



IRISH AMERICAN HALL OF FAME

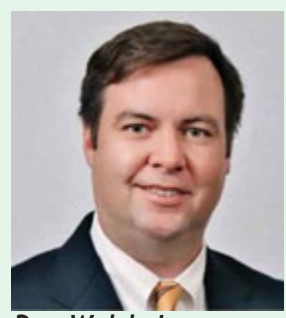
*Recognizing the Contributions of Outstanding Irish Americans
at the Irish American Hall of Fame Gala, Saturday April 29 . . . Page 5*



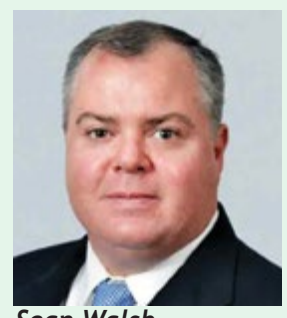
Dan Walsh



Matt Walsh



Dan Walsh Jr.



Sean Walsh



Matthew P. Walsh II



Matthew P. Walsh Sr.

Hometown Heroes: The Walsh Family



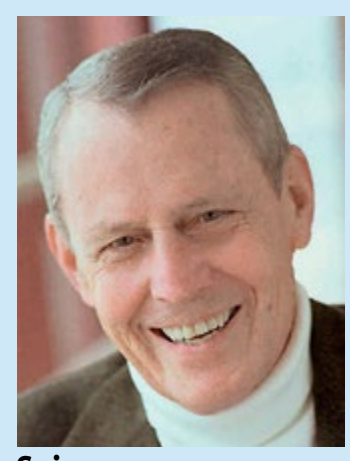
Business
John Sexton



Education
John L. Lahey



Public Service
Joanne Hayes-White



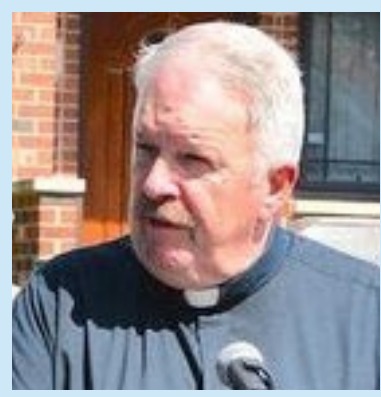
Science
Dr. Thomas E. Starzl




Sports - Patrick J.
'Patsy' Donovan




Arts & Humanities
Mark Howard



Religion
Fr. Thomas A. Mulcrone



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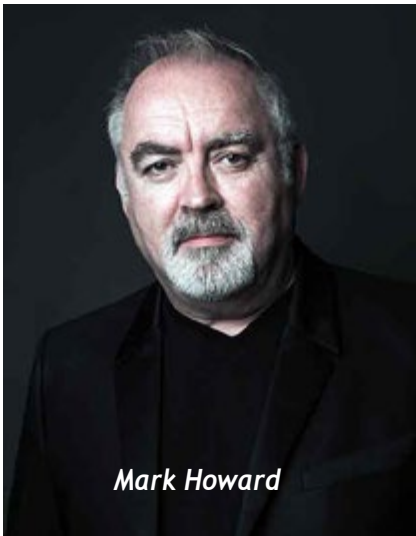

Irish American Hall of Fame Announces 2023 Class of Inductees

The Irish American Hall of Fame announced its 2023 Class of Inductees - seven outstanding Irish Americans who have made significant contributions in their fields. The inductees and one "Hometown Hero" will be honored at the 11th Annual Irish American Hall of Fame Awards Gala on April 29, 2023 at The Irish American Heritage Center on Chicago's Northwest side.

Now in its 11th year, the Irish American Hall of Fame is national in scope and operated under the auspices of the Irish American Heritage Center. Over 200 nominations were considered from throughout the U.S. and a rigorous screening process applied to appoint the final 7 inductees.

Below are the 2023 Irish American Hall of Fame inductees and Hometown Heroes. Full bios at <http://iahof.org>.

Arts & Humanities



Mark Howard

Mark Howard (born April 3, 1962) is an Emmy Award winning choreographer and the Founding Artistic Director/Choreographer for Trinity Academy of Irish Dance and Trinity Irish Dance Company. A pioneer in dance, he created his own dance genre and significantly altered the landscape of Irish dance, re-introducing the art form as the phenomenon it is today



John Sexton

Business & Industry

John Sexton (October 10, 1912-August 14, 1966) was a highly successful businessman in the sanitary landfill field. To honor his heritage, John would sponsor for Irish people immigrating to America. One of those people he sponsored was Tommy Ryan of Limerick, Ireland, who became the founder of the Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band. John Sexton quietly provided the financial support that allowed The Rovers to persevere and become an integral part of the Irish American community.

About the Irish American Heritage Center:

Founded in 1976, the Chicago-based organization is one of the premier Irish cultural organizations in the United States. It is a destination for people of Irish descent as well as those who wish to learn more about the Irish heritage. Learn more at www.irish-american.org.

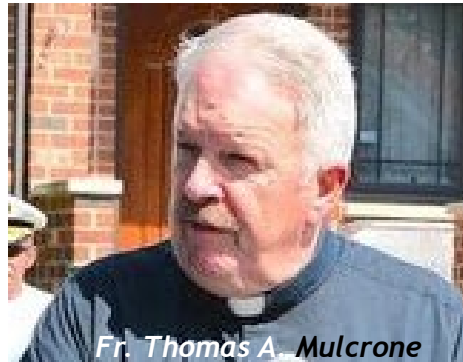
Public Service

Joanne Hayes-White (born February 1964) was sworn in as the 25th Chief of the San Francisco Fire Department on



Joanne Hayes-White

January 16, 2004. San Francisco was the largest urban fire department in the world with a female chief when Hayes-White took the job. She was the first ever women to lead the department, the first openly gay chief and the longest-serving big-city fire chief in the country.



Fr. Thomas A. Mulcrone

Religion

Fr. Thomas A. Mulcrone (born 1951) served both the Chicago Fire Department and the International Association of Firefighters as their Chaplain. Over the course of 30 years, he responded to 1,480 extra-alarm fires and attended over 1,900 special-duty calls. He is a well-respected individual whom many from all religious denominations look to as a role model and leader.

Sports

Patrick J. "Patsy" Donovan (March 16, 1865 - December 25, 1953) was a native of County Cork, Ireland, and often



Patrick J. 'Patsy' Donovan

About the Irish American Hall of Fame: The Irish American Hall of Fame (IAHOF) aspires to preserve and promote the stories of the Irish in America and the ongoing links between Ireland and the United States. The Hall of Fame was founded by members of the Chicago-based Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC). While the Hall of Fame is an organization born of and operated under the auspices of the IAHC, it is overseen by a separate governing committee and has a national focus.

Founded in 2010, the IAHOF inducted its first honorees in March 2011. On the occasion of this year's 2023 Hall of Fame celebration dinner, 101 Irish Americans will have been inducted. To see the full list of prior inductees and learn more, visit www.iahof.org

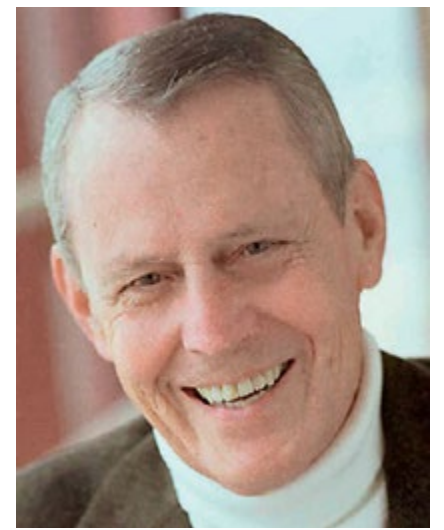
referred as the most successful Irish-born baseball player in America. He spent 17 years as a player and player coach in the big leagues, boasting an impressive .313 life time batting average.



Education

John L. Lahey (born 1946) is an educator and administrator who served as President of Quinnipiac University for over 30 years, leading the University's unprecedented growth. He serves as Vice-Chairman of the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee and has devoted much of his time to educating the public about the historic

implications of Ireland's Great Hunger, including the founding of the Ireland's Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University.



Science

Thomas Earl Starzl (March 11, 1926 - March 4, 2017) was an Irish American physician, researcher and an expert on organ transplants. Having performed the first human liver transplants, he is often referred to as "the father of modern transplantation." Dr. Starzl also performed the first transplant for an Irish citizen, Ireland's "miracle boy," two-year-old Colin McStay.

2023 Hometown Heroes

The Walsh family originates from County Armagh and County Mayo.

In 1893, Matthew Myles Walsh came to Chicago looking for work at the World's Columbian Exposition. Through 4 generations of Walshes in Chicago, the Walsh family went on to become leaders in architecture and construction, while also conquering the legal field as prominent attorneys for well-known law firms in Chicago. Matthew P. Walsh Sr. passed away on December 22, 2023.

Info: www.iahof.org.

For tickets use link below

<https://irish-american.org/event/2023-irish-american-hall-of-fame-gala>



Dan Walsh



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Dan Walsh Jr.



Sean Walsh



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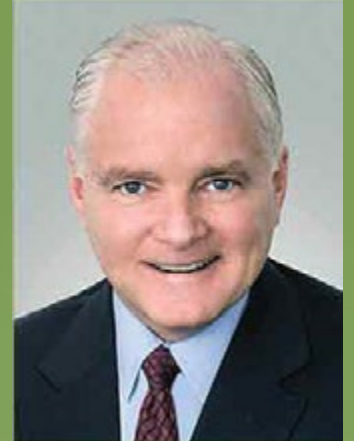


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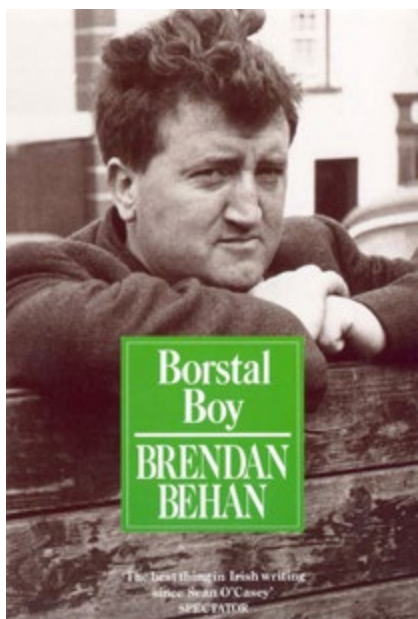
It was my intention to write a column commenting on the colorful life of Brendan Behan. To my mind a worthy and interesting effort.

Searched my Irish book shelves and could not locate a copy of his book Borstal Boy.

The local bookstore never heard of it and so I did what most of you do, I slipped into the world of Amazon and within a day or so a small parcel was left on my doorstep. There it was: Borstal Boy-Brendan Behan written in large letters on the paper back cover and this is what I read on the inside: Borstal Boy ist ein aufrührerisches Buch, nicht nur seiner erbarmungslos nackten, den Gefangenen-Slang in sich aufnehmenden. Amazon sent me the German copy of Behan's book!

My first thought was of Brendan churning and moaning in a damp grave totally disgusted. He could churn and moan all he wanted but my job was to write a lengthy column and Amazon left me in the lurch.

Yes, it occurred to me to pay a translator, or to dig in and become fluent in German. Time however was not on my side and I grit my teeth one more time regretting learning Gaelic as a youngster in Ireland.



In this instance German would save me better! My late Chicago friend Dr. Rory W. Childers, an Irish man with historic distinction was a renowned cardiac physician at Chicago University as well as Behan's

friend and doctor.

To amuse he was fond of recounting the shenanigans the day he and Brendan were in Dublin walking toward O'Connell Street, Behan flaunting a blackthorn walking stick and announcing they should pop into *The Irish Times*. Once inside, Behan, gesturing in the News Room with the stick in the air shouted in a very shrill voice: "Down with the Papacy."

That's not exactly what he said but you get the gist since his words cannot be printed in this publication.

Journalists, editors and whoever else was in the news room rose up enraged, while several reporters even jumped from their desks clearly ready to tackle Behan to the ground. As the story goes, he quickly got out of harm's way dashing with Childers to the double glass doors and once outside placed the walking stick into the two handles locking the doors to the hallowed news room.

Dr. Childers always maintained Behan did not die an alcoholic although research produces a different cause of death. One of the many advantages of being Irish and a writer is the endless amount of interesting information, real or imagined to record on the printed page. For example

a long time ago, the late Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, as I recall not a popular yoke with the Irish people, was quoted in the Irish Press criticizing prominent women in Ireland labelling them "mad, bad, dangerous Irish women."

Celia Doolan was on that list, a resident of Galway who lives in an authentic Irish Cottage, and when there last turned turf from the bugs in her fireplace.

A renowned actress, film producer, director of the Abbey Theatre, and head of the Irish Film Board The Archbishop's anti-female tirade did not stop there.

He broke many barriers when he launched Bernadette Devlin into the female maddest, baddest group despite the fact she was the youngest ever Member of Britain's Parliament. She was also the face and voice of the Civil Rights movement in Northern Ireland in the late sixties and early seventies, a period that experienced sectarian violence, riots, brutality, pitched battles in the streets and the intervention of the British Army.

In 1981, Bernadette and her husband Michael McAliskey were attacked in their home and shot by members of the Ulster Freedom Fighters for being leaders of the H Block, Long Kesh British Prison campaign against the criminalization of members of the IRA. Both survived.

Years later, in 2012 I was fortunate and privileged to be included in a Female Liberation Panel in Los Angeles during the 5th annual Irish Film Festival partnering with courageous women including Irish actress Fionnula Flanagan, Lelia Doolan, and Aine O'Healy, a graduate from the National University of Ireland/University College Galway. She was also a Fulbright Professor at the University di Roma La Sapienze, Italy. I was included on the panel as an award winning journalist, author and media relations expert, born in Dundalk, County Louth and wrote extensively highlighting the political strife in Northern Ireland for American Newspapers. I also contributed to print media in Boston, Chicago and Southern California and quite proud that an Irish bishop especially the arch conservative anti-female John Charles McQuaid's philosophy classified me among a group of high class intelligent, successful women as mad, bad,



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and dangerous.
 We had names for him, alas none of them suitable for inclusion in the pages of *Irish American News*.

Bernadette Devlin was a fierce force in the North of Ireland and according to the usual reliable sources is currently not involved in Irish politics.

Ironically for the 5th Irish Film Festival Lelia Doolan produced a new documentary focusing on Bernadette entitled: Notes on a Political Journey. It was produced at the Linwood Dunn Theatre in Hollywood, California in September 2012 and received rave reviews.

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



The leader of the DUP, Jeffrey Donaldson is anxious to bring his party with him. If he ultimately does endorse the Framework, one

Still Crazy After 25 Years

The timing of the brokering of the Windsor Framework could hardly be more propitious for most of its stakeholders. Those who wish to implement it in the UK, Irish and US governments and across the EU all have the wind at their backs. The UK has faced waves of dissatisfaction with the economic downturn resulting from Brexit, manifesting principally in strikes across crucial public service providers. It needed a 'victory' to placate its discontented population. While Northern Ireland is of no interest to the British public, the prospect of a trade deal with the EU certainly is - that has a direct effect on their lives. The EU had made a trade deal contingent upon bedding down the Northern Ireland Protocol, or the Windsor Framework as it is now known after it was put through the political and PR laundromat (washed down with tangible improvements on the regulation of goods travelling from Great Britain to Northern Ireland).

The Irish government is obviously relieved that the interminable playacting over the Protocol seems to be over. Since Brexit, when the Irish government signs off on an aspect of Northern Irish affairs the EU is almost certain to support it. Like the EU, the US also made a trade deal with the UK conditional upon the Northern Ireland Protocol. So, Washington can look forward to better relations with London now. That also chimes well with the appointment of Joe Kennedy as Special Envoy to Northern Ireland and President Biden's April visit to Ireland.

Moreover, a large majority who live in Northern Ireland are greatly relieved that the economic limbo in which they have been suspended now appears to be nearly over. They can make the pitch that Northern Ireland enjoys unique access to the EU and UK markets; Washington is lending credibility to that claim with the promise of a surge of investment in Northern Ireland. So, everyone is happy? Of course not. Welcome to Northern Ireland.

