or misshapen about the telling of the story, and to compound matters theatre is such a different medium to prose so if your actors don't understand what you're trying to communicate the whole thing is dead in the water. I put the project aside, and worked on other things while keeping my eye on the beast that refused to be tamed. Other stories began and worked out fine without as much effort. The difference was akin to trying work with a dog and a fox; the domestic pet and the wild animal. What I failed to understand is that fiction, whether it be prose, poetry, or drama, is not just about storytelling, it's about how you deal with a living, creative force that does not always conform to your shaping, and design. Some ideas will comply, they, like house pets will wag their tail and sit by your

conception that the four legged creature refuses to substantiate, and instead demands that the boy learn the art of friendship. In order to 'tame' the fox, the human has to prove himself worthy of the fox's company. The subsequent dialogue between the fox and the little prince elucidates the skill and patience required in developing a relationship.

And while this scene in the story is a great parable for friendship it also can be applied to the writer and his muse. Authors frequently talk about waiting on their muse, their source of inspiration, to move them to write when sometimes it's the muse who waits for the author. Sometimes a story is not what one expects it should be, and this should be no surprise since life is rarely what we expect it to be. Friends begin as either immediate connections that require little or no effort, whereas others require work, and extreme

we tame an animal, we are also tamed by what we learn about the creature that we are trying to persuade into submission. The art of conversation begins only when there is genuine interaction. Our muse is not simply an idea, or an inspiration; it's a new impression and one that is unlike the others. It is only when we begin to understand this can we move forward.

It has been almost 7 years now since I began with this play, and I'm only now beginning to understand what it wants to say. It may not amount to anything, and bring no pleasure to anyone but me, but the process has been truly transformative. I've learned that ideas, like people, are filtered through our own personal judgments and prejudices. They can remain stagnant, and undeveloped, if we do not allow them to change us, and re-make our preconceptions. The frustration, and despondency wrought



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I'm Here With You

*Written by Nathan Carter
and Joe McShane*

Verse 1

In the darkness of night, a candle lost its flame
As a soft gentle breeze came through the window
With the passing of time and a friend that never came
Memories fade like springs melting snow

Verse 2

Sweet music from way back stays around a little longer
An old familiar tune fills your mind
Every once in a while I know you remember
For a moment I see that old smile

Chorus

Please don't be afraid I'm here with you
As the candle gently flickers,, with the passing of time
I'm not going anywhere I'll be by your side
So please don't be afraid I'm here with you

Verse 3

Dearest one you lit the flame that always will be
Your love is here in my heart
Let me show the tenderness, you gave to me
Hold my hand I'm here by your side

Chorus

Please don't be afraid I'm here with you
As the candle gently flickers with the passing of time
I'm not going anywhere I'll be by your side
So please don't be afraid I'm right here with you
Mamma don't be afraid I'm here with you

It Starts With A Song

*By Joe McShane
and Margo O'Donnell*



Hello Everybody,

I was talking to Margo a few days ago and she ask me to wish everyone a very Happy New Year! She has been so busy lately with the Mary Boyle case and has worn herself down. So she is taking a well deserved rest.

I was looking back on last year and feeling very thankful for all the good things that have happened, I like to do that every once in a while. I reckon being grateful is a good thing. I have written songs with Nathan Carter, Andy Cooney and the new sensation from Ballymoney, twenty one year old Jordan Moge. Also Ben Troy from Carrickmacross, has recorded a song I wrote with James Thacker (Nashville). So It's been very productive on the song writing scene. I can think of nothing better than to take a blank piece of paper an idea and turn that paper into a song.

One of the nicest things that happened last summer in Ireland, was I got to meet Merle Haggard's eldest son, Marty Haggard. He looks and sounds like his father. He joked about it on stage saying "if I sound like my dad, that's his fault". Like his father, he is also a fine song writer. My brother Nicky James brought him over for a tour and we got to have a pint (two) in Ma Kearney's pub in Crossmaglen. I also went to his show the following night in Moate, Co Westmeath. We all stayed at the same hotel, one of the most famous musical venues in Ireland, called The Well. Well! we sat up most of the night swapping songs and talking about what we love to do, which is play and write music. Our conversation came around to talking about Glen Campbell and it was amazing to hear how Marty knew him so well. He said I met Glen, many, many times at my house. Then he told us how Glen had played all the acoustic parts on Merle's big hit song "Mamma Tried" and a lot more of his songs. He also said Glen Campbell did the vocal harmonies also. I was in complete awe. I am such a big fan of Glen Campbell. I told them I'd been to see the movie "I'll Be Me" (twice actually). The movie is about his last tour, before he had to

quit because of Alzheimer's disease. As I write this, Glen Campbell is now in a nursing home in Nashville.

Nathan Carter and I started to talk about it the following week, during a song writing session, at his home in Enniskillen. I was telling him how I have known so many people who have been through the trauma of having it and their families dealing with it. We both decided it would be something we should write about. So this months song is the song we wrote and it's call "I'm Here With You". You can find a version of me singing it on YouTube. I recently sang it at a funeral. I'm sure it's something we all fear. I know for myself, I would hate to think I would ever forget the ones I love so much or them, me.

This final paragraph is on behalf of the O'Gara family and myself. Their son, Ray O'Gara, suffered a brutal death three years ago. He was one of my dearest friends and I miss him more than words can say. His family are wonderful people and I remember Fr. Smyth giving a eulogy at the funeral, about Ray R.I.P. and all the O'Gara family. His words echoed my thoughts entirely. Ray was not just a blessing to know, he was also one of the best guitarists I've ever heard. I don't believe Chicago has produced a finer musician. It would be greatly appreciated if you are able to show your support and are able to attend the opening trial. It will take place at 11:00am on Wednesday January 13th. At 26th and California Courthouse. In room 708 and the presiding Judge is - Judge Nicholas Ford. If you are able to - Please show your support for this wonderful family. Thank you, sincerely.

Next months column will have a new feature. I will be doing some short Q and A interveiw with some of our musical icons across the ocean. People like Nathan Carter, Declan Nerney, etc. A little behind the scenes banter.

Until next time, be good to one another.

I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year!

sona bhliain nua sláintiúil,

Hooliganism

Mike Houlihan



I've nominated myself for the Irish American Hall of Fame several times over the last five or six years, but they never call me.

Bob McNamara put me on the nominating committee years ago and I figured that's the only way I'd get invited is to keep throwing my name in the ring. The Awards dinner is mucho expensive so I've never been to that.

But today I've decided I no longer want anything to do with this dog show.

I got my nomination form via email yesterday and I was looking over the candidates and could easily understand why I never got the nod, what with Spencer Tracy, Nolan Ryan, and many other illustrious luminaries in contention. Frank McCourt and Father Andrew Greely were also on the ballot and I made a mental note of avoiding those two dead fakers.

I scanned the rest of the names and was suddenly brought short and shocked by the name "Margaret Sanger", listed under "public service". WTF?

That's got to be a joke I thought as I checked for her bio. Sure enough there were instructions that read, "Candidate bios can be viewed by clicking the link under the category name on the ballot form." (sic)

I clicked the link under the ballot thinking maybe this Margaret Sanger was a ballerina, not the she-devil who founded Planned Parenthood.

But nope, there she was with lots of platitudes in her bio about "women's rights" but nothing about her role as probably the most malicious and immoral woman in civilized history.