The DUP, the largest unionist party, and the cause of the ongoing suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly, voted against the Windsor Framework when it was put to a vote in the House of Commons on March 22nd. The Framework easily passed anyway, by 515 votes to 29. One faction of the party led by Sammy Wilson and Ian Paisley Jr., repudiated the advances of the agreement almost immediately after it was negotiated.

Even so, the Prime Minister of the UK, Rishi Sunak, has taken ownership of this deal, and he had plenty of support in Westminster, given that the Leader of the Opposition, Keir Starmer, also endorsed it. So, the DUP's opposition to it will only further distance themselves from the mothership.

aspect of the agreement that is likely to be central to his attempt to sell it to his party is the 'Stormont brake'. That is the clause in the agreement that enables a group of 30 Northern Irish Assembly members (out of 90) to block an EU law if it can demonstrate that that law will negatively impact the lives of their constituents. Alternatively, a group of 30 could attempt to trigger the break if they can demonstrate that a new EU law represents a democratic deficiency (since Northern Ireland no longer has political representation in the EU).

In practice, such a demand, if made, will almost certainly come from unionists and it is certainly possible that unionist members of the assembly could muster the requisite 30 votes. However, they should think three times before doing so. The 'brake' must ultimately be pulled by the UK government, which would have to decide whether remonstrating with the EU over a Northern Irish grievance is in its interests. Even the most pro-unionist British government will be unwilling to do so since London's priority will be its trade deal with the EU. Given how contemptuous London has been towards unionism since Brexit, it is almost impossible to imagine London acting in accordance with such a petition from unionists. London has repeatedly used Northern Ireland as a political football in its negotiations with the EU since 2016, and it has never worked. The Tories, under Rishi Sunak, appear to finally have faced reality. They will convey that reality to unionist politicians who attempt further wreckage.

The 'brake' is being sold as a sop to Northern unionists, allowing them to claim that they held out and extracted this and other concessions from the EU. However, the 'brake', if exercised, would put them in the position of supplicant to London and tee themselves up for yet another betrayal if London dismisses their concerns and refuses to negotiate with the EU. London will remain deaf to the claims of many in the DUP, and to all in the party on its right flank, the Traditional Unionist Voice, that the agreement constitutes a 'democratic deficit'.

The Windsor Framework is here to stay, and it will be implemented one way or another. The next act will be the Northern leader of Sinn Féin, Michelle O'Neill, sitting as First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Sinn Féin had hoped that that could happen before President Biden's visit so the party could display to the world's television cameras that the agreement which they signed on Good Friday 25 years ago is a triumph. The DUP's ongoing sulk dampens Sinn Féin's party. However, in the long run, the DUP can deny evolution, but they cannot stop it.

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Benefit for Cameron Taft 4-16

On October 10th, 2021, Maureen & Chaz Taft experienced the most unimaginable tragedy. Their 22-month old son, Cameron, suffered a near fatal drowning. Due to the quick response from family, friends & first responders, Cameron was revived and began fighting for his life.

Maureen & Chaz were soon given news no parent wants to hear and needed to make a decision. Maureen was taught "Where there is life, there is hope." They knew Cameron had life in him. Cameron has a severe brain injury and the road to recovery will be long. With the high cost of care, the medical bills have become insurmountable.

On Sunday, April 16th, 2023, from 2PM-8PM, Cam's friends will host a "Super Cam" fundraiser at the Irish American Heritage Center (4626 N Knox Ave, Chicago, IL 60630) to celebrate Cam's recovery and help offset costs for Maureen & Chaz on this journey.

The event is free and open to all ages. Funds will be raised through donations and auction items. We are eagerly asking for your support to make this a success and are looking for donation items. No item is too big or small and will go a long way to aid Cam in his recovery. Every donation is welcome & appreciated! Some ideas include:

- Tickets to Sporting Events/Live Events
- Getaways, Trips, Vacation Homes, Airline & Hotel Points
- Signed paraphernalia • Electronics, Gadgets
- Children's items • Golf trips • Gift baskets
- Spas (Manicure, massages, etc.)
- Gift certificates (restaurants, Bars, etc.)
- Lessons (Cooking, Golfing, Dancing etc.)
- Fitness packages (Gym & Class memberships, Trainers, Work-out Gear)
- Experiences & Adventures (Horseback Riding, Go-kart Racing, Sky-Diving, etc.)
- Monetary Donations welcomed!

Our committee would happily pick up an item from you. Please reach out to us at any time:

SuperCamStrong@gmail.com & the website is SuperCamStrong.org.

Erin McGuire - emcgg0016@gmail.com

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New Owners at Donegal Imports

Good news for friends of Irish imports stores on the north side of Chicago. Donegal Imports, is open again and ready for business.

After many years of long service to the community, Alex

community in Chicago.

Michael J. was a longtime stationary engineer with Local 399. Ellen is best known for her work at St. Viator Church, and as a banquet waitress with



McGrath has taken a well-deserved retirement.

The new owner is Michael T Hughes, known as Miceál to his family, a long time resident of the Northwest side of Chicago and first generation Irish-American. His parents, both from County Mayo, Michael J. Hughes and Ellen C. Hughes, née Walsh, are well known to the Irish American

Monastero's Restaurant. His brother Martin J. Wilmet-Hughes was a well-known singer in the area, cantoring many wedding and funeral masses over the years. He has now moved to the sunnier climes of Scottsdale, Arizona, along with his bride, Nicole Wilmet-Hughes.

His sister Brigid Norah was a long time dancer with the

O'Hare School of Irish Dance. Many of you have seen her over the years, dancing at various pubs and restaurants over the St Patrick's Day holidays.

Michael's aunt, Agnes Mahoney, was very well known in the Irish dancing world, attending all the feiseanna, and created many of the dresses, some of which are still used today. She, also with Michael J. Hughes was one of the founding members of the Irish American Heritage Center.

Now that Michael T Hughes is taking over the store, he hopes to keep up the same friendly atmosphere and warm welcome that Alex had over the years. It has the same location (5358 W. Devon Ave, Chicago, IL 60646) and telephone number (773-792-2377) as before.

He's planning on keeping all of your old favorites, and introducing some new ones. He will be having an official grand opening in the next few weeks.

Please check Facebook for notifications about when that is happening. In the meantime, feel free to stop by and see what he has in inventory. Please let him know if there's anything you are looking for in particular, as he restocks everything for the ongoing year.

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Irish-American Returns from Edge of Universe with Astronomy Ambassador Program in Chile

Michael O'Shea, formerly of Chicago's Northwest Mayfair neighborhood, recently returned from an astronomy ambassador trip to Chile. During the trip, the ambassadors had the opportunity to visit some of the world's most advanced telescope installations. Chile is home to over 50% of the world's astronomy observatories, due to its unique climate, geography, and dark sky conditions. The United States (US) has major investments in telescope operations there, often in partnership with other astronomy organizations, such as the European Southern Observatory (ESO) and the Japanese Space Agency (JAXA).



The finale was the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA), an array of 66 telescopes perched high in the dry Atacama Desert. (The desert receives less than an inch of rain per year; sometimes there is no precipitation.) The low levels of precipitation make it ideal for detecting radio waves from space the ALMA telescope dishes are designed to receive.

The ALMA is an array of 66 radio telescopes spread over 10 miles that operate together as a single telescope. Its main telescopes are 36 feet in diameter. To reach the radio telescopes at ALMA O'Shea and group traveled more to more 16,000 feet in elevation, which required the use of supplemental oxygen.

ALMA telescopes are so large that to move them into new positions, the observatory uses two large custom-built super-transporters, each some 60 feet long and 18 feet high. 28 tires allow each 140-ton transporter to safely transport its astronomical cargo through the desert mountains.

O'Shea grew up in a close-knit Irish American family on Chicago's Northwest Side (Mayfair) with his Fermanagh-born grandmother, close to the Irish American Heritage Center and St. Edward's Church. He is a proud graduate of Chicago Public Schools, having attended Palmer Elementary, Beaubien Elementary, and Lincoln Park High School. He now resides in Cambridge, Massachusetts with his partner and wife Nicky Enriquez.

O'Shea joined nine other lucky astronomy educators in adventuring to the highest peaks of Chile in December 2022 as part of the Astronomy in Chile Educator Ambassadors Program (ACEAP). The ACEAP brings amateur astronomers, planetarium personnel, as well as K-16 formal and informal astronomy educators to US astronomy facilities in Chile. While at these facilities, ACEAP Ambassadors receive extensive training about the instruments, the science, data products, and communicating STEM concepts. These ambassadors included both astronomy educators and enthusiasts. Upon their return, ambassadors have been hard at work sharing what they learned with their communities through presentations, outreach activities, and articles.

Their itinerary included visits to Chile's capital, Santiago, and the communities of La Serena and San Pedro de Atacama to the north. While there, they explored astronomical facilities at the leading edge of scientific discoveries, O'Shea visited breath-taking observatories and telescopes at the cutting edge of astronomy, including Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory (CTIO), Victor Blanco telescope, Gemini South Observatory, Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA), and the Vera Rubin Observatory. Cerro Tololo means "edge of the abyss" in local Indigenous language, a fitting name for the sharp dry peaks of the Andes mountains where the observatories are perched

A highlight was the visit to the Vera C. Rubin Observatory, located on the Cerro Pachón ridge in north-central Chile. Currently under construction, this observatory is named after Vera Rubin, whose pioneering work established the presence of dark matter through precise measures of galaxy rotation, the groundwork for dark energy. She was a trailblazer for women in science.

The group met with outreach and education staff from all of the major observatories, who shared bilingual outreach efforts with surrounding communities, schools, and Indigenous communities. Efforts there include PROVOCA mentorship program is a mentoring program for women and girls in Science Engineering Technology and Math (STEM).

The ambassadors also visited an example of the ubiquitous astro-tourism operations, the Centro Astronomico Alfa Aldea, family-run planetarium set among the vineyards at the foothills of the Andes Mountains. Local university students conducted astronomy tours and astrophotography activities.

O'Shea and crew visited Parque Puribeter, a natural reserve managed in partnership with local Indigenous communities, that emphasized human connections to the earth and sky, and featured an introduction to Indigenous cosmology.

About Michael O'Shea O'Shea is the co-founder of #popscope (with Viva Dadwal), a community-based urban astronomy movement that brings diverse populations together through joyful, free astronomy events in cities across Canada and the US. Volunteers from #popscope have hosted 400+ events that have introduced 20,000 guests to the night sky since 2014, spreading joy and love for astronomy! A local #popscope affiliate is the Mather Astronomy Club, co-sponsored by teacher and community leader Mary Rose O'Shea. The club recently completed a field trip to Adler Planetarium and is collaborating in constructing a radio telescope.

O'Shea hopes his trip inspires other Chicagoans and CPS students to consider astronomy as a hobby or a career and apply for the ACEAP program. O'Shea states that "Chicago has a lot of light pollution, but you can still see the moon's craters and the rings of Saturn from the street or your backyard." Chicago Astronomy regularly schedules observations across the city. O'Shea encourages you to visit the Adler Planetarium, find (or start!) an astronomy group at your high school or to find a "star party".

Mary Pat Flanagan Sr. VP North American Sales

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GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!

By **TINA BUTLER**



happy to see my youngest brother tie the knot & hear U2 playing.

U2 formed as a group in the 70's the band includes, Bono, who's real name is Paul Hewson, from Dublin, The Edge, real name David Evans, born in England but grew up in Dublin, Larry Mullen from Dublin and Adam Clayton, born in England but grew up in Dublin.

Bono is known for his heartfelt vocal style and has been classified as a tenor. The groups style has changed and evolved over the years, but their music usually has a personal and socio-political theme to their songs. They are well known for being a politically conscious group that likes to help global causes like poverty, disease, and social injustice.

They have campaigned a lot over the years for human rights causes including Amnesty International, Jubilee 2000 (it was an international coalition movement in 40 countries that called for cancellation of 3rd world debt, by the year 2000.) Also, Product Red, it is a brand that raises money, awareness and helps to eliminate aids in Africa, War Child, it is an organization that tries to protect and empower children in war torn areas, and Music Rising, it is an organization that helps the livelihoods of musicians affected by disasters.

The band is known worldwide and are said to be the best music makers of all time. They were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame their first year of eligibility.

Rolling Stones ranked U2 at number 22 on its list of "100 Greatest artists of all time". They gained great popularity for their live performances and their elaborate tours. The thing I like the most about U2's story is it started with Larry (the drummer) posting a note to the school's notice board in search of creating a band. And as they say the rest is history. It all started with a little note...

U2 isn't just a rock band they have inspired and impacted society by raising money for charities and making positive changes to help those in need. The band has received so many awards and honors over the years, some include: Innovator Award 2016, Legion of Honor 2003, Time's (Bono) Person of the Year 2005, Honorary British Knighthood in 2007, 22 Grammy Awards, two Golden Globe Awards and Kennedy Center Honors in 2022!

"I put Catholic guilt to work pretty good for a rich rock star." Bono

I'm sure U-2 didn't think they'd ever be this influential, historic or famous, but that's true for anything or anyone that starts something.

I'd like to point out in my last article on Colin Farrell I had a typo that said Fionnula Flanagan was no longer with us. She is very much alive and starring in the Broadway Show, The Ferryman, based on a true story. (former IRA activist)

{I'd also like to add about an up and coming Irish Actor named Paul Mescal. Mescal is from Co. Kildare. He was at the Bafta's recently (British Academy Awards) for the movie, "Aftersun". He was referred to as a "British" actor but he is from Co. Kildare. Also, TG4 (Irish language channel) interview him at the Bafta's in Irish, he is a fluent speaker.}

Gaelic for the month

Song-amhran, Music-ceol, Entertainment-siamsaiocht

Global-domhanda

"I have been working for Africans since I was 18 when I got involved with the Nelson Mandela concerts. I got involved with debt cancellation because Desmond Tutu demanded that the world respond to that situation." **Bono**

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Gallagher's Advice
By **Caroleann Gallagher**

Medical Malpractice

Medical malpractice is a serious matter. It is defined as a medical professional's failure to provide a standard of care that is accepted by the medical community. It is important for those who have been affected by it to understand their rights and the steps they need to take to seek justice. In this article, we will discuss the basics of medical malpractice in Illinois, what a lawyer has to do in such a case, and how to find the right lawyer for your situation.

Medical malpractice can include errors in diagnosis, treatment, or aftercare. In Illinois, medical malpractice is governed by the Illinois Medical Malpractice Act. The Act sets out the requirements for filing a medical malpractice claim. It also advises the time limit a person will have to do so. Generally, you have two years from the date of the injury or the date the injury was discovered to file a lawsuit for medical malpractice. The time limit is different for infants and minors under 18 years old.

When filing a medical malpractice claim, it is important to have an experienced lawyer on your side. A lawyer understands the legal process and can guide you through it while ensuring that your rights are protected from attorneys hired by the Defendant. In

order to file a medical malpractice claim, the lawyer must prove that the medical professional was negligent and that the negligence caused the injury or death, as well as damages such as medical expenses, lost wages, or pain and suffering.

Throughout the process of filing a medical malpractice claim and proceeding further with litigation, the lawyer will need to gather evidence to prove negligence on the part of the medical professional and of the damages that resulted. This evidence can include medical records, witness statements, and expert testimony.

The filing of a complaint that names the medical professional and the allegations made against them as well as serving that complaint onto the medical professional is the official filing of a medical malpractice case. Once the complaint is filed and received, the medical professional will have the opportunity to respond to the complaint. If the case does not reach a settlement, it will eventually proceed with a trial. At trial, the lawyer will present evidence to prove that the medical professional was negligent and that the negligence caused the injury or death.

The most important factor when looking for a lawyer to handle your medical malpractice case is to find one who is experienced in this specific area of law. Medical malpractice is a serious issue in Illinois and it is important for those affected by it to understand their rights and the steps they need to take to seek justice. By finding the right lawyer and understanding the process of filing a medical malpractice claim in Illinois, those affected by medical malpractice can ensure that their rights are protected and that they receive the justice they deserve.

If you suffered injuries as a result of medical malpractice, it is important that you speak with an experienced attorney like my colleagues and I who will evaluate your claim, determine whether you have a right to recovery, and represent you in that path to recovery. My colleagues and I devote time to developing personal relationships with all of our clients. Our team has decades of collective experience in representing people who have been injured and we have the knowledge, experience, and resources to walk you through the process and obtain the most desired outcome possible.

***Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of Personal Injury Law and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at cgallagher@cgtrial.com or at (312) 782-7482.**

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A Cháirde:

Thank you for being part of our St. Patrick's Holiday Season this year. It seemed like you enjoyed the festivities as much as we did, and made new memories along the way. With over 30 musical performances, four parades to march in, five nights of Ireland on Parade featuring brilliant performances by 11 dance schools, South Side Sunday Funday, Carraig Pub events and March 17th events, you had many options to join us. And join us you did. You're always very welcome at Chicago Gaelic Park.

We offer our thanks to the dance schools that volunteered to entertain us, and we thank Ireland's Minister for Finance, Michael McGrath, for visiting us. A warm welcome and congratulations are offered to our new Gaelic Park Queen and Court, Maggie Schwarz and Rachael Rutledge.

There's a lot to look forward to this spring as you'll see on these pages, including the Easter Carvery, the Jig Jam Concert, the Dancing Queen concert and performances by the Gaelic Park Players. May the sun warm your land and our Gaelic Park Garden and may every seed you and we plant bear fruit.

Is mise le meas,
Bill O'Sullivan



Minister of Finance Michael McGrath (center left) joins us at the South Side Irish Parade along with Vice Consul General Sarah Keating (left of Michael McGrath) and Consul General Kevin Byrne (far right)



Christina Lisigakis (far left) and Niamh Marshall (far right) from the Irish Consulate stop by The Carraig to kick off the St. Patrick's Day Season



Brónagh Turnulty of WGN (center left) visits Gaelic Park to celebrate St. Patrick's Day

Upcoming Events

visit chicagogaelicpark.com for more information on upcoming events and weekly live music at The Carraig (no cover charge!)

- April 8th - BERNIE GLIM
- April 9th - EASTER CARVERY
- April 14th - FAMILY SECRETS - G.P. PLAYERS' OPENING NIGHT
Show dates: 4/15, 4/16, 4/20, 4/21, 4/23. Call (708)687-9323 for tickets
- April 14th - THE ROCKETS
- April 15th - LIAM DURKIN
- April 21st - JIGJAM CONCERT
- April 21st - BILLY O'DONAHUE
- April 22nd - GERRY HAUGHEY
- April 28th - KIERAN BYRNE
- April 29th - DAMIEN PATRICK
- April 29th-30th - ST. VINCENT DE PAUL DRIVE
Bring your bagged/boxed clothing & household donations to Gaelic Park between 10am-2pm
- May 3rd - MONTHLY MUSICAL LUNCHEON
- May 5th - DANCING QUEEN: AN ABBA SALUTE
- May 14th - MOTHER'S DAY MAY CROWNING
- May 20th - CLAUDIA BUCKLEY CONCERT
Presented by St. Jarlath's GFC
- August 8-10th - KIDS' CULTURAL CAMP
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Nick Hnatusko (left) and Conor Yerkes (right) at The Carraig

The Carraig Pub

Nick Hnatusko and Conor Yerkes are the two guys behind the Instagram account @ChicagoPubs where they visit and review the many Irish pubs of Chicagoland. The two lads are South Side born and raised, so they've spent an evening or two at Gaelic Park and The Carraig Pub over the years. This past March Nick and Conor paid The Carraig their first visit under official pretenses. Here's what they had to say:

"Gaelic Park is not just great during the St Patrick's Day season, but it is also an awesome spot year round! With a huge new beer garden, an authentic Irish Pub in the Carraig, frequent Gaelic football matches, and beautiful ballrooms for weddings/events, Gaelic Park is a true year round destination! Check out The Carraig for good food, great pints, and live music or their website for fun events throughout the year."



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Chicago Gaelic Park Queen and Court, 2023



Queen Maggie Schwarz (left) and Court Rachael Rutledge (right)

Two accomplished Irish-American women, Maggie Schwarz and Rachael Rutledge, were crowned the 2023 Chicago Gaelic Park Queen and Court. Maggie, a University of Notre Dame graduate, is a project manager at ARCO/Murray Construction. "I am so excited to represent my family, my Irish heritage, and the Gaelic Park community as the 2023 Gaelic Park Queen," said Maggie. "I have so many fond memories of spending time at Gaelic Park growing up and am excited for all the events in the coming year. Thank you to Gaelic Park and everyone who made this program possible!"

Rachael, who is likewise pursuing a career in the construction field, attends class at the Local 399 Union Hall after earning her Associate's Degree at Moraine Valley Community College. An accomplished singer and fiddle player, Rachael is also on the Erin's Rovers Gaelic football team.

Crowning Event Emcee John Quinn engaged in his usual witty banter, providing an entertaining evening for all. Caroline Cunningham of CC Homes, Tom Mulvey of Athletex, and Shana Pembroke, 2018 GP Queen, were tasked with the 2023 selection. As Caroline noted, "The Gaelic Park Queen is someone who embodies the essence of Gaelic Park and continues to preserve and promote the culture and heritage of Ireland. After a fun afternoon of interviewing contestants, we had a difficult decision to make. Both ladies are wonderful and will continue to do amazing things all while promoting their Irish heritage!"

You can follow Maggie's adventures as Queen on Instagram @ChicagoGaelicParkQueen!



From left: John Quinn, Shana Pembroke (2018 Queen), Rachel Hoban (2020 Queen), Caroline Cunningham, and Tom Mulvey

SPRING CONCERTS



JigJam

The lads are back on April 21st! When Irish playing jumps the pond through the wide open fields of bluegrass/Americana, JigJam is born. General Admission: \$25. 7:30pm doors open. 8:00pm concert begins. Call (708)687-9323 for tickets.

Dancing Queen: An Abba Salute

Dance, jive, have the time of your life with us on May 5th! Dress in your ABBA inspired best. General Admission: \$30. 7:30pm doors open. 8:00pm concert begins. Call (708)687-9323 for tickets.



Claudia Buckley

"The Hottest Act in Irish Country Music" will be at Gaelic Park on May 20th presented by St. Jarlath's Youth GFC. Visit EventBrite - <https://bit.ly/4045tsz> for tickets.

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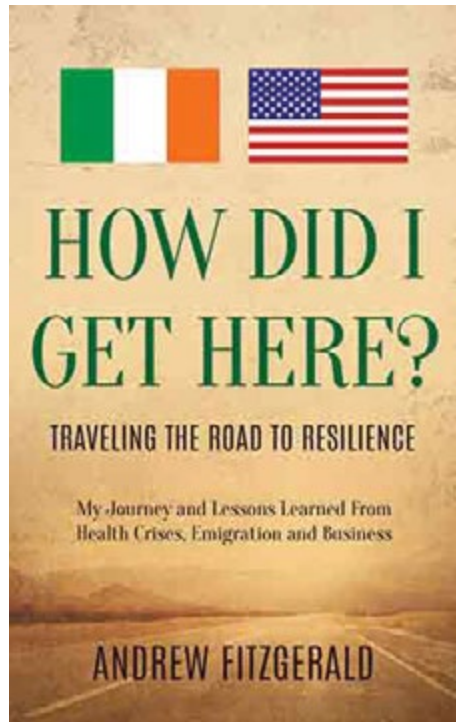
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How Did I Get Here

by Andrew Fitzgerald [Available at Amazon.com](#)



As he woke up after dying for the second time, Andrew Fitzgerald asked himself, "How did I get here?"

As he and his wife left Ireland and stepped foot on American soil to begin their lives in the US, he asked himself, "How did I get here?"

As his wife delivered their baby after four miscarriages, he asked himself, "How did I get here?"

As he sat in a customer sales meeting and negotiated the new listing, authorizations, and launch for what is now the no.1 Hard Seltzer in the USA, he asked himself, "How did I get here?"

As he stood on the first tee about to play golf with one of his sporting heroes and a three-time major champion, he asked himself, "How did I get here?"

As he sat in a board room meeting, asserted himself, and rebuked some negative assertions about him, he asked himself, "How did I get here?"

In this poignant memoir about resilience, Andrew Fitzgerald shares his story of emigrating from Ireland to America, only to return to Ireland, and then back to America for good. He explores his struggles with health crises, corporate culture, miscarriage grief, and adapting to his new country.

You'll follow Andrew's story as he shares his key learnings from the highs and lows of his journey, such as: Talk about your challenging experiences; find someone to help you process your feelings

Follow your dreams; know they're right for you no

Andrew will affirm and demonstrate in his book that the journey is just as important as the destination, with the stark realization that the journey filled with highs and lows is sometimes more fulfilling than the destination.

So come with Andrew on this journey to learn how he overcame the various obstacles in his life, flourished, and ultimately traveled the road to resilience a key trait you too can develop in your personal and business life.

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matter how they sound to others

Give yourself time to adjust; when making big life changes avoid running back to what was comfortable

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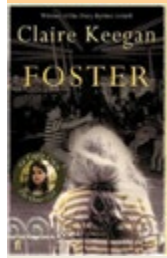
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Books Under Review

By Sabina Clarke



The mysterious Belgian Benedictine monk Father Francois de Grunne—the last person seen with Merton alive and the discoverer of Merton's body reappears. His behavior is suspicious—to the point that one may easily pose the question was his job to deliver Merton to the professional assassin?

Both before and after the discovery of Merton's body—others at the scene commented on de Grunne's strange behavior and his unusual comments that seemed odd and inappropriate given the tragic circumstances. And in 2017 when Hugh Turley reached out to de Grunne's Abbey he was given no information about de Grunne—it was as if de Grunne had disappeared into thin air.

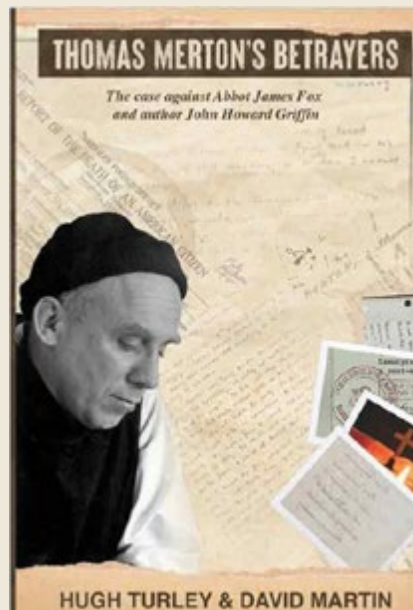
Turley expertly and methodically identifies the betrayers of Thomas Merton—and there are many—and the secrecy surrounding their conversations about what information to conceal regarding Merton's death.

Also peculiar is why Merton was suddenly approved to go on such an extended trip to Thailand and other destinations. This is extraordinary in itself and worth noting since his prior Abbot James Fox denied Merton any excursion outside the Abbey other than a short trip to town for a medical appointment.

Also worth noting is the fact that Merton was asked to sign a document bequeathing all royalties to the monastery upon his death. This appeared to be a precondition for his journey being approved—a document that seemed to have some urgency. The signed document bequeathing all royalties from his literary estate to the Abbey upon his death is significant since Merton had often requested to be transferred to other monastic orders—requests that were repeatedly denied.

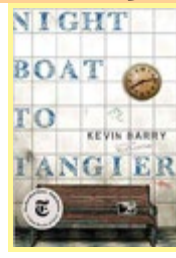
There seems to be a Machiavellian plot at the center of Merton's untimely demise with many players involved—all conspiring to cover up the death of the greatest and most important contemplative of the 20th century. The mystery of his death has lain dormant for years until the scholarship, courage and sleuthing skills of Turley and Martin came upon the scene and uncovered new information that may one day if not sooner crack this case wide open and bring justice to Thomas Merton.

Merton's head—which suggests that Merton may have been shot at close range by a silencer gun. Also there was no mention of Merton's body being wet in the Thai police report—which would contradict the false narrative that Merton



had stepped out of the shower and grabbed the fan and was electrocuted—this latter scenario was manufactured five years after Merton's death by Brother Patrick Hart in an effort to strengthen the false narrative that Merton was electrocuted.

Brother Patrick Hart, the secretary assigned to Merton before his trip was the longtime secretary to Abbot James Fox—Merton's nemesis, a conniving character who looms large in the book as one of the principal conspirators.



Books in Review

By Michael Corrigan



Sleepwalker's Guide to Grieving

By Shellie Harwood, *Finishing Line Press, PO Box 1626, Georgetown, KY 40324*

In 2021, Shellie Harwood released a chapbook of poetry called *With My Sister*, in a Tornado Warning published by a small award-winning literary publisher, Finishing Line Press. This year, Shellie Harwood was a finalist for the prestigious Montreal International Poetry Prize for the poem "Nocturne 20/Away to Nowhere." Now we have a second chapbook of 34 poems called *Sleepwalker's Guide to Grieving* which Harwood describes as a "collection of poetry about navigating the dark road through the grief that accompanies loss." The eponymous first poem has these startling lines:

I read in *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Grief: never wake them abruptly while in the throes of unearthing, the heart may erupt, violence may ensue.*

Sleepwalker's Guide to Grieving has a personal edge with a remarkable cast of characters, including the poet-narrator: a woman takes her mother's ashes to place on the grave of Edith Piaf, two lovers make love against a wall while fascists pound on the door, and a beekeeper discovers his bee hive torched by an arsonist ("Afterswarm" which won the Nutmeg Poetry Prize). That this collection of poems deals with grieving does not make it depressing due to the strong imagery that elevates the human condition. Another aspect of Harwood's poetry is the effective use of a caesura before a sudden epiphany, or suggestive details, i.e., a suicidal woman cooking dinner for guests while her abusive husband watches.

"Your sleeves were long, buttoned tight to your wrists, in August. You boiled potatoes with your sunglasses on. The oven crackled. Lamb is burning,

he said." One poignant poem is "Lessons from My Absent Father," and the lessons are dubious. Harwood's father abandoned her mother when he discovered the pregnancy, setting a scene for the future child's confusion and anxiety about the missing phantom parent. A lesser poet



would lament the loss and anxiety, but Harwood has a strong imagination working.

"I was always told, whenever I asked, that one of two things happened to my phantom father:

either he hitched away, burning across the sky on the tail of a comet, or he stole my grandmother's '51 Chevy and burned across every highway on the map on his way from Idaho to the furthest tip of northern Michigan, where someone new was waiting, stopping only when he skidded on November ice into a frozen lake somewhere in the Dakotas, settling the frame of the now forever rusting Chevy deep in the lakebed, where no divers could be paid to go, and too deep to ever come home from, even after a thaw."

A sense of fantasy and humor mitigates the grief until the poet closes in on a brutal truth:

"I think my father didn't fall through a lake on his way to disappearing. He just knew how to streak away through the heavens, staying faint and unspectacular, while arcing sixty moons across the sky."

The final lesson, however grim, has a touch of defiance:

"disappearing is the easy part, but only the hummingbird and the dragonfly know the art of reverse flight even my father had no lesson for this."

Another poem called "The Poet's Widower" concerns a bereaved partner left behind who glimpses the elusive spirit of the dead spouse:

A Labyrinthine Tale of Murder and Deceit

The investigation into the strange death of the celebrated author and Trappist monk Thomas Merton continues and reaches new heights with this fascinating and detailed examination by authors Hugh Turley and David Martin—a riveting sequel to their first book *The Martyrdom of Thomas Merton*.

The authors present a powerful argument supported by new information and detailed analyses to support their thesis that Merton was most likely murdered for speaking out against the Vietnam War.

They quote the Thai police report that states that Merton died of a 'heart failure' not by being electrocuted by a faulty fan as disseminated by the mainstream press and they expose outright falsehoods such as the lie most likely from the Abbey spokesperson and printed in a Kentucky newspaper that an autopsy of Merton's body was conducted in California—when no such autopsy occurred.

Also missing from the Thai police report—as noted by Turley—is that there was no examination of Merton at the scene of the accident and no mention of the gaping wound at the back of

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"Now, he will keep watch from high windows for her on occasion, even after the vanishing, eyes strained for the shape of her in the yawning street, once catching sight of her passing beneath the street lamp home to him from night. He could never be sure of it.

From a distance, grief moves like any other shadow, caressing first, then smothering the light."

Anyone who has ever lost a spouse will recognize the truth of those lines.