You won't find it in her "Irish American Hall of Fame" bio but Margaret Sanger was the patron saint of eugenics and a fierce advocate for the murder of babies. Back in the twenties, the lovely Margaret famously said, "The most merciful thing that a large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it."

Isn't that nice? Sure, let's put her in the Hall of Fame.

Referring to immigrants, blacks, and poor people, Margaret called them, "human weeds," "reckless breeders," "spawning... human beings who never should have been born."

Sanger shaped the eugenics movement

in America and beyond in the 1930s and 1940s. Her views and those of her peers in the movement contributed to compulsory sterilization laws in 30 U.S. states that resulted in more than 60,000 sterilizations of vulnerable people, including people she considered "feeble-minded," "idiots" and "morons."

You can do your own research on this malevolent witch but I'm thinking the real "morons" are the folks at the Irish American Hall of Fame who nominated Margaret Sanger.

Here's one more little bon mot, just for all our Irish American Catholics who might consider honoring Margaret Sanger at their annual Hall of Fame dinner. Sanger said, "THE MOST serious evil of our times is that of encouraging the bringing into the world of large families. The most immoral practice of the day is breeding too many children."

It seems to me that somebody at the Irish American Hall of Fame has an "agenda" they'd like to advance through this organization. Honoring Irish Americans who have made great contributions to our society is laudable, but honoring those who have worked to destroy our traditional Catholic values seems specious at best.

It's particularly alarming with the recent release of a series of undercover videos capturing Planned Parenthood officials gleefully discussing the wholesale merchandising of baby body parts recovered from their busy abortion mills.

Maybe they'll be serving those for dessert at the Hall of Fame dinner. Your \$200 per plate dinner offers you cocktails of baby's blood on the rocks with baby brains h'ordeuvres, served on golden trays delivered to your table by effeminate Irish waiters wearing green ass-less chaps. Won't that be a fitting tribute to Hall of Famer Margaret Sanger?

Evidently Ms. Sanger won't even be sending in a videotaped acceptance speech for the dinner because she's going to be very busy that weekend in hell.

I understand that next year's Hall of Fame could be nominating Richard Speck, (or as his Irish ancestors knew him, Richard O'Speck), for his contribution to helping nurses back in the sixties.

Happy New Year everybody!

Margaret Sanger

by Cathy Curry Carlson

Margaret Sanger, born Margaret Higgins in 1879 was from a large Catholic Irish-American family. Her mother, Anne, went through 18 pregnancies, with 11 live births in 22 years, before dying at the age of 49. This formed the basis of Margaret's interest in sex education for women.

She coined the term: Birth Control.

Margaret worked as a nurse in the slums of New York's East Side and wrote two series of columns on sex education "What Every Mother Should Know" (1911-12) and "What Every Girl Should Know" (1912-13) for the socialist magazine New York Call. During her work among working-class immigrant women, Sanger met women who underwent frequent childbirth, miscarriages and self-induced abortions for lack of information on how to avoid unwanted pregnancy. Access to contraceptive information was prohibited on grounds of obscenity by the 1873 federal Comstock law and a host of state laws.

Sanger was pro-birth control and anti-abortion. She believed abortion to be a barbaric practice. In her own words,

"[a]lthough abortion may be resorted to in order to save the life of the mother, the practice of it merely for limitation of offspring is dangerous and vicious." Her views are, ironically, in keeping with the views of many of the anti-choicers who malign and distort her legacy.

Many quotes have been falsely attributed to her and many of her quotes have been taken out of context.

Anti-choicers also like to claim that Sanger was closely associated with the eugenics program in Nazi Germany. While she may be loosely associated with the program, in the same way that every American who promoted eugenics was loosely associated with the Nazis, the Nazis specifically modeled their eugenics laws on California's sterilization law, not on Sanger's beliefs or writings. The United States, after all, led the world in compulsory sterilization until Hitler took up the practice.

In fact, the Nazis were not fans of Sanger. They even burned her books, as Gerald V. O'Brien points out in his article, "Margaret Sanger and the Nazis: How Many Degrees of Separation." Moreover, as Amita Kelly writing for NPR recently pointed out, "Sanger herself wrote in 1939 that she had joined the Anti-Nazi



Committee 'and gave money, my name and any influence I had with writers and others, to combat Hitler's rise to power in Germany.'"

For all of her advocacy work, Sanger was not without controversy. She has been criticized for her association with eugenics, a branch of science that seeks to improve the human species through selective mating. As grandson Alexander Sanger, chair of the International Planned Parenthood Council, explained, "She believed that women wanted their children to be free of poverty and disease, that women were natural eugenicists, and that birth control, which could limit the number of children and improve their quality of life, was the panacea to accomplish this." Still Sanger held some views that were common at the time, but now seem abhorrent, including support of sterilization for the mentally ill and mentally impaired. Despite her controversial comments, Sanger focused her work on one basic principle: "Every child should be a wanted child."

Margaret Sanger was a pioneer in the early efforts to provide birth control to the populace in a time when women were struggling for equality in society.

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Remembering Maureen O'Hara

By: Maureen Callahan

What was it you whispered into The Duke's ear to get that look of utter surprise on his face in the closing scene of The

come to Hollywood in your late teens, becoming Maureen O'Hara when told that FitzSimons would not fit on the marquee of Alfred Hitchcock's Jamaica Inn, one



Quiet Man? When we meet again after this act is over, it will be my first question for you. Born in Dublin on August 17, 1920 as Maureen FitzSimons, you're a fellow Leo. You were always close to your proper Irish family of six children known familiarly around Dublin as the fabulous FitzSimons. You're a person of great faith (your movie shootings revolved around the mass schedule), proper manners and etiquette. At the age of 5, an old gypsy told you that you would "leave Ireland one day and become a very famous woman known all around the world. You will make a fortune and be very rich." She wasn't lying. You will definitely be remembered as the toughest Irish lass who ever took on Hollywood and rose to be one of its brightest stars. At 95 years young, you were the last to close down the party of that lost generation of Tinseltown's leading ladies. I am honored to be named after you, the decision final after my father declared "Maureen O'Hara was a classy young lady and she'll be a classy old lady."

Self-proclaimed tough and strong, you always told others you could "do anything you put your mind to, as long as you're willing to make the necessary sacrifices." You struggled at an early age—sometimes mocked by teachers in the convent school who didn't understand you or your acting aspirations. Still, you had the courage to

of your first pictures. At the time, actors worked for the studio, performing whatever role the production house assigned. You started out with Mayflower Pictures for \$80/week, the salary including your own stunts. Known around town as the "feisty redhead," you stood up for what



was right, but were always polite and kind. You delighted in advising young actresses along the way and had a motherly relationship with them. Hayley Mills reflects on how kind you were to her during The Parent Trap—a difficult time in her life. Natalie Wood had fond memories of you while filming Miracle of 34th Street. Later in life, you wept as though she

were your real daughter at the news of her early death.

Director John Ford discovered you after you stole the show in The Hunchback of Notre Dame, offering you the role in How Green Was My Valley and beginning arguably the most dichotomous relationship of your life. It was an ambiguous friendship at best, on the one hand, Ford called you the best actress in Hollywood, yet it was peppered with jealousy (personally campaigning against your nomination by the Academy for The Quiet Man). It was Ford however, who introduced you to John Wayne, your best friend for forty years, via Rio Grande. "Maureen O'Hara, well, she's the greatest guy I ever knew," Wayne declared of you. You would perform opposite The Duke in five pictures over the course of your career, The Quiet Man being a defining moment. At 6 ft 4 in tall, he was a presence. Although not as tall, you were the only leading lady to ever truly go toe to toe with him. The greatest of friends while working in Hollywood and into retirement, you spent much time with each other's families and supported one another. When you petitioned Congress for the Duke's Congressional Medal of Honor, you asked to have only three words struck on it: John Wayne, American. An immigrant yourself, you felt that he personified the American Experience. This was your final gift to The Duke on his deathbed.

For someone who managed to always appear upbeat and positive, you had your share of heartache. Your two early marriages, first to George Brown, was a "comedy of youth," while the second was a "tragedy of inexperience" to abusive and alcoholic Will Price, the father of your only child, Bronwyn. Good luck surprised you unexpectedly one day in the form of airline pilot Charles Blair, flying you to Ireland. A long friendship ensued, and you eventually married. The third time was truly a charm for you as it turned out to be the great love of your life. After a happy twenty years following your leave of Hollywood to settle with Charlie and open a charter airline in the U.S. Virgin Islands, his plane tragically blew up on a routine flight. Speculation of foul play surrounded his death as you were recovering from uterine cancer.

Still, you managed to pick up the pieces, showing courage—perhaps your most defining characteristic. You were never afraid to speak your mind. Much earlier in life, you politely suggested that

President Roosevelt check his facts when he insisted Ireland was a communist nation in the context of lunch at The White House. When you applied for U.S. dual citizenship, you were told to forswear your allegiance to Great Britain, to which you argued that you had had no previous allegiance. Your papers had been drawn up to read "English citizen" as your nationality, as at the time, Irish citizens were considered subjects of Great Britain. You argued your case before a federal judge



to be classified as an Irish citizen. It was the first time the history of the U.S. that the American government recognized an Irish person as being Irish—not English. This earned you the personal thanks and recognition of Prime Minister Eamon DeValera himself.

You came out of retirement to star opposite yet another important John in your life—this time John Candy—as a proper Irish mum of a Chicago police officer in John Hughes's Only the Lonely. It did well at the box office and with rumors of the possibility of an Academy Award, it further demonstrated your tireless zeal for life and acting, regardless of your age. You and Candy had such a rapport that you agreed to do another movie together. Unfortunately, this never happened, as he passed soon after the movie wrapped. While it would have been nice to have one more film credit, by this point you had more than 50 to your name, some iconic and some not.

I still can't believe that nobody knows what you said to John Wayne at the end of The Quiet Man. You, Ford and Wayne all agreed to keep it secret, and keep it you did. Now that you three are all gone, a mystery it will remain.

I want to know the answer.

Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler



Who was Erskine Childers? He served as the 4th president of Ireland. (1973-1974) Unfortunately, he was in office for the shortest period of any president in Ireland, however not in the world. For example, James Garfield (20th pres of USA was assassinated less than 4 months after taking office. Also, William H. Harrison (9th president of USA died within a month of his 1st term.) It calls to mind the idea of unfinished projects, unfinished business, unfinished responsibilities. Maybe the silver lining of unfinished ideas may have an influence and inspire others in their own projects, dreams and plans. The presidency is an admirable and exciting job to strive for, but also stressful, demanding and taxing. You always have to be the moral leader and represent everyone. (a dangerous position as well, as we have seen in assassinations of Garfield, Lincoln, Kennedy, McKinley)

Erskine Childers was born in London to a protestant family that was originally from Glendalough, Wicklow. His father was Robert Erskine Childers (Irish Republican and author of "The riddle of the sands" a spy thriller) and his mother was Mary Alden an American from Boston. Childers had 2 brothers Henry and Robert, sadly Henry died before his first birthday. The family moved to Ireland when Childers was a teenager. Unfortunately, when he was 16 his father Robert was executed (1922) by the new Irish free state on politically inspired charges. Having different points of view can get you in trouble in times of war or anytime. Ireland has always been a puzzle to the outsider and often to itself. Historians say Robert Childers execution was a terrible necessity, a nemesis. (his own downfall) He was executed for his actions and support of the Republican cause in the civil war. Ironically, Robert was a Unionist

early in life but later changed and embraced Irish nationalism, tho many would not let him forget his past. He was executed at the beggars bush barracks in Dublin, authorities of the Irish free state said his last words were, "Take a step forward lads it will be easier that way". And before his execution in a spirit of agreement and forgiveness, he made his son promise to seek out and shake hands with every man who had signed his dad's death warrant. Robert himself shook hands with the firing squad before they shot him.

Leaving this legacy in his sons hands proved Erskine to be a controversial nominee for anything in the government. Erskine went on to Trinity college Cambridge, England. Erskine married Ruth Dow (from New Hampshire) and they had 5 children. Sadly, Ruth died and Erskine re-married, a woman named Mary from Massachu-

setts. Mary (Molly) Osgood, they had one daughter, Nessa. For a short time Erskine, worked on a tourism board in Paris, but as fate would have it, Eamon de Valera invited him to work for his newspaper, The Irish press. Erskine, rose to the ranks politically and he was elected in the Fianna Fail party, and would remain in the Dail until he was elected president in 1973. Childers quickly gained a reputation as a vibrant, extremely hard working and respectful man. However, he had a strained relationship with some officials because he soon realized presidents didn't have that much power and he felt it prevented him from transforming the presidency as he wished. So instead, Childers put his energy into a hectic schedule of visits and speeches, which took a major toll on him. On November 17, 1974, just after making a speech in the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin, Childers suffered a heart attack and died the same day in hospital. Stress comes with any job but when we feel too much stress on a daily basis it raises our blood pressure, suppresses our immune

system and speeds up the aging process. It was said that President Childers widow Rita was going to step in to finish her late husbands term. Consequently, some misunderstanding ensued and Fianna Fail withdrew their support and so the next president would be Chief justice Cearbhall O. Dalaigh.

At the wishes of Molly, Childers second wife, before her death, she said that any writings about her husband involvement with the Irish struggle be locked away for 50 years after his death. So, in 1972, Erskine's son Erskine from his first marriage, started the process of finding a biographer to write his father's story. He found Andrew Boyle to write it, it was published in 1977 and it's called, the "Riddle of Erskine Childers. Erskine Childers funeral in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin was attended by some world leaders including the Earl of Burma (S. E. Asian country) and Prime Minister of England. He was buried in the grounds of the Church of Ireland in Derralossary, church in, Co. Wicklow. There is a road named after Erskine in Co. Limerick and

also a commemorative stamp, 2005. Erskine's daughter Nessa Childers is an Irish politician. (Labour party, Green party)

Gaelic for the month:

Wicklow-Chill Mhantain
Unfinished-nach bhfuil croich-naithe

Widow-baintreach

Seanfhocail

Ni Feidir an dubh a chur ina gheal ach seal

(You can only deny the truth for awhile)

My good friend Virginia Gibbons hosts the monthly book club at the "Irish American Heritage Center". All are welcome and in for a treat as she is a professor and makes the book club very interesting and fun! The book for January is called, A History of Loneliness, By John Boyne, we will meet in the library at the center at 1pm on Jan. 31st.

Thank you for all of the kind and inquisitive emails, I'm a lucky cailin! (girl)

If you have any questions or comments please Email me at: Molanive@yahoo.com

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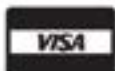
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The Kerryman

The Kerryman is named after the unique St. Brendan the navigator, who many an Irishman will tell you was the first European voyager to reach America by sea. The priest from County Kerry, who established many monastic cells throughout Western Ireland, is best known for his nautical adventures seeking "the isle of the blessed." A unique history has also surrounded this very building in which the Kerryman Bar and Restaurant resides.