Shellie Harwood's poems often illustrate too familiar headlines like "Two Children Shot Dead in Richmond," but in one stunning work, the children are hers. Here is the opening stanza: *Burnt Planet*

--for Morgan and Nicholas

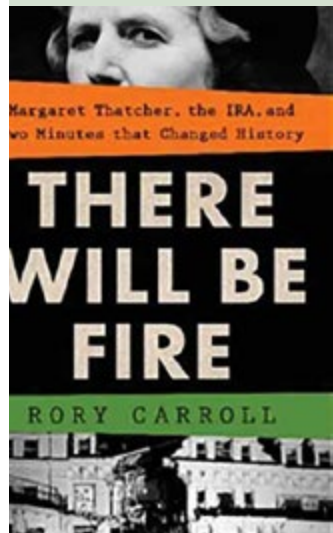
"Our babies did not know the planet was burning. They woke star-eyed and sticky-fingered, fat fists filled with dappled daylight, mouths open for the first worms and mama's fresh cream warm from breast to belly. They did not know to care for icecaps melting. They woke stuffed into sausage snowsuits, thrown into fresh powdered winter, tipping top heavy into drifts, lifting puffy arms to fly with magpies, starlings, and the Northern flickers".

I wish I had space to review in more depth this collection, but all 34 poems deliver universal truths with fresh lyrics and a clear insight into what it means to be human. This is a mandate of art that Shellie Harwood meets with great precision and feeling.

<https://www.finishinglinepress.com/product/sleepwalkers-guide-to-grieving-by-shellie-harwood>

There Will Be Fire

The Brighton bombing of 1984 was arguably the most potent attempt to decapitate the British state since the Gunpowder Plot. Rory Carroll's brilliant reconstruction combines the heart-stopping intensity of a great thriller with an acute exploration of the political context. This was a moment on which history turned and Carroll brings it alive for us in all its horror, drama and humanity."



Fintan O'Toole, author of *We Don't Know Ourselves*

In 1984, the IRA attempted to assassinate Margaret Thatcher and her high-ranking cabinet members. Thatcher narrowly avoided death and the world was transfixed by the epic manhunt that followed. Rory Carroll, a renowned Irish journalist for *The Guardian*, brings a new and personal perspective to this almost forgotten chapter of history, one

that forever altered the intertwined histories of England and Ireland in *THERE WILL BE FIRE: Margaret Thatcher, the IRA, and Two Minutes That Changed History* (Putnam, On-Sale April 4, 2023).

The IRA bomb exploded on October 12, 1984 at 2:54 AM, the last day of the Conservative Party Conference at the Grand Hotel in Brighton, England. Rooms were obliterated, dozens of people wounded, five killed. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was in her suite preparing her keynote speech when the explosion occurred; with her survival, history changed.

Carroll swiftly reveals the road to Brighton: the decades-long Irish fight for freedom; the shocking 1979 assassination of Lord Mountbatten; Thatcher's dismissal of a hunger strike by republican prisoners. He illustrates how this event was the most spectacular attack linked to the Northern Ireland Troubles and the most daring conspiracy against the British Crown since the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Along the way, Carroll paints indelible portraits of this moment's many characters, from Prime Minister Thatcher to IRA bomb expert Patrick Magee, from Member of Parliament Norman Tebbit to bomb defuser Peter Gurney.

About The Author

Rory Carroll is a veteran journalist who started his career in Northern Ireland. As a foreign correspondent for the *Guardian*, he reported from the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Africa, Latin American, and the United States. His first book, *Comandante: Hugo Chavez's Venezuela*, was named an *Economist* Book of the Year and *BBC Radio 4* Book of the Week. He is now based in his native Dublin as the *Guardian's* Ireland correspondent.

The Last Irishman

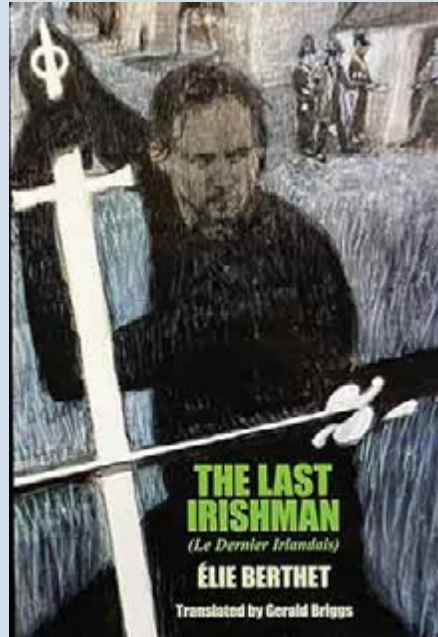
By Gerry Briggs, Paris, France
gerrybriggs2@gmail.com

The Last Irishman was written in 1851 in the form of a historical novel but its uniqueness is that it was actually a real-time report of what was currently happening only a few hundred miles away from its French author, Elie Berthet (1815-1891).

The book provides historical information on the six centuries of Irish struggles under British domination, but it mainly concentrates on the situation during the tumultuous 19th century when the Irish miseries had reached a peak during the potato blight of 1845-1852, resulting in mass starvation and emigration.

But this story, in particular, focuses on one Irishman's efforts to mount another insurrection against the British oppressors. The book highlights the courage, resilience and the indomitable spirit of the Irish which enabled them to survive centuries of harsh rule by the British.

Berthet was an acclaimed historian and novelist, and within a year of writing this book, translations appeared in German, Swedish and Spanish, thus alerting other European communities of the time as to the harsh realities in Ireland Today, with this translation, English-speaking history buffs, and in



particular those readers who have a particular interest in Ireland, will enjoy this unique view into the turbulent history of that proud nation."

You may wish to know who I am, what my own connection is to Ireland and why I have translated this book. I am Franco-American, born in Paris of an American father and French mother, but I received the major part of my education in the U.S. Elie Berthet, the author of this work, was my Great-great-Grandfather, on my French mother's side. He wrote over 100 books and was one of the leading writers of the 19th century. His works were translated in over 20 languages. I took it upon myself when I retired, to translate those works that had not yet been published in English. *THE LAST IRISHMAN* was my third translation of his works.

I was about six months into this translation, when by chance, I learned that in 1859, an Irish writer, C. M. O'Keefe, had done a translation in English of this book that appeared serialized that year in Boston's Catholic journal, *The Pilot*. I had not previously found it because it had never been published in book form.

I continued my own work because I found that the first translator had made some important modifications to the story line including changes in character names and locations, whereas mine follows the author's original script

Children's Book:

"Our Irish Heritage - A Kid's Guide to the Irish Diaspora and Irish National Anthem" Launches by Rachel J. Cooper - Irish author

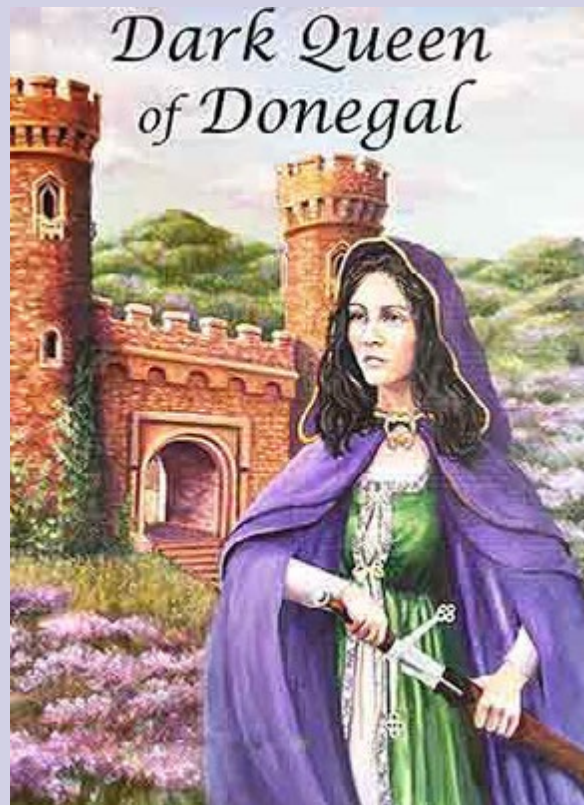
Not only does "Our Irish Heritage - A Kid's Guide to the Irish Diaspora and Irish National Anthem" teach children about Ireland and its culture, it is also the only book that teaches the Irish National anthem by including the phonetic easy-to-pronounce (as well as the Irish / Gaelic and English) version of "Amhrán na bhFiann" Ow-



ran na Vee-un (The Soldier's Song). This allows children who do not speak Gaelic to learn the song and be proud to sing it amongst their Irish-American family and peers.

The book includes pages about the origins of the Irish Diaspora; the Druids and Celts, the Normans, the Vikings, Irish emblems, factual stories on Halloween, and most importantly, it teaches kids the Irish National Anthem in time for St Patrick's day. \$9.99 from Amazon.com (Shortlink: bit.ly/Our-Irish-Heritage)

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- Mary Pat Kelly, bestselling author of *Galway Bay*

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Dave McDermott's Irish Connection Helps Him Lead Hubbard Street Dance Chicago

Dave McDermott does not lack for ambition when describing the work of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, where he serves as Executive Director. "We're creating the future of contemporary dance in America," he said during a recent interview, and the scale of its influence is not lost on him. "Every day I wake up and feel blessed to have an opportunity to have such an impact on one of the great American art forms."

in Ukrainian Village with his wife and two children.

Hubbard Street Dance's journey began with its founding on the



How did McDermott, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, ascend to such heights? The path was anything but a straight line. McDermott grew up in Oak Park, made his way to Dublin, where he earned his bachelor's degree at Trinity College, then returned to Chicago to enter the rough and tumble world of national and local politics. He now lives

corner of Hubbard and LaSalle Streets in 1977, and it soon grew into a world-renowned company. Today, under the leadership of McDermott and Artistic Director Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, the company is selling out

performances everywhere it goes, from local spaces like the Museum of Contemporary (MCA) to well-known locales like New York Los Angeles and less traveled places like Huntington, West Virginia.

Oak Park to Dublin to Chicago McDermott's ancestors on both sides of his family emigrated from Ireland to the United States through Buffalo before eventually settling into the Chicago area, landing on the near south side near the turn of the twentieth century and dispersing around the city in the years that followed. In his youth, he was surrounded by all the traditions that have come to exemplify the Irish American community, from St. Patrick's Day celebrations to weddings, funerals, and other the large gatherings.

McDermott arrived at Trinity in 2000, in time to witness the effects of the "Celtic Tiger" economic transformation of Ireland and gain a first-hand perspective on the nuances of Irish society - distinctions among class, religion, and sport, to name a few. He starred on the Trinity College basketball team and developed strong friendships with a group of friends from Dublin before ultimately returning stateside upon graduation in 2004.

He spent the first decade of his career immersed in politics and government service, beginning with his role as Duckworth's campaign manager and subsequently working in a variety of roles with Senator Dick Durbin over the course of seven years. In 2011, he took on management of the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), where he led a significant reorganization of the institution, launched the city's first cultural plan in 25 years, and helped to create new programs and activities such as the Chicago Architectural Biennial.

During his time at DCASE, he had come to know Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and its legendary Artistic Director Lou Conte, so when the opportunity to lead the organization came available in 2017, he made the leap.

Hubbard Street Dance and

Chicago

From its founding, the story of Hubbard Street Dance has been interwoven with Chicago, and this connection helps set the company apart from its counterparts in New York, according to McDermott.

"Anyone can walk into a show and feel immediately connected to what's going on stage, and that's largely because we come out of Chicago, which is a grounded and community-based

classrooms across 17 Chicagoland schools, showcasing dance to young people who might be unfamiliar with the artform, and McDermott commented that "there's nothing better than when kids say that dance is a favorite part of my day, or that they now feel more powerful in their own voice. These are some of the most fulfilling moments that I have."

Beyond this extensive youth outreach, Hubbard Street Dance



place."

In early 2020, McDermott was in Milan, Italy with the troupe when he first heard of COVID-19, and the ensuing years have been incredibly challenging for all performing arts organizations, Hubbard Street Dance included. He describes making "heart-wrenching" choices in his role as Executive Director, but acknowledges that the organization is stronger today than it has been for a decade.

Drawing on high demand from audiences, fans are regularly packing local venues such as the MCA and the Harris Theatre, and the company recently moved into a new rehearsal studio at Water Tower Place that was adapted to become a creative space, in what McDermott calls a "model for commercial real estate in downtown areas."

The company's connection with Chicago extends beyond the physical spaces it occupies for rehearsals and performances. It delivers programs in 50

also offers adaptive dance programs for those with differing abilities, including autism and Parkinson's Disease.

McDermott credits much of the positive energy stemming from Hubbard Street Dance Chicago to Fisher-Harrell, herself an alumna of the company who rose in the ranks of the dance world before taking on the position of Artistic Director in 2021. The Juilliard-trained Fisher-Harrell was featured in a recent article in The New York Times ahead of the troupe's sold-out run of performances in New York City.

"She is core to what we are doing when it comes to creating the future of dance in America," McDermott said. "She is an amazing and inspirational leader."

Art as a Social Good Ask McDermott about his strongest connection to Ireland, and he will not tell you about the corned beef and cabbage dinners of his youth, or even his time as a student at Trinity. Rather, he will highlight how his Irish connection has actually led him to the position he finds himself at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago.

"A big part of being Irish to me is deep tradition of art as a social good. The thing that resonates with me about Irish arts and culture - whether it's James Joyce or U2 - is that it seeks to move the world forward. When I look back at my Irish heritage, I think there is a clear throughline with what I do now, and what we are trying to do at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. That's my big connection to Ireland." www.hubbardstreetdance.com to learn more about Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, its mission, and upcoming programs, including a series of performances at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in May.

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Baseball is Back! "And it's in Time! The Cubs Have Done It!"

By John Ryan

When capturing the 2016 Chicago Cubs season, many emotions surface as I reflect on that time in my life. My fandom started early by watching games with my Nana. Nana was your typical diehard Chicago Cubs fan and she sure surpassed me on lifetime Cubs game attendance. If you walked into the McLaughlin house on Laramie Street during a summer day, the radio would be tuned in to WGN with Pat Hughes calling the games. The ups and downs she witnessed from the Cubs over the course of her lifetime were what made her a resilient fan. Seeing the team had not won a World Series since 1908, the phrase "maybe next year" was an all too constant theme.

When I was younger growing up in Park Ridge, I frequented games with my mother. My grandmother and occasionally my grandfather John joined us. We hopped on the Metra train to the Grayland stop, then changed to the 152 bus at Addison, which took us directly to the stadium. The sea of blue grew thicker and thicker as we got closer to the field. Just outside of the stadium you could hear the raspy voice of the street vendors yelling, "peanuts, get your peanuts! Cheaper outside the ballpark!"

We found our gate and made our way to the seats. The smell of fresh peanuts and the scent of perfectly cut green grass is ever-present in my memory. You could hear the buzz of all the fans settling into their seats, completing their ballpark experience with a Chicago style hotdog or a cold beer. Nana would keep score of the entire game marking strikes, hits, batting order, and pitching changes. She followed the game closely and loved every minute of it.

Prior to the addition of Gallagher Way, the Cubs locker room opened directly out into a players-only parking lot. Mom and Nana never minded patiently hanging around the ballpark waiting for the players to leave the locker room. I met stars like Mark Prior, Derek Lee, and the late, great, third baseman and WGN radio color analyst, Ron Santo. My passion for the Chicago Cubs grew as I got older. It

was a tremendously emotional time as a life-long Cubs fan. The anticipation of a new season, so often followed by the dread and agony of getting so close to the playoffs and the elusive World Series Ring. Time went on and years went by.

I had the wonderful experience of living a mile from the stadium at Ravenswood and Belle Plaine with my cousin, Dan. As mid twenty-year-olds, we were able to fully experience the season as young adults.



The 2016 season was long, but I knew this year was going to be different. I attended the first playoff game against the San Francisco Giants at Wrigley. Chicago won the game 1-0 with a Javier Baez homerun off Johnny Cueto.

I couldn't think of a better person to watch the next few playoff games with than my Nana. We would sit in her living room together and click on the television. She had the channel lined up and ready and we nervously watched the Cubs fight their way through the playoffs.

Playoff games were late when Chicago played on the west coast. But Nana was up. She had waited her whole life and her Cubbies were too close to making history happen. We watched players like Jon Lester with the first pitch and Aroldis Chapman close out games with his

102 mph fastball.

I get goosebumps reminiscing about the wild ride the team had, and the emotions that came with the World Series game. After 108 years of disappointment, Chicago finally had a team that could pull this off and end the drought.

Game 7 was special. As the game entered the tenth inning, there was a rain delay in Cleveland. The anticipation was more than enough to handle. From Chicago, you could feel the tension from the fans packed inside Progressive Field in Cleveland.