As with many existing buildings along Clark Street North of the river, 661 N. Clark Street was built in the 1880's. Hotels and saloons lined the street. Horse stables lined the alleys. The intriguing roots of the building on the Northeast corner of Clark and Erie is immersed in the rise and fall of the Northside Irish mob. As early as the 1870's, Mike McDonald ruled Clark Street South of the river. He built a vast criminal and political organization led by Irish immigrants and their sons. Clark Street North of the river was welcoming the vice trade on a smaller scale that would grow into the 20th century, with McDonald's henchmen leading the way.

One such saloonkeeper was Bob McGovern, who along with his brother Bill, ran at least two saloons and an attached hotel, including at what is today, 661 n. Clark street. McGovern's Saloon and Cabaret served food, beverage and entertainment of all tastes from the early 1900's into the 1950's. Vice, such as gambling and prostitution played out in and around McGovern's saloon. "Street soliciting has been going on steadily in the last seven months up to a short time ago," stated Rev. E.L. Williams in a Dec. 15, 1911 Chicago Tribune story. "One night in May I watched women working out of McGovern's saloon from 10:30 at night until 1 o'clock in the morning. There probably were fifteen of them. One approached me." Many attempts were made to clean up the run of vice ridden nightclubs along the near North side over the years.

"I called the McGovern brothers and Joseph Frez, saloon keepers, to my office and told them things had to be changed." Mayor Carter Harrison II in an Oct. 31, 1912 Chicago Tribune article updating Rev. Williams charges of unchecked rampant vice along North Clark Street.

Reformers eventually got Mayor Harrison to close down the Southside levee vice district prior to World War I, but much of that muscled itself into the lower near Northside along N. Clark street and its tributaries. In June of 1917, McGovern's had its liquor and cigarette licenses evoked for a time due to

its being named an out of control "tough joint" by Mayor Harrison. A younger, more aggressive group of Chicago Irish gangsters, the Little Hellions, took over the area with a few corrupt politicians trying to control the rowdy bunch during the 1910's. Many of those Little Hellions who converged into the North Market Street gang congregated at McGovern's.

Among the unique forms of entertainment at McGovern's Saloon was singing waiters. One young server crooned traditional Irish songs to the patrons, passing by their tables with a distinct limp. His name was Dean O'Banion.

O'Banion was one of the many local youth's terrorizing the streets as a newspaper wags slugger, cocky burglar, brazen safecracker and come the 1920's, the leader of the Northside Irish mob. As prohibition took hold, O'Banion and such young tough's as Heimi Weiss, Vincent Drucci and Bugs Moran ran the Northside with the help of local pol's, police and judges. Most of them were Irish.

In a most complete biography on O'Banion, "Guns and Roses" by Rose Keefe, it appears that O'Banion controlled McGovern's Saloon, which became the local hangout for those connected to his gang. Rooms upstairs and next door were used as offices, meeting rooms and for various forms of vice that fed the Northside Irish mob machine. While Johnny Torrio, Al Capone and the Genna brothers ruled most of the prohibition turf South and Southwest of the Chicago River fork, O'Banion and his gang controlled most areas North and Northwest of the river.

After O'Banion and Weiss were killed by Capone's gunmen respectively in 1924 and 1926 across from Holy Name Cathedral, Moran took over O'Banion's gang and McGovern's saloon. Both began their downfall after the Feb. 14, 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre. By the mid-1930's prohibition was over, Capone was in jail, Moran fled town and North Clark street was falling into disrepair along with the Northside Irish mob. World War II soldiers brought some life back onto the strip in the 1940's. The Frank Nitti and Paul Ricca led Chicago outfit, controlled local pol's, police and judges on the near Northside at that point.

McGovern's Liberty Inn, as this joint was called after prohibition, became the city's largest strip club in the 1950's. At least 25 dancers unleashed their wares there. The outfit controlled many of the nightclubs, cabarets, restaurants, porn shops, food and beverage support industries and saloons on the near North side well into the 1990's. The city of Chicago used building code viola-



tions, task forces, inspections in the form of "shakedowns" and undercover vice investigations in their attempts to clean up the area in the 1960's. The Buildings in the area were becoming a "skid row" dotted with strip joints, gambling dens, porn shops, sleazy saloons and a dark "Boys town" amid the shadow of the bustling Rush street district and the nearby Gold Coast. The colorful history of past tenants at the Kerryman piled on. In 1971, a few years after McGovern's Liberty Inn closed, Paul Quinn, a former Employee of Butch McGuire's tavern on Division Street, opened PQ's, a cloistered gay nightclub. A falstaff beer sign with "PQ" printed below it hung over the main entrance. "It was a unisex gay club where both men and women came to listen to 70's rock n'roll, music and dance," Paul "PQ" Quinn recalls. "The front bar area had a long bar on the North wall, with tables and glass enclosed cabinets lined with red velvet on the South wall with soft lighting. The restrooms were in the middle of the place."

"In the back we had a raised plexi-glass dance floor filled with lights sync'd to the music of the jukebox or dj. We even had strobe lights reflecting off crystal balls hanging from the ceiling." The black wooden entrance at Clark & Erie, along with the black painted windowless outer brick wall facing Erie did not expose its off-beat clientele. PQ's inherited a few characteristics from McGovern's saloon. Behind the stage on the East wall was a hidden staircase that led up to the 2nd floor of the connecting Liberty Inn Hotel. Most assumptions for its use would be true. The "silent partners" who owned the building took care of city inspectors and police when they'd come calling. Free food and beverage and often times cash filled envelopes would make their visits uneventful ones. By late 1975, PQ's was shuttered. The space stayed vacant until June of 1978 when a new edgy tenant re-opened the doors. O'Banion's Nightclub became one of Chicago's first live punk rock clubs. The pungent, dark, messy décor did

not change. The music did.

For nearly four years, O'Banion's led the new punk music scene in Chicago with early performances from the Dead Kennedy's, the Replacements, Naked Raygun, Poison Squirrel and Strike Under. "O'Banion's sign was the façade's only adornment," recalls Ken Mierzwa, a photo journalist of the then punk scene as told to chicagobarproject.com. "Through a flimsy wooden door with a tiny diamond window you'd find an interior featuring a long narrow space with a worn wooden bar running most of its length. Bands played in the rear, which was larger than the front and featured a small raised stage at the back. Some seating could be found beneath the narrow balcony that ran along both sides of the room. There was also a dj booth in the Southeast corner, accessible only by ladder." The blend of gay clientele from the neighborhood would shift to a mostly retro punk crowd when the bartender would play Sham69's Sunday Morning Nightmare. (Chicago Bar project) The zenith of the original punk movement closed its doors Feb. 3, 1982. As the 1980's took hold, so did vast new development along N. Clark Street and the River North area. Pressure from Mayor Jane Byrne, Chicago police, city building inspectors and real estate developers forced the skid row elements, vice trade, surviving gay scene and sleazy saloons to move out by the late-1980's. New retail and residential building owners were given tax breaks to build up the area. Old warehouses throughout the River North area, west of N. La Salle Street became revitalized during the same period with new residential and an ambitious new art gallery District. By the mid-1980's, new owners of the 661 N. Clark building joined the rehab craze, setting the stage for a series of restaurants attempting to do business on the street level. The wonton club (mid-1980's), Joey's Italian Kitchen (late 1980's - Early 1990's), Salvador's Mexican Restaurant (1990's), Tonic 661 (late 1990's) and Doc's River North Restaurant (early 2000's) all took turns trying to make a go of it. Each new place improved the layout of the space, including the raising of the first floor, but none took it to the level of success that its current tenant has. The O'Donoghue brothers, Mick and Trevor, from Castle Island, County Kerry, Ireland and boyhood friend Colm Kennedy came aboard to establish what is now The Kerryman Bar and Restaurant. The official opening was April 27, 2005. In late 2003, planning started in the Killarney Plaza Hotel in Ireland with great help from Trevor and Mick's father, who has established more bars, restaurants and nightclubs than anyone can remember. As



Trevor describes it, "I was living in England, Mick in Australia and Colm in Switzerland. Our father mentioned the idea of us opening a pub in America when we were home one Christmas and we thought, 'why not?' The three of us had grown up in bars and nightclubs and we had all managed bars before. Bankers backed us and we got one of our friends, Patrick O'Sullivan involved as well."

"When banks were booming in Ireland back then, they were throwing money at people with any sort of an idea," Trevor recalls. He added, "Said bank is no longer in business. We were the only business who paid back their loan to them."

"We traveled to other cities in the USA and decided on a place in Philadelphia. We flew to New York to review the documents.

In the meantime, our father, who was on business in Chicago,

spotted a man on a ladder early one Sunday morning putting up a for sale sign on a rather nice old building on the corner of Clark and Erie Streets. We bought the building. We ripped up our other prospective lease, flew back to Ireland to pack our bags and headed to Chicago, where none of us had ever been before. We haven't regretted that decision one bit. We now call Chicago home."

"The building was a bank foreclosure after Doc's closed when we bought it," recalls co-owner Mick O'Donoghue. "We lowered the first floor to ground level, built two new bars, floors and basement that included new restrooms, kitchen and walk-in coolers. We didn't leave much of Doc's Bar. We brought

our own architect and interior designer over from Ireland to get an authentic Irish feel for "the Kerryman."

The sidewalk café and flowers went up that first summer of business and have been there every summer since. "Setting up the sidewalk café was a no brainer," Colm said. "Everyone who visits Ireland always talks about how scenic it is and how green the countryside is. The elaborate flowers and hanging baskets is our way of trying to bring a small piece of Ireland to downtown Chicago."

After arriving and becoming more familiar with the building's history, the lads from Kerry took it in stride, as always.

"From one set of Irish gangsters to the next!", Laughed Mick, when reminded of the corners' infamous past.


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Dublin Players with their young fans at Gaelic Park. (L to R): Philly McMahon, James McCarty, Cian O Sullivan, Kevin McMenamon, Paul Flynn. In the middle is team manager Jim Gavin

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2015-16 SEASON SPONSOR







Before I get to the topic of this issue's column --- Exploring West Cork, I'd like to address a concern that many travelers may be having these days --- terrorism. In today's climate every traveler would be wise to assess the risk associated with the destination they are traveling to. Ireland has consistently been voted one of the world's safest destinations, making it an ideal choice, especially for first-time international travelers. Ireland is also voted one of the friendliest countries in the world and there is no language barrier (unless of course, you're in a pub in Cork at closing time). Combine that with the favorable currency exchange rate and it's no wonder Ireland is expecting to welcome record numbers of tourists in 2016. I encourage you to be one of them!

So, as promised in my last column that focused on Kinsale, I'd like to guide you farther afield to West Cork. There are two Corks; Co. Cork and West Cork. West Cork begins at the edge of Cork City and is enclosed by mountain ranges and the Atlantic Ocean. It takes in the valleys of the River Lee and Bandon and much of the land is mountainous or boggy. It has the large town of Bandon and the smaller towns of Clonakilty, Skibbereen and Macroom. Large Georgian houses and well-farmed land can be seen in the river valleys but predominately the landscape is dotted with a number of small farms.

The following route assumes a departure from Kinsale and is a circular route, which could also be taken in part, if heading toward Kenmare or Killarney.

Timoleague - or Tigh Molaga, meaning the "home of Molaga" is located on the R600 coastal road. St. Molaga, who coincidentally introduced beekeeping in Ireland, founded a monastic settlement here in the 6th century, which was later the site for the Timoleague Friary, built in 1240. In 1612, the abbey was sacked by English soldiers who also smashed all of the stained glass windows. The friars remained in the abbey until 1642 when the friary and town were burnt by English soldiers. However, much of the significant architecture remains and can be explored. It's vantage point along the shores of the River Arigideen is stunning

and photo worthy.

Clonakilty (or Clon as it's known locally) - is full of history and rich in culture. Clon has a renowned international music scene and festivals that celebrate that fact, including the Clonakilty International Guitar Festival in September. I recommend stopping at De



Barra's, one of the Top 10 Traditional Pubs in Ireland and an amazing venue for music. The popular Irish singer/songwriter, Christy Moore was quoted as saying, "There's Carnegie Hall, The Royal Albert, Sydney Opera House and then there's De Barra's."

If you're interested in recent Irish history, you'll want to take in the Michael Collins Tour. Michael Collins, who was from Clonakilty, led the campaign for independence from Britain, beginning with his role in the Easter Rising in 1916. The centennial of the Easter Rising will be commemorated throughout Ireland in 2016. He was killed in an ambush just outside of Clonakilty at Béal na Bláth, in August 1922 by the IRA. Tours depart from the Michael Collins Centre where the guide will actually accompany you in your rental car and escort you to various sites relevant to Michael Collins. Early booking, especially during summer months is essential.

Blue Flag Beaches - West Cork has some of the most stunning Blue Flag Beaches (beaches that meet the highest environmental and water quality standards) near Clonakilty you'll find Inchydoney and Owenahincha,

further west toward Skibbereen, Tragumna and Barleycove near Schull. It's common to see people kayaking, swimming and even surfing in proper weather conditions. Most can be reached by leaving the N71 (the main route through West Cork) just look for signage.

On your way toward Skibbereen from Clon, you'll reach Rosscarbery at which point I recommend taking the R597 where you'll come across Drombeg Stone Circle, and then enter one of the most picturesque harbor villages - Glandore. Do yourself a favour and stop at the Glandore Inn for an Irish coffee which can be enjoyed outdoors in good weather. From this vantage point you can see Adam and Eve islands where local boating folk advise intrepid sailors to

and Heir.

If you have the time, I recommend going to the most southwesterly point in Ireland --- Mizen Head. If pressed for time, you would begin to trek northward on the N71 toward Bantry and to one of my favorite villages in Cork, Glengarriff. Glengarriff was also a favorite of the late Maureen O'Hara, who chose to make Glengarriff her home for several years. I had the good fortune of being introduced to her by the barman at Mac Carthy's bar adjacent to the Glengarriff Park Hotel. I was star struck, she was gracious and still gorgeous. If you're a gardener or just enjoy them, I recommend visiting Garnish Island via a ferry from the pier in Glengarriff. The island has some stunning specimen plants which are rare in this climate. Structures in the garden include a Martello Tower (an original feature of the Island dating from 1805), a Grecian Temple on the western side, a clock tower adjacent to the walled gardens and the Italian Temple and Italian Tea House.

From here you'll head back east toward the Gougane Barra National Park and a visit to St. Finbarr's Oratory - a beautiful small church popular for weddings. The oratory was erected near the remains of St. Finbarr's monastery dating back to the 6th century. The scenery in this area is breathtaking, nestled along Gougane Barra Lake in the mountains. Cork's River Lee has its source in Gougane Barra's Lake, where it flows through Ballingearry and onwards towards Cork City.