At the bottom of the tenth inning, the Chicago Cubs led the game 8-7 with two outs. My friends and I nervously watched from their apartment on Eddy and Seminary. Mike Montgomery was on the mound as the closer. The Cleveland batter hit an infield groundball and Pat Hughes called: "...a little bouncer slowly towards Bryant, he will glove it and throw to Rizzo....It's in time! And the Chicago Cubs win the World Series! The Cubs come pouring out of the dugout! Jumping up and down like a bunch of delirious ten-year-olds...the Cubs have done it!"

When the Chicago Cubs won game 7, I immediately thought about my Nana and how happy she must be, waiting her entire life to witness this moment. After an unbelievable season, I called her the next day and could hear the excitement in her voice. The Cubbies had done it - the curse was over!

A few days after the World Series, my mom and I spent an entire afternoon at the stadium. For a day in November, it felt like a midsummer day game in June. Cubs fans were everywhere, taking pictures in front of the notorious marquee with friends and family. The energy was electric. Mom and I walked around the outside of Wrigley Field soaking it all in. Fans created drawings and signed names on the brick wall outside of the ballpark. I picked up a piece of chalk and signed Nana's name, Sally McLaughlin. Jryan91@aol.com **Editor's Note:** Okay Sox fans, it's your turn! Send your story to cliff@irishamericannews.com, and someone will have their say in the May edition!

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'He Played His Farewell Song'

Written by Joe Cullen, Joe McShane, Margo O'Donnell

Verse 1
By the grotto at the old spring well he sat down a while
With the fiddle he so cherished on his knee
Old tunes ran through his mind, as they would an exile
And the sweet notes floated gently to the sea

Verse 2
In his home close by the rocky shore, he feared he'd see no more
The breeze it seemed to whisper won't you stay
Departing from his kin, this new life to begin
Just another son of Ireland going away

Chorus
He played his farewell song and the birds all sang along
On that morning down beside the old mill stone
Put the fiddle in its case tears rolled down his Mothers face
Both their hearts were torn as he walked off alone

Verse 3
He landed in Chicago, with his fiddle and his bow
And each night he'd play the tunes of Ireland
He met and wed his sweetheart reared a family built a home
No more we'll ever shake that fiddlers hand

Chorus
We played his farewell song and the birds still sang along
Like that morning down beside the old mill stone
We put Dad's fiddle in its case as the tears rolled down my face
Now with heavy hearts we stand here all alone

(Tag) - Just a story of a fiddler, long ago



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It Starts With A Song
By Joe McShane



I decided to dedicate my write-up for this month to a dear friend of mine, Joe Cullen.

I'm sure most people are aware now that this month, April 2023, Joe will be doing his final shows. He has been a major part of the Chicago music scene for around thirty seven years now. I know we all wish Joe all the very best for the future, and he will be sorely missed. I spoke with him by phone a little while ago and we decided that I would ask him some questions and I will put the conversation in this article.

Me - So Joe, when did you decide that you needed to step back from performing?

Joe C - Over the last three years or so, and also since my doctor said it was the cause of some back problems that I've had. It was a hard decision to make.

Me - I understand, that's a heavy machine to have on your back for so many hours. Joe, who first influenced you when you started out in Ireland?

Joe C - John Kerr, the balladeer. He encouraged me to learn and he got me on stage when I was still very young, nine or ten years old. He was a great

Irish Festival for the first time in 1990.

Me - Didn't you do the Gaelic speaking stage at Milwaukee Fest also?

Joe C - Yes, I did the cultural stage for about four or five years. It was very interesting



Joe and Patti Cullen

and a challenge. Even though at school it was all as gaeilge and we spoke both Irish and English in the house.

Me - I suppose it will be nice that you can spend some time with Patti and do a little traveling. I know you've travelled lately to Portugal and home in Ireland?

Joe C - Yeah it's gonna be nice to have the freedom and the

from Notre Dame university in Indiana, because there was nothing else really going on at the time. Then we moved to Vaughan's after that, it was basically the same deal every weekend.

Me - Who were the other five Joe?

Joe C - James O'Connell, Mike and Mort Buckley, Owen Moriarty, and Pat Finnegan

Me - I was chatting to James O'Connell last week, we were reminiscing about old times.

Joe C - They really were happy times.

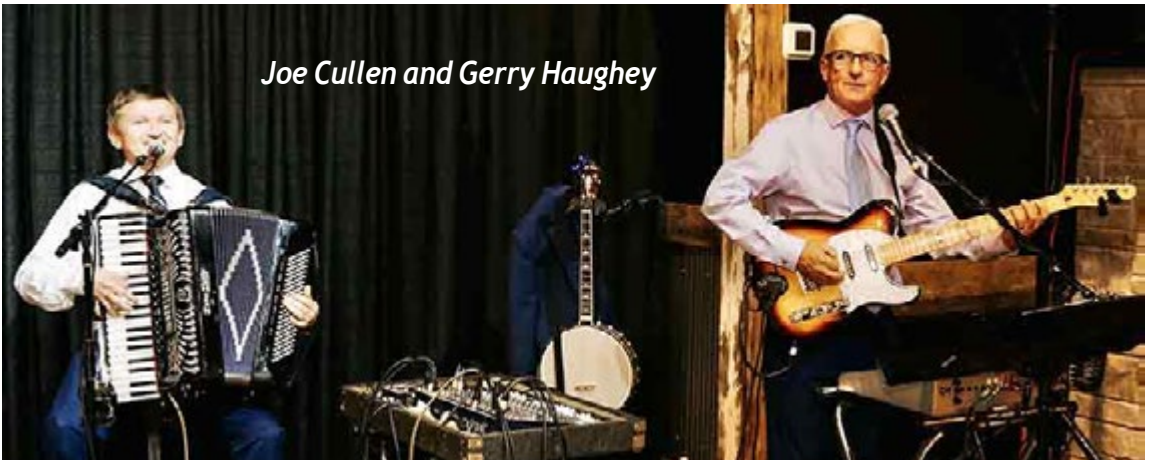
Me - I'm not sure if people are aware of your other talent and that is song writing. You and I have written a lot of songs together, and also along with people like Nathan Carter, Margo O'Donnell to mention a couple. Do you have a favorite one that we have written?

Joe C - Yes, I would say my favourite one is 'He Played His Farewell Song', which was about my great uncle Johnny Friel. He came to

Chicago in 1927 He played the fiddle and also made them. He passed away in 1970. Margo recorded a beautiful version of it.

Me - I suppose we could write a book about your career, and maybe someday you will do that.

Joe C - That's food for thought Joe. Thank you for taking the



Joe Cullen and Gerry Haughey

inspiration to me.

Me - When did you arrive in Chicago?

Joe C - I arrived on March 12, 1986, along with a Fiddle player by the name of Damian Flanagan from Roscrea County Tipperary.

Me - Do you have any final gigs in Chicago, Joe?

Joe C - Yes, I just played at Johnny's Kitchen, Glenview, with my good friend Gerard Haughey, on March 25 and then my very last one will be the St. Patrick's Father's annual dinner - which is on Sunday, April 23, at Crystal Palace Banquets, Mt. Prospect.

Me - Well, I'll certainly miss you Joe. We've put up a lot of miles and gigs together, and I enjoyed it all. Including, recording your album in my Studios

Joe C - Some great times for sure and I learned a lot from recording with you.

Me - What were some of your favourite gigs Joe?

Joe C - I really enjoyed playing Gaelic Park and the Irish Village. Also, the Milwaukee

time to do some things together. There is a possibility we might actually move there and also spend a good portion of the year in Ireland as well.

Me - I remember when I first came out here playing in the Irish village, that's where I first met you. I know you played a lot of venues around the Chicago area.

Joe C - Yes, John Dillon R.I.P. and I played a lot of places together. For a long time we were playing Foxes, five nights a week for three months of the year, five nights a week in the Irish village, three months of the year. Three months in Kitty O'Shea's 6 nights a week. The rest of the year was festivals, parties, weddings.

Me - I know you were also a bit hit in your early days in Chicago, at Murray's on Elston (now called the 'High Stool').

Joe C - We played Murray's on the weekends at the beginning as a five sometimes six piece. People used to be lined down the street. They would come

time out to do this and before we finish up I would like to thank all of those people, especially in the early years who gave me the chance to play music. When I came here to live, obviously I didn't know anybody but it wasn't long before it became a home away from home.

Me - And I thank you Joe, for your friendship, fellow musicianship, and last but not least being a dear family friend.

Joe C - Thank you, I'm going to miss the camaraderie with the musicians and seeing all the familiar faces every weekend over 37 years. It's going to be quite a change for me.

Me - Well, the stage door is always open for you Joe. Go Raibh Mile Maith Agat. Joe and Patti, go n-éirí an bóthar leat.

Happy Easter Everyone!
As always be good to one another. Joe McShane
Visit Joe's FaceBook Page
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Joe's columns can be found at www.irishamericannews.com, in the Back Issues section.!



at the time was scant. I had some idea that the ego was the thing that got us into trouble. Our attachment to pleasing the self was the very thing that caused us pain.

Meditation on an Ice Flow

Getting older brings with it a unique form of nostalgia. With less time ahead, it's natural to look back more. It's weird sometimes how memory plays with our thoughts. There are enough memories in my head to make any stream of consciousness an ocean. I'm quite tickled by some of the bizarre showings from the past that can either make me cringe with embarrassment or simply laugh aloud. So, whenever I see those Godawful reality shows where the compere asks one of the exploitable candidates 'what would you say to your younger self', I want to shout out 'don't fall for such a ridiculously stupid question'. Our younger selves no longer exist, they are part of the flotsam and jetsam of memory.

I wonder if it isn't this reality, accompanied by the brevity of life, that makes us grumpy old men and women. Rummaging through our memories looking for redeemable, worthwhile events to soothe the ravages of time and avoid those times that would sink us further into turmoil. My mind is constantly sorting, and selecting items from the past that keep me afloat but like the titanic, it's only a matter of time before the illusion of control runs aground on a cold reality. My favourite preoccupation is discovering those moments when life reveals itself to be absurd. Those delicious moments that cause us to feel the weight of existence aren't what plunge us under but keep us merrily dancing on a sinking boat.

It was sometime in the late 80s. I was living in Derry and studying English literature in Coleraine. It was always hard to find things to do in a small city when you're young. Even if there are lots of things you could be doing, the mindset of that particular age is incredibly hard to please. Someone suggested that I go to a meditation class. Anyone who knew me then and now would see the ridiculousness of such an idea. My own frenetic brain does not stop long enough to smell roses, coffee or any other pleasurable object. Still, I was happy enough to give it a try. After all, I was the one who was complaining of having nothing to do.

I remember entering the meditation room. There were about 12 of us would-be-seekers of divine enlightenment. We sat in our chairs carefully taking in our surroundings. It was a large upstairs room in an old building. The wallpaper had been meditating on that wall so long it had faded into a yellowish nirvana of sorts. Our meditation mentor was a Buddhist nun. My knowledge of Buddhism

Meditation could help us abandon our self-centeredness and liberate us from the pain of attachment.

As I looked around the room, my ego was in total flight mode. The door was shut closed and my way of escape too. The nun carefully avoided making any eye contact. Her ego wouldn't be sated by the adulation of her mentees. She was detaching herself from all forms of prideful ego. The initial encouragement to concentrate on our breathing seemed harmless enough, if not boring. Our goal; to stop the manic flow of oceanic thoughts from sweeping us. Any attempt, on my part, to stop those glorious waves from pulling me onwards was futile. Try as I might, there was no interest on my part to find breathing a worthy object to pay attention to.

Next, we were encouraged to empty our minds, which was tantamount to asking a hoarder to get rid of stuff. My attachment to thinking was too strong. Life on the ocean was a bit too exciting to give it up for nothingness if indeed nothingness even exists. I sat pretending to clear out cupboards and closets full of unnecessary thoughts. Who was I deluding? Having failed the first two exercises, I was beginning to think (another failure) that I'd had better things to do than pretend I liked doing nothing. The more I thought about my lack of contemplation, my breathing was becoming erratic. Just when you think that you've plugged all the holes in the boat, another leak emerges.

During the final moments of the meditation, we were encouraged to welcome the dead. One by one, we were to imagine our dead loved ones blessing us. Any hope of stopping this tidal wave of despair stopping was futile. My dead loved ones were too busy laughing their asses off watching me squirm in my seat to be in a blessed mood. I'm sure they were pointing their fingers at me lapping up my well-deserved karma for believing I could stem the tide of living. The realization of the futility of my efforts allowed me to cast me adrift from meditation and take my chances.

It's a memory such as this that gives me hope. I know that whatever panacea for life I'm looking for doesn't exist. And, instead of talking to our younger selves, we should speak to our older selves. The grumpy old men and women that we've become should be reminded that our lives are full of joys and woes. How we face or avoid those things that are a part of who we are is immaterial. In the end, if we can laugh at the absurdity of life, we can at least pretend it matters.

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Game On!
 By Chris Wheaton



It seems as if everyone claims to be Irish during St. Patrick's week and a lot of them are worthy of the claim. 31.5 million Americans claim Irish Ancestry, second only to German. Right at home in Cook County the U.S. Census Bureau reports that 461,598 people have some Irish heritage, that's 8.9% percent of the county population. Not too shabby but far below some of the counties in the Northeast that are Irish strongholds.

The number of Irish or those posing as Irish were on full display this past weekend at the West Suburban Irish St. Patrick's Day Parade which marched through downtown Naperville on a "brisk" Saturday Morning. Naperville Hurling Club participated and really enjoyed the camaraderie and the spirit of the hearty souls who braved the elements to wave and cheer and spend their morning celebrating the Irish. Most of the parade route had families lined 3 deep on the sidewalk with every little child smiling from ear to ear decked out in whatever green they could find. Politicians and kilt clad pipers (not to mention a few hurlers as well) soaked up the fun on the mile long walk to downtown. Many people inquired about hurling and the history of it and how to play and a few were amazed that Naperville actually supported a club.

As the parade came to an end the day's festivities continued at Quigley's Irish Pub, an authentic Irish pub in Naperville that pours a fine Guinness and sponsors Naperville Hurling. Being veterans of the parade, our club made a beeline to the pub as soon as it ended to secure a spot before the masses arrived, and arrive they did. The bar was soon packed with the young and old, the Irish, the Americans and anybody else who

was looking for a great meal and a perfect pint. Being shoulder to shoulder in every corner of the bar did not dampen the spirits as the crowd was extremely well behaved and there looking for good fun and to celebrate the day. I found myself wondering why we can't celebrate St. Patrick's Day every day, as the craic was contagious and smiles and laughter were abundant.

I don't think we should have to wait until March 17 every year to celebrate the Irish and to have fun in a drama-free world. It's nice, and I believe healthy to get away from the daily grind and to block out politics, racism, violence and all the other nonsense that pollutes our brains and thinking every day when we turn on the television or open a newspaper. Life should be simple and uncomplicated, much like sport. I acknowledge that my wish is probably not realistic in that we all have problems but if each of us could take some time during our hectic days and focus on being positive I think the world could be a better place. I saw it firsthand for a few hours on Saturday morning at the parade and it reinforced my belief that we all have the ability to tune out the minutia and enjoy life.

Those of us who participate in GAA sports have the privilege of gathering with our teammates for a few hours every week to train, compete, laugh and enjoy each other without the day to day distractions that often times consume our thoughts. Give it a try sometime, find a club in your area and I promise you will find it very inviting. Every GAA club has a social aspect if you don't feel ready to actually play the game and I guarantee you will have friends for life. It's like St. Patrick's Day every day and who wouldn't love that?

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**New Single Victoria Johnston
'TAR LIOM' (FOLLOW ME')**

'You hear a call, It is calling you far from here, Calling you like a bird, come follow me beyond the mountains, Follow me'

Singer-songwriter Victoria Johnston is from Dublin, Ireland, and is set to release her new single 'Tar Liom' ('Follow Me') in the US on March 17th ahead of her debut album, 'Where The Lights Glow', which will be out in May. Victoria Johnston is an independent artist and her music has received television features and radio airplay across Ireland including on its prime national broadcaster RTÉ. Victoria has been interviewed and featured in Irish magazines and newspapers including Irish Tatler, Irish World newspaper, Irish Daily Star, The Sunday World, and RSVP magazine.