From here it's about an hour and a half's drive back to Cork City, 2 hours to Kinsale. You'll traverse the scenic Lee River Valley, one of the few remaining Irish speaking areas in Ireland. Here you will find the villages of Beál Átha 'n Ghaorthaidh (Ballingearry), Cúil Áodha (Coolea) on the river Sullane, and Baile Bhúirne (Ballyvourney). Stop at any one of the pubs located within these villages and you'll receive a warm welcome, feel the warmth of a turf fire and hear the lyrical Irish language being spoken.

You've now gotten a glimpse at an often overlooked region, which may be part of the attraction. This is the Ireland of your dreams ---

I wish all of our readers a Happy New Year - a year that I hope finds you happy, healthy and planning a trip to Ireland!

Go dté tú slán - "May you go safely", Mary Ann. I invite all queries, suggestions, and comments. Don't forget if your question is chosen to be answered in my next column, you'll receive a \$25 dining voucher to Peggy Kinnane's in Arlington Heights!

You can reach me at insidersireland@gmail.com

A Word With Monsignor Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Reverend Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO



No one should be without a place to live. Yet, on any given night there are approximately 14,000 homeless in Illinois, and over the course of the year, some estimate that well over 100,000 people experience homelessness.

It is heartbreaking to see someone sleeping on the street. But sadly, the homeless who are visible to us are actually only a very small percentage of the homeless population. The majority of homeless are low-income families with children who may be doubled-up with friends or family, or living out-of-sight in emergency shelters.

While we know that mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence can contribute to homelessness, not all homeless families face these challenges. For many working poor families, the problem is mainly economic. The severe shortage of affordable housing in our high-rent metropolitan area, combined

with low-wage jobs, means that all of a family's income must be used to make ends meet. Their monthly budgets are so tight that

almost any emergency—a major medical expense, unexpected job loss or illness, loss of child care—could trigger their inability to consistently pay rent or a mortgage, and therefore cause homelessness. For many of us, a \$400 medical or car repair bill can be an unwanted burden; but for the working poor, it can trigger a spiral into homelessness because they have no safety net.

Catholic Charities fulfills the Church's mission to care for the homeless in many critical ways including our mobile street outreach, hot meal services, counseling and substance abuse programs, domestic violence services, and temporary housing and shelter programs. But perhaps one of the most significant ways Catholic Charities addresses homelessness is by helping to prevent it in the first place.

Several years ago Catholic Charities began operating the Homeless Prevention Call Center, a centralized system in the city of Chicago that links callers

facing an eviction or foreclosure to social service agencies who can give financial assistance to keep them in their homes. Through government and private foundation grants, several social service agencies in our community receive a limited amount of homeless prevention funds, but eligibility criteria and amounts available vary widely and change day by day. Not surprisingly, the need far surpasses what is available—there are over 35,000 calls to the Homeless Prevention Call Center each year—but Catholic Charities can help callers determine if prevention funds are available for their situation.

Last fall, the University of Notre Dame conducted a groundbreaking evaluation of the Call Center, proving that homeless prevention funds can make a substantial impact on homelessness. The study found that callers who were able to receive financial help were 65 percent less likely to end up in a shelter after six months than callers who did not receive help. Callers with very low incomes (less than \$750 per month) who received assistance were 80 percent less likely to enter a shelter.

These findings are significant as we move forward to address the issue of homelessness with limited resources. Homelessness has extremely high social costs, and more importantly, it threatens human life and human dignity. It makes sense to "catch" families before they fall into the depths of homelessness.

The ultimate fix for homelessness is to permanently close the gap between what people earn and how much of their income they must devote to housing. The Catholic Church has long been advocating for more affordable housing, higher wages, and improved education and job training. But until the day when all of our brothers and sisters are affordably housed, increasing homeless prevention funding could help families weather a temporary crisis and provide a safety net for those who would otherwise fall through the cracks.

Our Take on Social Services

By Paul Dowling



reports, books, and films.

Senior groups take place at IAHC and Gaelic Park. See below for specific details of senior group meetings this month. All senior group meetings begin at 10am. There is no cost and refreshments will be served. All are very welcome. If you need further information, please call our office on 773-282-8445.

Wednesday, 6th January at IAHC AND Wednesday 13th January at Gaelic Park – Pub Quiz

Join us for our first pub quiz where you will get an opportunity to show off your smarts! Attendees will form teams and battle it out for first place and a chance to win the 'big' prize!

Wednesday, 20th January 2016 – Consulate General of Ireland at the IAHC: 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising – a crucial event on the path to Irish freedom. This week we will be joined by the new Consulate General of Ireland, Orla McBreen who will give a talk and take questions on Ireland's commemorative program for this very significant moment in Irish history.

From the Board of Directors and staff at Chicago Irish Immigrant Support, we would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy new year. We look forward to working with you all to better support the Irish community of Chicago in 2016!

Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation

Unfortunately, the history of Ireland has too often been blemished by the cruel and disturbing practices we have inflicted on each other. Prime examples of our misguided wrongdoings are the different institutions that existed throughout the island of Ireland to house unmarried mothers and their babies. By now the harsh conditions within these homes and the deplorable treatment to which residents were subjected is common knowledge, having been the subject of several high profile

Now the Government of Ireland has made provision for an official investigation to be conducted. February 2015 saw the launch of the Mother and Baby Home Commission of Investigation which was established to perform detailed research into how 14 mother and baby institutions throughout Ireland were funded and operated. The investigation will also encompass a number of county homes that housed single mothers and their children.

In order to get a real sense of what life was like in these institutions the commission is seeking oral or written testimony from anyone who was a resident of one of the homes or worked there. The commission is interested in learning about the circumstances that led to women becoming residents of these institutions and what their experience was like during their time there. The Commission is scheduled to run for three years from its inception in February 2015 with the potential to go beyond this time frame.

Realizing that many of the women who were resident in the mother and baby homes soon became emigrants once they were released, the commission is making efforts to reach out to Irish communities abroad in the hopes of including testimony from the many women who left Ireland's shores and their tragic losses behind to begin a new life. It is important to note that the commission is not investigating all institutions in Ireland. A list of the Mother and Baby Homes being investigated is below. At this time there is no list of County Homes that will fall under the remit of the investigation. Please contact the Commission directly with further questions or if you wish to share your experience with the investigation. You can call the Commission on +353 1 644 5088 or email them at info@mbhcoi.ie. More information can also be found on their website at www.mbhcoi.ie.

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Mick

Mike Morley



the majority of his life thereafter with his great-grandmother. She died a year before Laquan's final rampage.

A black woman called "Laurel", a former schoolteacher

posting on her "Black Political Buzz Network" video blog emphasizes what 'our' media does not. After his great-grandmother's death Laquan was again placed in foster care, and 'the system' again found someone in his family willing to take him- an uncle. The uncle also took Laquan's younger sister (also removed from her mother's home by the state). But the uncle's live-in girlfriend wasn't keen on being an 'instant mother' to Laquan and his sister, and when the girl stayed out one night, the girlfriend gave the uncle an ultimatum. He sent them to foster care once again.

Laurel insists "The cop should not have shot him 16 times" but maintains that a "troubled childhood and the DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) killed Laquan, not the police". Laurel believes Laquan simply gave up trying to make his life work and opted for 'suicide by police': "His biological mother saw Laquan as a check, food stamps, section 8 vouchers. She didn't see him as a human being who came from her womb who needed nurturing, parenting, guidance, love, attention". He was "an inconvenience... that's why the grandmother had him so long".