On launching her solo career in 2020, Hot Press Magazine featured Victoria as 'New Artist' and 'New Music' to watch for. "The tunes turn out to be as impeccable as her credentials. She is already being hailed as the next Enya" - Hot Press Magazine. Victoria's music



background includes being classically trained at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin from the age of 9 with annual scholarships. She then continued her music training at the TUD Conservatoire in Dublin, Victoria also holds a degree from Trinity College Dublin.

The single, 'Tar Liom' is sung in the Irish Language or 'Gaeilge'. Victoria says,

'Gaeilge is such an inherently musical language, and it lends itself so well to being sung. It's a powerful thing that Irish music resonates so well with people all over the world. It's a true musical identity and I've endeavored to showcase a sense of Ireland's musical heritage through this song. As an artist I'm very much influenced by how almost ethereal Ireland's scenery can be. The lyrics for 'Tar Liom' are very much influenced by nature and Ireland's picturesque forests, valleys and mountains.'

'Tar Liom' was recorded and produced in Ireland by Grammy-nominated producer Denis Woods (previously of Windmill Lane Studios, Clannad, Moya Brennan, Enya), with the lyrics and music composed by Victoria. The music video for 'Tar Liom' was filmed in the Wicklow Mountains in Ireland. Victoria Johnston is also the founding member and songwriter of the Irish group Celtic Calling who had a #1 iTunes single in Ireland with their arrangement of the Irish Celtic classic 'The Parting Glass' and their concert performances to date include sold-out shows in Ireland and London.

'Tar Liom' is available on all streaming services, Spotify, Apple Music, etc

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - APRIL 2023

It is this time every year when I take a moment to reflect on the history of the Irish American Heritage Center and the long line of incredible people who had the vision to imagine that an empty school building could become a beacon to our shared heritage. I also marvel at the amazing, selfless volunteers who make possible all the events we currently host, but especially the weeklong bacchanalia that is St. Patrick's Day in Chicago.

Beginning on Friday, March 10 through Sunday, March 19 the Center hosted more than 6,000 people for fish fries, concerts, shopping, the St. Patrick's Fest and of course St. Patrick's Day. Four local TV stations decided the best place to celebrate on March 17th was the IAHC, starting with Channel 2 and the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance at 5am. On March 11th, the Center was represented in the

Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade, a special thanks to the Mother Jones Society for adding labor to the great work that the float committee does every year. The Friends of the Irish American Heritage ensemble of singers represented the Center by performing at the United Center for the Bulls on the 17th.

I would like to thank everyone who made these events possible – the leadership and staff of the IAHC who put in countless hours and went above and beyond (and without sleep); the Parade and St. Patrick's Fest committees who plan for a year to make sure we are ready for this week.

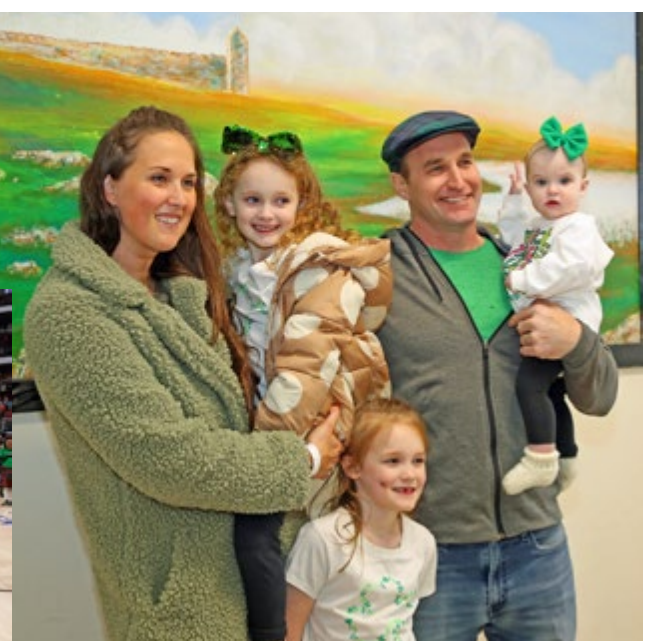
A special thanks to the Irish Community Services who hosted and entertained the wee ones on both Fest Day and St. Patrick's Day. It is wonderful to see the next generation of members being



introduced to the Center. And to Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Theresa Flynn for issuing a proclamation honoring the Irish in Chicago that included the IAHC and our friends at Gaelic Park.

The greatest thanks are saved for all our volunteers, not only for St. Patrick's week, but for what they contribute to the Irish American Heritage Center year-round. Without you and the great commitment to giving that fuels the spirit that is our Community, the Center would not be the hub of Irish American activity in Chicago. Go Raibh maith agaibh!

Tony McHale
President of the IAHC. Board of Directors





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Generation Next
 By Conor O'Connor

The Windsor Framework: What's the Fuss?

On February 27th, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen jointly unveiled the proposed Windsor Framework. The Framework, which will ostensibly replace the dysfunctional Northern Ireland Protocol, has Northern Ireland's pro-UK Democratic Unionist Party scrambling to understand the nuances of the deal (and, in my opinion, to find an excuse to oppose it).

Foreign policy appreciators know that Brexit opened a can of worms with regard to the 6 remaining counties under British rule in Ireland. On one hand, since Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom, unionists wanted every measure taken to cut ties between the EU and the UK to apply to Northern Ireland as well. On the other hand, such measures would include reestablishing a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Needless to say, anyone with memories of The Troubles did not want that to happen.

So, when the UK officially left the EU in January 2020, the Northern Ireland Protocol went into effect. Rather than imposing customs checks on goods traveling between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Protocol required inspections and customs checks to be conducted before leaving Northern Ireland or upon arrival in the mainland UK. This arrangement was acceptable for most politicians in Ireland, but diehard Unionists and establishment Tories were not fans. They felt that it essentially established a border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and, in turn, drove a wedge between British citizens.

Former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson made fixing the Northern Ireland Protocol a policy priority, but he never really got anywhere with it. And we all know how well Liz Truss handled governance during her brief stint as UK PM. Now, 3 years after Brexit, we finally have a proposal that seems like it could replace the Northern Ireland Protocol. So, what is the Windsor Framework?

The Windsor Framework would establish "green" and "red" lanes for goods flowing from the mainland UK to Northern Ireland. "Green" lanes would be for goods with a final destination within Northern Ireland, and would thus be subject to fewer customs checks. "Red" lanes would be for goods that might end up moving into Ireland and/or the rest of the European Union. This

arrangement is meant to ease some of the frustration prevalent among diehard unionists who hate the de facto border in the Irish Sea.

Additionally, the Framework would grant the Northern Ireland Assembly (essentially the local Parliament of Northern Ireland) the power to use a mechanism colloquially called the "Stormont brake" to temporarily prevent any changes in EU trade regulation from applying in Northern Ireland if the Assembly feared that such changes would have a "significant and lasting effects on everyday lives."

To trigger the Stormont brake provision, 30 members from two or more parties within the Assembly would have to object to the new EU regulation. From there, the objection would be sent to the UK Parliament for consideration. After the UK Parliament takes action, the new EU law would automatically be suspended for a maximum of 4 weeks. Then, EU officials and Westminster politicians would have to come together to find a solution or compromise.

It is important to note that this "brake" can only be used when the Northern Ireland Assembly is a functioning body. As of this writing, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has refused to allow the election of a new Speaker in the Northern Ireland Assembly since May 2022, and because of that the Assembly cannot meet.

The DUP has said they will not take part in any Northern Ireland government until the Northern Ireland Protocol is amended or replaced to address their concerns. Prime Minister Sunak is banking on the DUP supporting the Windsor Framework so that business can continue in the Northern Ireland Assembly...but there appears to be continued skepticism among some DUP members that the deal will go far enough to address their concerns.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, it is really no surprise to me that the DUP refuses to fully endorse the Windsor Framework. The DUP will continue to move the goalposts on this issue because they are terrified of Sinn Fein (the Irish nationalist party that won a plurality of seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly last election) and the prospect of actually entering into a power-sharing agreement with them.

Hence, I am not holding my breath for the implementation of the Windsor Framework. Prime Minister Sunak will have to learn the hard way that he is putting in all of this good faith effort into pleasing bad faith actors.

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Milwaukee Irish Fest's 42nd Festival Lineup Features Fan Favorites & New Acts Plus Save on Tickets with BOGO Sale

Milwaukee Irish Fest, the world's largest Irish music festival, announced its anticipated 42nd festival lineup and launched a buy one get one ticket promotion. Now through March 19, save on tickets by getting two for the price of one - only \$12.50 a piece. Admission to Irish Fest includes access to over 100 acts across 16 stages, plus endless entertainment and cultural activities such as sporting events, genealogy research assistance, Irish language sessions, theater performances, and so much more! Featured musical entertainers this year include Boxing Banjo,



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The Byrne Brothers, Cassie and Maggie, Derek Warfield and The Young Wolfe Tones, The Diddley Idols, Doolin', The Drowsy Lads, Eileen Ivers, Goitse, The Henry Girls, Lisa Canny, Shane Hennessy, and Skerryvore. Irish Fest is also bringing back fan favorites Gaelic Storm and Scythian.

from Dublin, The Coronas, will return for the first time since 2017 and Hermitage Green, an acoustic folk rock group from Limerick, will also return. Ten artists and bands will make their Irish Fest debut this year: Colm and Laura Keegan from Scotland, The Finns, The Friel Sisters, Gross Isle, MEGA-Trad, Merfolk, Polly Barrett, and Wallis Bird from Ireland, and Steam and Ulla from Irish America.

View the full lineup at irishfest.com/lineup and get the lowest ticket price available at irishfest.com/tickets. Irish Fest returns to the Henry Maier Festival Park Augusts 17 - 20 for 4 days of music, culture & craic.

Into the West: The Banshees of Inisherin

By Cormac O'Donnell (pictured)
 The following article contains spoilers for the film

The Banshees of Inisherin has received a glowing reception across the world. Nominated and winning awards most of the major categories, the cast and crew are fixtures on the awards circuit. How has a small film set in the West of Ireland caused such a buzz?

The electric chemistry of Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson is certainly one of the major attractions. Having previously starred opposite each other in writer-director Martin McDonagh's In Bruges (2008), lightning strikes twice for the trio in another darkly comedic - and shocking - tale.

Set in a fictional island of the West of Ireland (In reality - Inis Mór), the film takes place in 1923 amidst the backdrop of the Irish Civil War. Farrell plays Pádraig, an innocent simpleton who takes pleasure in the mundane minutiae of everyday existence. Colm, his best friend, has an epiphany of sorts and abruptly calls time on their friendship. What follows is bizarre and bittersweet. Colm informs Pádraig that he wishes to maximize his time left in life and has no more room for his friends' repetitive conversational content. Demonstrating his point to extreme levels, Colm vows to cut off one of his fingers for every time Pádraig speaks to him.

For many international viewers new to the West of Ireland, the film's locale provides a feast for the eyes. Crashing coastal waves, lush green fields and contemplative strands set the scene for the locals to act out life as they see fit. A myriad of interconnecting series of stone fences set boundaries for the island's residents, recalling the immortal words of Robert Frost: "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know What I was walling in or walling out, And to whom I was like to give offense"

Good fences make good neighbors, indeed - particularly when Ireland was establishing it's separation from Britain in 1923. Colm abruptly declares

his independence from Pádraig and so begins a chain of events mirroring the actual civil war taking place concurrently. In this conflict, Irish citizens would turn on themselves, brother against brother, family versus family and friend against friend.

Pádraig becomes a pet left in the cold, unceremoniously dropped by his best pal. He is confounded by Colm's decision and is desperate to just return to "the way things were" - the pangs of pain and regret that surely ran through the heads of thousands of divided Irish men and women during this time.

In the Irish language, the word "Inis" means Island - and the word "Eirin" means Ireland. Viewed in this way, the setting is literally the Island of Ireland; a microcosm of a stage for an internal conflict set aside by itself, into the West - reflecting the larger national conflict taking place on the mainland.

"Banshees", or "Bean-sí" (in Gaelic) are female spirits in Irish folklore, harbingers of doom that herald the death of a family member. They are recognized by their piercing screams that turn the blood cold. A skilled violinist, Colm ends his friendship with Pádraig to focus on writing his musical masterpiece, a song he calls "The Banshees of Inisherin". Without a family and in the twilight of his years, Colm views the song as his legacy; something that will live on after him. Filled with grandiosity and self-importance - certainly not hallmarks of the West of Ireland - he is unable to be distracted by the incessant, repetitive chatter of his former friend. The song is therefore a death-knell to their friendship - but unlike the banshee's scream - we never hear it. Colm ensures this by cutting off his fingers, one by one.

By the end of the film, he takes to the local pub to unveil his magnum opus. Colm is impassioned in his presentation, waving his bow with one hand

and unable to press the strings with the other; he is fervently delusional (Note: Brendan Gleeson's eye movement alone deserves an Academy Award for acting in this film.) His desire to succeed need not be questioned - but it is quite clear that the song will only ever exist in his head. Is the extent of his legacy to be



no more than a myth of the island himself? Is it the destiny of this self-mutilated violin player to become something talked about, in hushed whispers, not unlike the Banshees of his song? Fingerless and friendless, he faces a more haunting question that the survivors of the civil war must also have asked themselves; was this really worth spilling our own blood?

Deftly directed by Martin McDonagh, from his own screenplay rich in symbolism and characterization - he looks certain to grab Best Screenplay for his efforts. Colin Farrell, Brendan Gleeson are rightly considered for Academy Awards for their contributions. Barry Keoghan and Kerry Condon, outclass in roles that have given them Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress nominations, respectively. Kerry Condon is simply terrific in this picture, lighting up every frame with her abilities. Sister to Pádraig, her character Siobhán acts as a beacon of maturity and much needed "cop-on". We feel her frustrations when her advice goes unheard and breathe with relief when she removes herself from the unfolding tragedy. Rising star Barry Keoghan wears both masks of tragedy and comedy as he steals every scene he is part of. The swell of Irish filmmaking artistry is further noted by the Academy with Aftersun's Paul Mescal nominated for Best Actor and Colm Baird's An Cailin Ciúin up for Best International Feature. In a year that the Irish film industry has made its mark, Banshees looks certain to direct audiences into the West.



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Several Irish leaders took the time to visit Chicago last month. Pictured (l to r): Consulate General of Ireland Chicago; Kevin Byrne, David Corcoran of Enterprise Ireland USA, Michael McGrath TD; Minister for Finance Government of Ireland, and Citibank's Joseph McKittrick.

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Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) play an essential role in healthcare, especially in Illinois. The demand for healthcare services is increasing, and CNAs are in high demand to help meet the needs of the growing elderly population. In this blog, we will explore why we need CNAs in Illinois and how they can make a difference in our healthcare system.

What is a CNA?

A Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) is a healthcare

professional who provides basic patient care under the supervision of a registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN). They are responsible for tasks such as taking vital signs, assisting with personal hygiene, helping patients with mobility, and providing emotional support to patients and their families

Why do we need CNAs in Illinois?

1. To meet the increasing demand for healthcare services

The population of elderly people in Illinois is increasing, and so is the demand for healthcare services. CNAs are needed to provide basic care to patients, allowing RNs and LPNs to focus on more complex medical tasks. With the aging population in Illinois, the need for CNAs is only going to increase.

2. To provide quality care to patients

CNAs are trained to provide compassionate and patient-centered care. They play a vital role in the healthcare team and are often the first point of contact for patients. CNAs can help patients with their daily activities and provide emotional support, which can have a significant impact on their well-being.

3. To reduce healthcare costs

CNAs can help reduce healthcare costs by providing basic care to patients, allowing RNs and LPNs to focus on more complex medical tasks. This can result in fewer hospital readmissions and a decrease in the length of hospital stays, reducing healthcare costs for both patients and healthcare facilities.

4. To fill the gap in the healthcare workforce

The demand for healthcare services in Illinois is increasing, and there is a shortage of healthcare workers to meet this demand. CNAs can help fill this gap in the healthcare workforce, providing much-needed support to RNs and LPNs.

How can CNAs make a difference <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/Pages/IndividualResources.aspx>

1. Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH): IDPH

offers various resources and financial assistance programs for healthcare professionals, including CNAs. You can visit their website at <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/> to learn more.

2. Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES): IDES offers training programs and grants for individuals seeking to advance their careers in healthcare, including CNAs. You can visit their website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/individuals/Pages/Training-Opportunities.aspx> to learn more.

3. Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS): IDHS offers various programs and resources to support healthcare professionals, including CNAs. You can visit their website at <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12> to learn more.

There are several potential barriers that low-income workers may face when considering signing up for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classes, including:

1. Financial Barriers: The cost of CNA classes can be a significant barrier for low-income workers, as they may not have the financial resources to pay for tuition and other associated expenses. Some low-income workers may not be eligible for financial aid, scholarships, or grants that could offset the cost of CNA classes.

2. Time Constraints: Low-income workers may have limited time available to attend CNA classes due to work, family, or other commitments. They may not have the flexibility to take time off work or attend classes during traditional business hours, making it difficult to fit classes into their schedule.

3. Limited Access to Education: Some low-income workers may not have access to educational resources that could help them prepare for CNA classes, such as basic literacy skills, computer skills, or transportation to and from class.

4. Lack of Information: Low-income workers may not be aware of the opportunities available to them to become CNAs, or they may not understand the requirements and process for obtaining certification. They may also not know where to look for information on CNA classes or have difficulty navigating the application process.

5. Fear of Failure: Low-income workers may lack confidence in their ability to succeed in CNA classes or fear the consequences of not passing the certification exam. This fear can be a significant barrier to enrollment and can prevent individuals from pursuing a career as a CNA.

Overall, addressing these barriers requires a multi-faceted approach that includes providing financial support, flexible scheduling, educational resources, clear information, and support for building self-confidence. By addressing these barriers, and getting the word out about these grant funds and local job and training resources we can assist recruit the work force of the future.

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Secretary Hillary Clinton to Host President Clinton at Queen's Conference

Former President of the United States, President Bill Clinton, and the Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, Secretary Hillary R. Clinton, are among the first global leaders to be

Friday Agreement anniversary. Speaking ahead of the event, Former U.S. Secretary of State and Queen's University Chancellor Hillary Clinton, said: "Northern Ireland and Queen's University



announced as participants in an international conference to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement at Queen's University.

President Clinton played a critical role in negotiations leading up to the signing of the Agreement on April 10 1998, and has maintained a steady friendship in the region as it has served as a model for peace.

The University's Chancellor Secretary Clinton will host the 3-day conference, which aims to reflect upon how the Agreement was achieved in 1998 while also looking forward with a renewed commitment to resolving outstanding issues.

Global, political and civic leaders, past and present, are due to gather at Queen's from 17-19 April marking the Belfast / Good

are both close to Bill's and my heart. It's fitting that such a unique event will take place at Queen's. The University makes a significant impact on the world through its outstanding research and innovation.

Professor Ian Greer, President and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, said: "We are delighted that our Chancellor Secretary Clinton, alongside President Clinton and a host of esteemed world figures will be joining this event to share their experiences and expertise in peace-building. President Clinton played a crucial role in securing the Agreement in 1998 while working with local parties to establish the institutions outlined in the three B/GFA strands.

"Secretary Clinton continued that work to secure progress

in Northern Ireland through dialogue and working with local leaders and community groups to promote reconciliation. It is fitting that both of them will play a central role in the conference.

"With global leaders in attendance at our conference in April, the world's eyes will be on Northern Ireland. This is an opportunity to show how far we've come as a society since

1998. Northern Ireland is now a place of peace with lots to offer as a great place to live, work and invest. It is now also a leading destination for students worldwide to come and study."

President Biden Expected to Attend Queen's Conference

US President Joe Biden will visit Northern Ireland for the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, as well as the Republic of Ireland. In her book, *My Ireland*, Margaret O'Connor talks about Joe's ancestral home, Ballina, or Béal an Átha an Atha in Irish, meaning the mouth of the ford, as befitting the setting on the River Moy near Killala Bay. While the river is known for salmon fishing, the town has gained fame as home to Ireland's first female President, Mary Robinson, and as the ancestral roots of Joe Biden.

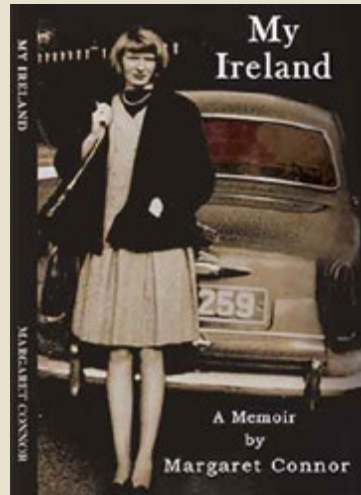
Their legacies live on which, together with the treasures of a local historian, Jackie Clarke, reveal some of the town's highlights from the ancient Bronze Age cist, known as the 'Dolmen of the Four Maols', to the present.

Early settlers in the area can be traced from the 14th century Augustinian Friary founded there. The following century saw two Franciscan Abbeys, Rosserk and Moyne, established in the vicinity, whose extensive ruins are preserved. Ballina was founded as a garrison town in the 18th century by Lord Tyrawley, an Irish officer in the British Army.

The town incorporated the pre-

dated Belleek estate with its Neo-Gothic castle, built for Sir Arthur Knox-Gore, Lord Lieutenant of County Sligo, which stands today as a modern hotel.

On the opposite side of the Moy River is Saint Muredach's Cathedral. Built from local stone in the townland of Sligo before the 1898 revision of county boundaries, the Victorian Gothic



church serves the Catholic Diocese of Killala. Along the streets of Ballina are a number of listed Victorian and Georgian structures of which the former Provincial Bank building is renowned. It was designed by the Victorian architect, Thomas Manly Deane, who also designed the National Museum in Dublin, among others.

During the same era, the Ice House was built as a residence around a fish preservation ice shop. It now operates as a first-class hotel. These refurbished properties are among the mix of older three-to-four story edifices, many in need of repair.

Ballina is one of the largest towns in Mayo, with a current population of about 10,000 and it has remained a major centre of commerce through the ages.

My memories of Ballina are numerous, from my childhood years attending church services to my teenage years working in the town. The sights and sounds linger on, Ardnaree, an Irish word meaning hill of the king whose battle was fought during the Tudor conquest of Ireland in the 16th century, 3 Humbert's Monument honouring the French landing at Killala in support of the 1798 Irish Rebellion against the British Crown that ultimately failed, and the two stone-arched bridges straddling the Moy that pre-date the Great Hunger of the mid-1800s.

Ballina's, old market square now features a memorial to Joe Biden, 46th President of the United States, in reference to his ancestral roots. (*My Ireland* available on Amazon.)

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IRISH LANGUAGE IS HAVING A COMEBACK. WHY? Meet the Teacher & Creator of Irish With Mollie

People everywhere are falling in love with the Irish language. Is it the aftermath of the pandemic? "The Quiet Girl", the first Irish language film to be nominated for an Oscar? Or Grá ar an Trá (Love on the Beach) which will see a dozen young Irish speakers compete to become the couple with the most focail (words). A trend towards wholesome living can be seen in Farm-tok, Cabin Porn, and the power of hygge. In Ireland and for the Irish diaspora, a reawakening to ancient Celtic practices and decolonising the Gaelic mind; a longing to return to simple living is palpable. We're all online all the time, and learners are craving authentic and niche communities.

LEARN IRISH ONLINE

Language learning is also about belonging, heritage, and nostalgia. Dubliner Mollie (@irishwithmollie) is popularising the language and creating accessible and attractive content. She says, "People are finding meaning and fulfillment in Irish. "Life's better with a cúpla focal (couple of words) and I feel so lucky to grow and connect with such a dynamic community."

With over 100K followers on Instagram and TikTok, and thousands enrolled in her courses on irishwithmollie.com, Mollie has been called the "language-healer" of her generation. "I never thought I'd become a teacher! I was even kicked out of the Gaeltacht, but the Cambridge Celta and



traveling really taught me how a language can be taught" she says. Followers write, "I've learned more scrolling on @irishwithmollie in 20 minutes than I did in 14 years in school!" Mollie has created courses for those starting from scratch or digging deep into dim memories of their school Irish. She shares

free daily content including vocabulary, proverbs, how to order in a restaurant, to analysis on literature, culture and etymology.

There's a buzz around the language - people are discovering their ancestry and tapping into the innumerable benefits of picking up a language. As the late Irish poet Séamus Heaney wrote, "A knowledge of Irish is an essential element in the realisation of cultural diversity, imaginative enhancement and a tolerant political atmosphere."

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Senior Events for April

<p>Irish American Heritage Center</p> <p><u>MONTHLY MUSICAL GATHERING FEATURING JOE MCSHANE!</u></p> <p>Wednesday 5th April Doors: 10 a.m. Music: 10.30 a.m. Come along to enjoy the sounds of the Emerald Isle as the talented Joe McShane plays your favorite traditional Irish tunes. This is a free event and refreshments are served. All are welcome!</p> <hr/> <p><u>GRANDMA GOES TO ANTARTICA!</u></p> <p>Wednesday 19th April Doors: 10 a.m. Music: 10.30 a.m. Jeanne Roppolo tells her story of working for five months for the National Science Foundation in Antarctica—the coldest, driest, and windiest, a place on earth.</p>	<p>Chicago Gaelic Park</p> <p><u>CHICAGO GENEALOGY 101</u></p> <p>Wednesday 12th April Doors: 10 a.m. Music: 10.30 a.m. Learn exciting tips for finding your Windy City relations from Grace DuMelle, author of Finding Your Chicago Ancestors and head of Heartland Historical Research.</p> <hr/> <p><u>THE IRISH STUDENT TAKEOVER</u></p> <p>Wednesday 26th April Doors: 10 a.m. Music: 10.30 a.m. Join us for a morning of music! This gathering will feature Annie Brennan, our student intern from Ireland. Annie is a talented musician who has been learning about the power of music to connect, heal and engage people.</p>
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Trinity Irish Dance Company's (TIDC) Founding Artistic Director, Mark Howard and Associate Artistic Director, Chelsea Hoy are back with new revelations for their annual hometown appearance the evening of April 22nd at Chicago's historic landmark Auditorium Theatre.

The most cutting-edge companies of their respective genres, Chicago's own internationally renowned TIDC, New York-based tap dance company Dorrance Dance, and Chicago's M.A.D.D. Rhythms

mirrored the same positive experience I had when working with Howard on tap collaborations."

Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC) will honor the memory of Irish musical icons Dennis Cahill, Mick Maloney, and Seamus Begley with an A-list of Irish musicians and rapid-fire footwork choreographed by Founding Artistic Director Mark Howard.

Local trad band, Chicago Reel: Gerry Carey, Jonathan Whithall, Pauline Conneely and Larry Nugent will join forces with TIDC's band: Brendan O'Shea, Jake James, Chris Devlin and Steven Rutledge. The program will include Howard's



will join forces for a thunderous evening.

This evening of percussive dance will celebrate two dynamic forms, American tap dance and Irish step, forms both born of resistance, and simultaneously joyful and rebellious. The much anticipated concert was made possible through a combination of long time friendships and mutual admiration between artists, coupled with the Auditorium Theatre's bold spirit and commitment to bring innovative programming to Chicago audiences.

Howard has spent decades earning a worldwide following in the performing arts and remains a leading innovative force in the dance world. For Chelsea Hoy, a Denver-native who's creativity and leadership have redefined TIDC in recent years, mainstream recognition has been more recent, with her co-choreographed works with Howard receiving international critical acclaim.

Both the New York-based Dorrance Dance and TIDC share long-standing visions to ensure their movement forms are respected on the concert stage, presenting internationally-celebrated, innovative work that honors the forms' complex histories while pushing boundaries for the next generation. M.A.D.D. Rhythms is a revolutionary Chicago arts organization founded by Bril Barrett, focused on giving back and using tap dance as a catalyst to make a difference in the underserved communities of Chicago and the world.

The connections to be celebrated on April 22 are not exclusive to the dance forms themselves. M.A.D.D. Rhythm's Founder Barrett first worked with Howard and Trinity in the early 90's, collaborating on Howard's piece 'Turf,' which featured American tap alongside Irish step.

Barrett remembers seeing one of Howard's early creations involving African Dance and Irish Dance and thinking: "This guy [Howard] gets it. He did a piece called 'Umoja' which is Swahili for 'Unity' that clearly showed his ability to uplift and respect other art forms.

Sometimes when people combine forms, it does a disservice to one or both. When I saw Umoja, I was amazed at how much respect Howard had paid to African dance. It was a very in depth collaboration that

tribal and timeless 'Soles,' revamped 'Push'; 'American Traffic', a hybrid of Irish step/American tap choreographed by Michelle Dorrance and Melinda Sullivan, and Howard and Associate Artistic Director Chelsea Hoy's 'An Sorcas ('The Circus').' "In a class all their own" (Lauren Wernecke, Chicago Tribune),

The evening includes a short video celebrating Howard's global impact and his upcoming induction into the Irish American Hall of Fame.

The day following the performance, you can mingle with the artists, and wish them well as they head out on a summer tour of Japan - Join TIDC April 23 for their Inaugural Ceiliúradh (celebration) and fundraiser at Theater on the Lake, April 23, 2023 - 2-5pm, 2401 N Lake Shore Dr, Chicago, IL 60614, 312-414-1313.



On her right was Saint Joseph, his head inclined toward her and on her left Saint John the Evangelist. To the left of Saint John was an altar on which stood a cross and a lamb."

Holy Wells in Ireland-the belief is water from a Holy Well will keep a person healthy. It's a sacred spring. The water is thought to have healing properties through a saint or guardian angel. They are places of pilgrimage where people pray and might leave an offering a coin or pin. A common practice was to tie a piece of cloth to a tree near the well, so the cloth would absorb the illness.

Most Holy Wells are found in Europe, Ireland has several, over 3,000. I would guess Ireland has the most Holy Wells in the world. Some wonder why we have so many, maybe the idea came from the famine and it gave people hope.

It has been said they cure anything from headache to mental illness. Some think if you drink or bath in these waters you will be healed, inspired or gain wisdom.

In Waterford there is St. Patrick's Well one of the biggest Holy Wells in Ireland. Some people go to the well and are not sick for example a bride to be, someone in need of a job or someone looking for something. People go to the wells to pray for others and themselves.

Years ago, people only visited the wells on certain times of the year. Today I don't think people wait for a certain time, they go when they have the need. Holy Wells are very special places and some of them have fallen into poor condition and groups are working on restoring them. I will list a few Holy Wells in Co. Clare St. Bridget's in Liscannor, Eye Well in The Burren, Tooth Well in Burren, Margaret's Well in Ennis and St. Augustine's Well in Kilshanny.

I'd like to also include the Story of Our Lady of Knock for people who don't know this story the apparition of Mary. "In County Mayo in Ireland of Our Lady of Knock is reported to have occurred on the evening of August 21, 1879, the vigil of the octave of the feast of the Assumption. Those who witnessed the miracle ranged in age from five years old to seventy-five. The apparition was described as follows: "Our Lady was wearing a large, brilliant crown and clothed in white garments.

Standing only a few feet off the ground, the Blessed Virgin wore a white cloak and was described by witnesses as being incredibly beautiful. She wore a bright golden crown, and appeared to be praying with her eyes looking toward heaven with her arms bend in front of her with her palms facing inward.

Fifteen parishioners stood to witness the apparition for two hours as they recited the rosary. Although it was daylight when the apparition began, the weather turned for the worse and it began to rain heavily. The area around the apparition appeared unaffected, however, as the ground remained dry as long as the vision lasted. She did not speak, but the gable of the church where the manifestation was made was covered with a cloud of light."

Saint Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus, also wore white robes and stood on the Virgin's right. He inclined his head respectfully toward the Blessed Virgin. Saint John the Evangelist wore a miter (the ceremonial head gear of a bishop), and appeared to be preaching as he held a book in his left hand.

Since then, thousands of people have gone to Knock to pray to Our Lady. Their prayerful, penitential and reverential spirit has been commended again and again by visitors from other lands. No sign of commercialism detracts from the purely religious atmosphere of that hallowed spot. People from all walks of life kneel in humble supplication before the shrine of Our Lady, fully confident that she has sanctified that spot by her apparition.

Organized pilgrimages from various dioceses are conducted frequently to the shrine of Our Lady of Knock. The rosary comprises the main portion of the devotion; the shrine is therefore appropriately called the Rosary Shrine. The "Knock Shrine Annual" relates many interesting stories of cures and conversions effected at the shrine. Pope John Paul II visited the Shrine in 1979.

Any questions please call us at, (708) 425-7021



Celtic Social Gathering

Saturday, April 15



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Blind Tom & Navigators Are Live From Ireland!