Chicago's City Council signed off 67-0 on a \$5 million settlement with McDonald's

family even before they filed a lawsuit. That likely works out to \$3.3 million for his 'mother' and a \$1.6m cakewalk for the lawyer, paid by a financially troubled city, which then battled in court for months to keep police videos of Laquan's death hidden from public view.

When police confronted McDonald, he seemed oblivious to the danger, using his knife to slice the tire on a patrol vehicle and damage its windshield. But if McDonald was out of control, there is no doubt in my mind that former Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke also has multiple mental issues. The first responding officer stated he did not see any need to use force, and none of at least eight other officers on the scene fired their weapons. In fact, Van Dyke had to be restrained from reloading and continuing to fire after plugging nearly as many bullets into Laquan as years in his life.

Laquan's death, either mindless or suicide, has become a blood sacrifice on the altar of change. Following investigations of Ferguson and Baltimore, Obama's Justice Department is now coming to Chicago. They found Ferguson Police in violation of the First, Fourth, and 14th Amendments of the Constitution.

In Ferguson a deal is in the works, and citizens must be sold on approving a federal policing monitor and huge new expenses for the already financially strapped city. Some officials predict a tax hike is unavoidable.

Truth is, the state is responsible for both McDonald and Van Dyke. How much social cost can the city absorb? Nine-year-old Tyshawn Lee is executed by a Chicago gang as a message to his father-justice by

a gutter government which has no responsibility but to itself.

Citizens who once lived in that jungle, or ones like it, but now live in safe neighborhoods and work for steady wages and believe in "the system", decry the violence and blame their government, demanding it be more responsive to "the people".

Many may forget the foster care movement in America began when "orphan trains" ceased at the onset of the Great Depression when those in rural areas suddenly experienced the poverty plaguing crowded inner cities. The Orphan Train Movement was a welfare program transporting orphaned and homeless children from crowded Eastern cities to foster homes in rural areas of New York, surrounding states and the Midwest. About 200,000 orphaned, abandoned, or homeless children (New York City alone had an estimated 30,000 such children in the 1850s) were placed in foster homes throughout the country.

Unsurprisingly the movement began in 1853 to deal with Britain's forced expulsion of Irish people under cover of "famine". Children lost parents in Ireland's holocaust or on coffin ships or in successive epidemics of typhus, yellow fever and flu that ravaged the inner city poor. Some came from homes unable to care for them because of alcohol abuse or criminal prosecutions. Many of these kids had been in trouble with the law.

And the anniversary of another blood sacrifice, Easter 1916 is nigh, when Irishmen considered patriots were shot by England as traitors. But some believe it's not an event to recall with respect. Former Fine Gael Taoiseach John Bruton likened Pearse and his followers to traitors for opposing England's occupation of Ireland while at war with Germany and other Irishmen died in the trenches for England. He said living for Ireland was better than dying for Ireland. Openly gay independent Senator David Norris backed Bruton, actually labeling the rising's leaders "traitors" because they ignored Irish Volunteers chief Eoin MacNeill's call to cancel the event.

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This is our 28th year.

Blood Sacrifice

A woman in Bethany (Mary of Bethany or Mary Magdalene) who was said to have lived a sinful life, learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house; so she came there with an alabaster jar of spikenard, a precious and outrageously expensive perfume derived from a flowering plant of the Himalayas. The guests, dirt poor, watch as she anoints Jesus' head with it. She then anoints his feet and, most offensive to Jewish sensibilities, wipes his feet with her hair. It was scandalous for a Jewish woman to let down her hair in public. Jesus responds to the outraged guests and disciples saying: "The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me... She does this to prepare me for my death."

Not much has been released about Laquan Mc Donald's life before he was shot to death by a Chicago policeman in October 2014. High on PCP, an animal tranquilizer, he was wielding a pocket knife to smash windshields and break into vehicles in a trucking yard.

We do know he was removed by the state from his mother's household at age 3 and again at 5. He suffered beatings and sexual abuse at home and in foster care. He spent

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Christmas and New Years Message from President Michael Higgins

Christmas is a special time. For most of us, it is a time to be together with our loved ones, our families; a time to pause and reflect; a time to recognise and give thanks for the good people, and happy events in our lives.

If Christmas is a time to celebrate, it is also a time to share. We share each other's company, each other's achievements together with each other's pains, hopes and dreams.

For we must not forget that Christmas is also a time of hope. At this time, in the deepest darkness of winter, we celebrate the triumph of light over dark, of dreams over the setbacks of the past. We renew our sense of possibilities not yet realised.

As we take stock over this holiday period, we are given an opportunity to reflect on our lives and the world we live in. As we do so, we are reminded of the hardship experienced by countless people in Ireland and the suffering of millions of our fellow travellers on this vulnerable planet we call Earth.

As we reflect on the story of Christmas and the birth of Jesus, on the plight of the homeless Joseph and Mary



anticipating the birth of their child, and how they were aided by complete strangers, we can perhaps draw inspiration from what they experienced for our own lives and times. More than anything, the

Christmas story gives us guidance on how to shape our own shared humanity with a regard for future generations. This year in particular, we welcome the acceptance of new obligations by nation states in relation to global poverty and climate change.

During 2015 we learnt that 1 in every 122 people on the planet is now a refugee, a "displaced person" or otherwise forced to leave their homes. Wars, conflict and persecution have forced more people to flee than at any other time since records began. As people of a migrant nation we are perhaps uniquely placed to understand the great agony experienced by the 60 million displaced people.

In this context, it is heartening to see how countless people in Ireland have chosen to respond with warmth and real hospitality. Our NGOs, our medical services, and our uniformed services – both at home and overseas – are peopled by those who have chosen to take action, and to be the stranger that offers a helping hand, a shelter, a meal to those in need. How we treat the weakest among us is the finest test of us as a nation.

During the past year both Sabina and I have experienced and valued the warmth and friendship of people both at home and abroad – and it is something we deeply appreciate. In villages and towns around the country and on working visits abroad we have had the privilege of witnessing the contribution to community and the public world made by Irish people in so many various ways.

Together, we can strengthen that web of solidarity that binds us as a people and as a global community next year. As we prepare to commemorate the momentous events of a century ago that shaped the birth of our Republic, we are encouraged not only to recall those events, but also to re-imagine and take inspiration from the Republican ideals

proclaimed almost a century ago.

It is my sincere hope that those ideals can inspire each and every one of us on our shared journey where each step made by each citizen, in every generation, matters, a journey that we all make together, never alone.

Mar Uachtarán na hÉireann, guím gach dea-ghuáir oraibh go léir agus go raibh Nollaig agus Bliain Nua shona agus shíochánta agaibh.

As President of Ireland may I offer people everywhere the warmest wishes for a peaceful as well as a happy Christmas and New Year.

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Governor Martin O'Malley joins Irish Groups in Support Comprehensive Immigration Reform

by *Brendan Magee*

Last Wednesday, Former Maryland Governor and Democratic Presidential candidate Martin O'Malley was the first Democratic Presidential candidate to attend the Illinois Business Coalition's (IBIC) Presidential candidate series. He was joined by Chicago Consul General of Ireland Orla McBreen and over 100 prominent Irish and Latino immigrant business leaders at IBIC's Presidential Candidates Forum. During his two terms as Governor, O'Malley signed

bills providing undocumented immigrants in Maryland access to driver's licenses and in-state tuition rates at public colleges. Each law was put to a voter referendum in the 2012 general election and upheld by a majority of the voting public. Governor O'Malley has demonstrated that leading on commonsense immigration solutions is good economics, better morals and winnable politics.

"I firmly believe that our country succeeds when we include more people, more fully, into the economic, social and political fabric of our country. We must strengthen our economy and hold true to our values by taking 11 million of our neighbors out of the shadow economy and into the full light of our American economy," said Governor Martin O'Malley, Democratic Presidential Candidate. "It is who we are, who we've always been and how we will ensure our strength in the future."

"In the restaurant business, undocumented immigrants are the backbone of our workforce. They are the sweat, inspiration and creative minds behind the food industry," said Billy Lawless, famous Irish Chicago restaurateur and owner of the iconic Gage Restaurant. Billy, a Galway native and chairman of the Chicago

Celts for Immigration Reform, cofounded IBIC with Chairman Emeritus of Exelon, John Rowe to highlight the business community's need for common sense immigration reform. "Undocumented immigrants work hard. They pay taxes. They create jobs. As the largest private sector em-

The overwhelming majority of the 11 million undocumented immigrants migrate for a better future for their families, including the estimated 50,000 Irish undocumented currently here. They do honest work. They work hard. They keep places like Chicago, New York, Boston, Harvard (IL)



ployer in the state of Illinois, the restaurant industry needs commonsense immigration reform with a clear path to citizenship more than ever."

While Congress continues to stalemate over immigration reform, IBIC's Presidential Candidates Forum engages candidates from both sides of the aisle on the urgency to pass reform that is politically smart, economically sound, morally right and makes us safer.

IBIC's Forum kicked off this past July with Republican Presidential Candidate and US Senator Lindsey Graham at The Resurrection Project. IBIC has invited Presidential candidates from both parties to participate.

- big cities and small towns - up and running each day. They pay \$15 billion in taxes every year. They have paid \$150 billion to the Social Security Trust fund from which they are ineligible to receive benefits.

It is bad for the economy to have millions of people working in the shadows. It is bad for national security when we do not know who is in the country and for what purpose. It is bad for the country when families are kept apart. The Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform and IBIC urge Congress to act on real solutions that reflect the realities of our current economy, protect hardworking immigrant workers, create American jobs and make us safer.

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Wednesday
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 Hosts Tim Taylor and Mike Shevlin 773-792-1240 773-286-6866
 tim.taylor@windycityirishradio.com, mike.shevlin@windycityirishradio.com
 podcasts: www.windycityirishradio.com/podcast.html

New Irish Radio Hour *The Craic*

Irish American Heritage Center President, Gene Cooney and Irish entertainer Kathleen Keane, kicked off a new weekly radio show last month. The taping of the program is open to the public on Thursdays from 6-7pm, in the Fifth Province, and airs on Saturdays from 8-9pm on WSBC 1240 AM.

The Craic, with Cooney & Keane features music and community news for the Irish American community of Chicagoland. The show is produced by Hibernian Transmedia, a not for profit producing organization dedicated to preserving and promoting Irish and Irish American culture.

Cooney, a local funeral director and long-time supporter of the Center was elected President of the Board of Directors last July. He's a popular figure in the Irish community and continues to perform stand-up comedy at a variety of community events.

Kathleen Keane is an international performer on Irish fiddle, tin whistle, flute, button accordion and a handful of other instruments, who has performed in Ireland and all over the world with her signature style. She has recorded several CDs and performed with Gaelic Storm, The Drovers, and The Keane Machine. She was recently appointed Musical Director of the Fifth Province Lounge.

The taped program coincides with the Fifth Province's new free weekly Thursday night tune learning workshop from 6:30-7pm, and music session from 7-9pm. Tune in every Saturday night at 8pm to hear the Craic with Cooney & Keane on WSBC 1240AM.



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Cooney and Keane kick off *The Craic*

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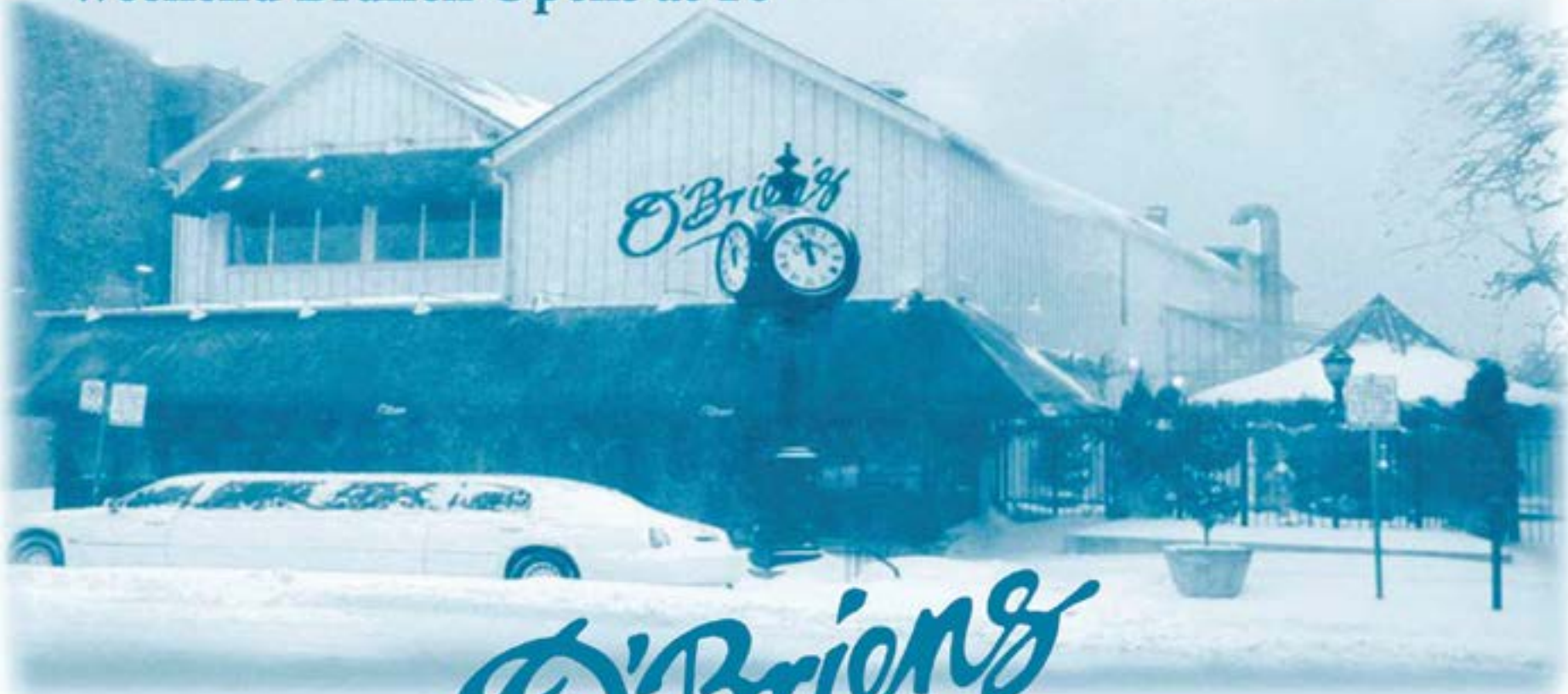
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