SAVE THE DATES! *Blind Tom and the Navigators* will be visiting Chicago on April 19 to April 23 to raise money for important projects in Belmullet Co. Mayo.

The group of musicians features Tomas Langan from Castlebar and Pdraig Conroy, Bridget McMahon Hegarty, and Quinn Neary from Belmullet.

Tomas, an amazing musician, blind from birth, he plays the piano and the fiddle.

The group is sponsored by the Mayo Association and Ceol & Craic Trasna na dTonnta. Tickets and further information are available on Eventbrite.

Wednesday April 19 - there will be a session at Vaughan's NW side

Thurs April 20 - Clancy's on 103rd

Friday April 21 - Chief O'Neills

Sat. April 22 - Gingerz in Milwaukee

Sun 4-23 - Irish Am Heritage Center 3pm

These talented musicians are raising funds for important projects at home:

1) Palliative inpatient service in Belmullet Community hospital covers Erris area and beyond. The nearest hospice is in Castlebar nearly 50 miles away.

2) The restoration of Belmullet Tidal pool, a community built outdoor salt water pool opened in 1984. For tix or to sponsor, contact Kevin O'Shea 630.865.7137.



Master Your Money By Mike Corrigan



Long Term Care in a Post Covid World

You may recall the heart wrenching pictures on TV of the husband holding his wife's hands through the plastic curtain at a nursing home during Covid. Not able to have any physical contact for months.

There were countless other graphic pictures that made you weep of children waiving through a window at their mother or grandmother at an assisted living facility. Very sad and difficult to watch, let alone go through it if any of you experienced that situation.

Well, a lot has changed as Covid has subsided but not gone away. What also has not gone away is the cost of Long -Term Care. One of the biggest questions for seniors is usually money.

How are we going to pay for long-term care? According to many insurance companies the national average daily rate for a private room in a nursing home is \$297. While a semi-private room is \$260.

The national average monthly base rate in an assisted-living community was \$4,500. The national average hourly rate for home health aides is \$27 and adult day services was \$78.

Privately paying for long-term care means seniors would have to find an additional \$50,000 to \$130,000 per year in their budget for just ONE person to receive care. Most of us, seniors or not, could not afford to privately pay for our own care year after year.

Long-term care Insurance will pay for in-home care, assisted living and nursing-home care. This is the most appropriate and needed form of insurance protection available to us today. Long-term care should be called "lifestyle" insurance - it is NOT nursing-home insurance.

If your vision of your later years includes sitting at home in your own recliner, with your own remote control, watching your own TV....well, you should

be planning for that future with long-term care insurance.

There are 70 types of Alzheimer's. Every 66 seconds, someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. The RISK is REAL. Memory care facilities are popping up every week across the country and the cost is significant. I heard of one family is paying \$13,000 a month for their father in Denver, CO. in an Alzheimer facility.

Nobody has a crystal ball to look into the future to see if they will be affected and require care. The statistics are not favorable as we get older. By 2030 over half the US population will be over 65. Do you believe the cost for Long-term care will increase if more people need it? Supply & Demand!!!

Difficulty dressing, vision & hearing difficulty, difficulty going out, difficulty in walking, reaching, lifting, carrying, climbing stairs or getting around the house, difficulty remembering. More than 45% of those 65 to 74 reported experiencing one or more those difficulties. 70% of households age 75 or older reported difficulty in some activity.

So, if the odds are increasing that you will need care doesn't it make sense to plan for that possibility? "If I only knew then what I know now." It's a phase that most of us will use at least once-perhaps many times as we age.

There is good news. The insurance market has changed for Long-Term Care. The insurance industry has responded to address this growing need. With some pre-planning there are a few government incentives to help pay for long term care. There are programs available whereby you can "re-purpose" a portion of your IRA or annuity or savings to leverage it to be worth 3 to 4

times to pay for care. Example: \$50,000 IRA value would be worth \$150,000 if you had to pay for long term care. And the benefits are TAX FREE when paid under the Pension Protection Act. That's just one example. There are many other possibilities.

There are ways to legally protect your assets without going broke in an assisted living or nursing home. There are methods and "guarantee issue" insurance products that can pay for the type of care for the physical difficulties we will face as we age.

Many questions to ask but 3 that I ask my clients. Number 1. "If you needed care, where would you want to receive it?" 88% say "in their home". Number 2. "Which asset would you liquidate first to pay for the care?" Most say "IRA or savings. Number 3. "If there was a better way to pay for care that prevented you from going broke, is that something we should look at?" 100% say YES.

If you know what the options are you can plan and be better prepared. I have a FREE Book called TAX FREE BENEFITS for Long-Term Care in a Post Covid World. It's just been updated for 2023 with all the new regulations and government incentives identified.

Send me an e-mail at mike@corriganfs.com or call me at 708-215-5100 and I will send you this FREE book. Is just 100 pages but it's filled with great information that you can use. Everybody knows someone that spent a fortune on caring for a parent or a loved one. It's devastating in many ways. Get this book. It might be the best thing you ever read.

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The Legend of Conal Cearnach

The following is the story of Conal Cearnach, the famous and renowned warrior of the Red Branch Knights in Ulster over 2,000 years ago. The ancient legends tell us that he was present with a group of Roman Centurion comrades to witness the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

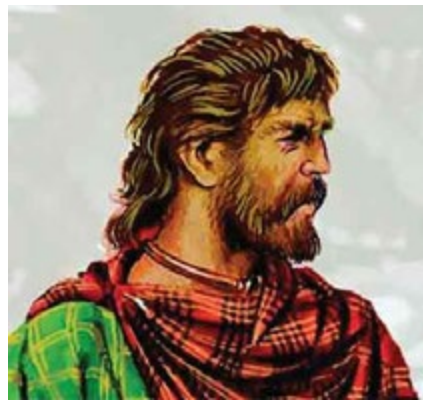
'Again the vision shifted and changed, and he saw himself the comrade of a band of centurions, who had journeyed over land and sea in peaceful wise to the populous cities of the East. It was afternoon of a certain day when they reached Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, a strange day and a fearful one, for the sun hung like a ball of fire in the heavens, and the air was filled with the noise of shouting men and the wailing of women.

Past the bare and brown synagogues the strangers went, following in the track of hurrying crowds that stayed not for question or reply, intent were they on the purpose that drew them onward. Here and there a group of women talked in whispers, pausing at sight of the Romans and the splendidly-clad chieftain of Uladh, whose like they had never gazed on before. For Conal Cearnach wore his wide-spreading scarlet cloak, fastened with a large brooch of gold, across his breast, and his ruddy hair fell down in many plaits to his broad shoulders, each plait being tied at the end by a string and tiny ball of gold. His short trimmed beard was as ruddy as his hair; his cheeks were like an apple when the sun hath kissed it, and his bright blue eyes,

keen-glancing, drew the eyes of all to look at him.

And the Jewish women hushed their talk as he came up the way to marvel at his height and grandeur, and it was then that the centurions, seeking speech of them learned what had so disturbed the wonted customs of the city.

'It is one whom they go to



crucify on Golgotha,' said the women. 'A Man who hath called Himself the Son of God, and we know not if the deed they do be just or wise.'

'What crime hath He done?'

'Nay, no crime, unless crime it be to raise the dead to life, or restore sight to the blind, or hearing to the deaf, or give strength to the lame and feeble, and comfort to the sad of heart. All this He hath done, for we have seen it; and there are many who have followed Him in the belief that He is the long-looked-for Messiah, whom the prophets have foretold.'

'And is it for this the Jews have given Him to death?'

'Yea', answered the women, 'and because that He hath spoken to the Kingdom of His Father and of Himself as King of the Jews.'

'Then He deserves death for that saying,' cried the Centurions, 'for Caesar, and Caesar alone, is your king. We go to see him die. What name hath He?'

'Jesus of Nazareth'

Up the steep stony road that led to Calvary Conal Cearnach went with his Roman companions. Here and there he noted drops of blood upon the pathway, as they hastened onward with such speed that the crowds gave way before them, and the little black-eyed Jewish children drew aside from their course in terror. Once they stopped before a weeping woman, shrouded in a long dark cloak, across whose knees as she sat was stretched a blood-stained towel, upon which her tears fell thick as rain, and over which many people were bending. Then they saw that the towel bore the impress in lines of blood of a most sad and weary face - 'the face of Him who is being crucified,' said a bystander, in answer to their looks of wonder. 'This woman wiped the sweat from His brow as He passed by, and his face is

here as a memento of Him whom Pilate hath called 'that just Man.'

Into the soul of Conal the hot anger came rushing as he broke away from the centurions and sped like a blast of wind towards the mount where the people had assembled. One thought filled his mind, 'shall I be nigh and witness the torture of this Man, whose only crime hath been the good that He hath done? Nay, it were not known in Emania (Ireland) that many should fall upon one; it is the trial of single combat we give even to our enemies. I shall be His champion to the death if He will take me for such.'

Yet, alas, and alas, it was a bleeding and dying Christ that hung upon the cross When the Chieftain of Dunseverick drew near and stood beneath. And as he gazed in horror at the dastard deed, a soldier coming up in haste pierced the victim's side with a spear so that the blood shot forth and trickled down the rough wood upon which they had nailed Him. And a drop touched the brow of Conal Cearnach before he knew, and the fury left him for a marvelous and unwonted peace

while he watched the Saviour die. Then rocks were rent and graves opened, so that the dead came forth in their cerements in that most awful hour; and lightning flashed from the black thick clouds that had suddenly covered the sky, and all was dread and unearthly, so that the people shrieked and crouched upon the ground repentant and very afraid.

'It was indeed a God who died,' said the chieftain sadly and slowly, 'this cruel and untimely death. My grief, oh, my bitter grief, that the Red Branch Knights are afar, else a sure and fierce revenge would overtake the murderers of Jesus of Nazareth, their city should be levelled and their name effaced had the chivalry of Uladh been here this day with sword and skian and blue-black lance to hold the battle straight with me.'

This was the memory that Conal Cearnach dwelt upon the night he returned through storm and darkness, after many wanderings, to his Caiseal of Dunseverick on the bleak sea-swept Northern coast of Ulster.

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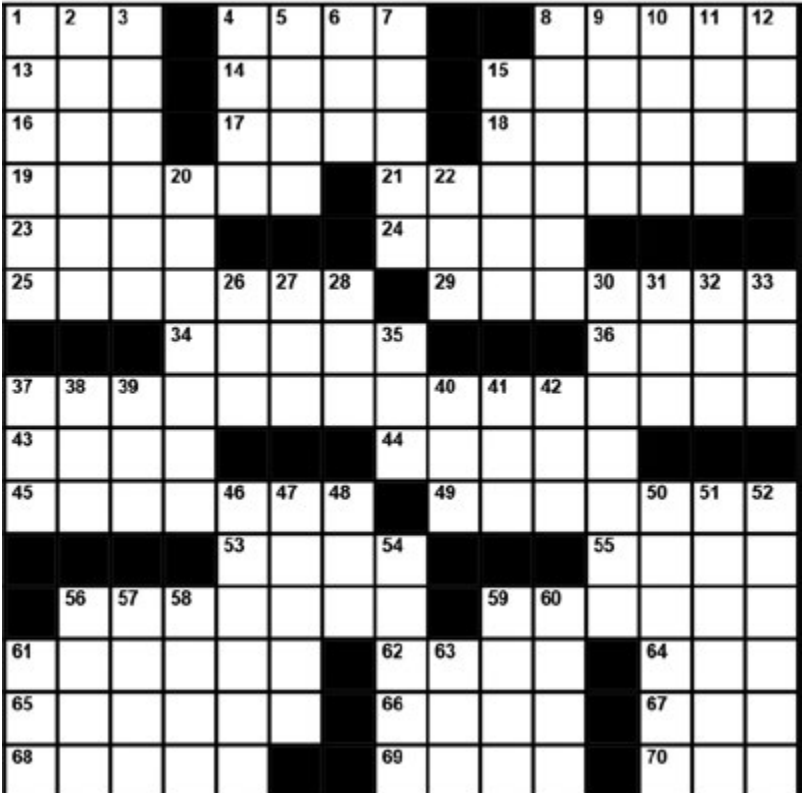
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 George Mitchell, native of Co. Limerick, Ireland, moved to Chicago in 2017. On a very windy day in April of 2022, he lost control of his motorcycle and was involved in a life-threatening accident. This accident left George with a life-changing spinal cord injury and he is now paralyzed from the chest down. He spent months in the hospital fighting to live, had several surgeries, and afterwards was transferred for a short period of time to Shirley Ryan Ability Lab (formerly RIC) for rehabilitation and physical therapy. The Committee is raising funds to assist in dealing with the financial costs of his injury. The funds raised will be George's sole source of income.
 To purchase a \$100 Raffle ticket, please contact: Martin Lally 630-675-6399
 For info or to donate (monetarily, raffle prizes, food) or are interested in helping, contact: Peter Moore 312-339-6543 -- Nora DeLance 847-668-3226 -- Dominic Bracken 708-663-1795
 For monetary donations, checks can be made out to George Mitchell Fund and sent directly to:
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Answers next month & online 1st week MAY

- Across**
- Network that presents "Ireland's Wild Coast"
 - Restlessness
 - Famous cliffs in County Clare
 - Stadium sound
 - Back of the neck
 - Big citrus fruit
 - French for island
 - Road fee
 - A Musketeer
 - Hardens
 - Software needs
 - State where the Mississippi R. originates
 - Augury
 - College area
 - Will process
 - Stradivarius's teacher
 - Aaron's 2,297
 - Small cabbage-like veggies
 - Sources of peat
 - Corrupt
 - Urgent requests
 - The Rock of ____, Tipperary
 - Bluenose
 - Put out
 - Impressive 19th century mansion in Killarney National Park
 - Spring times
 - Jim Beam or Jack Daniel, for example
 - "Go back," on an edit menu
 - Actress Long
 - "Sophie's Choice" Oscar winner
 - Preserved
 - Ballad's ending
 - One who dreams
 - Get rid of
 - Ed.'s pile
- Down**
- Refraction device
 - Monopoly property
 - Singer Easton
 - Like JFK, abbr.
 - NM resort town
 - An NCO
 - Phone greeting
 - Rita of 'West Side Story'
 - Middle-eastern kingdom
 - Does some tailoring
 - Composer Siegmeyer
 - Miss Diana
 - Indiana athlete
 - As a group
 - Babysitter's handful
 - Some Brit. statesmen
 - Emirates, for short
 - Letters on a Cardinal's cap
 - Paddy to Liam and Tom (folk group)
 - ____ Dhabi, emirate
 - Small songbird
 - Female suffix
 - Suffix meaning "practitioner"
 - Business watchdog for customers (abbr.)
 - Beluga delicacy
 - Horrible!
 - ____ fly (RBI getter)
 - Singer Zadora
 - E.R. personnel
 - More lively
 - Clobber
 - A sib
 - 2009 Grammy winner for "Relapse"
 - Monet subject
 - Astronaut's wear
 - Russian leaders before 1917
 - Screen door material
 - As far as
 - Milit. rank, abbr.
 - Leg connector
 - Cool drinks
 - Pea holders
 - Lieut.'s subordinate

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James Rogers 4-2
 Boy in the Striped Pajamas, John Boyne
 May 7
 The Titanic Sisters, Patricia Falvey

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MARCH ANSWERS

Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



Behind the Masks

Back in 2006, as publication of Thomas Harris's fourth Hannibal Lecter novel was getting closer, the title being touted was 'Behind the Mask'. Now that's a good one; but all the same I was glad when they changed it to 'Hannibal Rising'.

What with 'Mask' in the title I would just find myself thinking about politicians -- and would be distracted from the latest exploits of the doctor with a taste for Free-Range Rude.

God knows that if I had to make a choice between being stuck in an elevator with a sociopathic, mass-murdering cannibal or a politician, then I would pick the cannibal every time. And twice on Sundays. You can put money on that.

Just after I had posted last month's column, we in Ireland were treated to an instructive example of a politician letting his mask slide for a moment.

And it was none other than our beloved Taoiseach Leo Varadkar. So admittedly I'm a bit late to the party but what the heck - given how short social media seems to have made people's memories, it's no harm to have a refresher. Well, that and I neither like nor trust the guy -- never have, never will.

As I said in this column several years ago, Leo Varadkar is one of those grinning snake oil salesmen who presents to us as being all things to all audiences. For one segment of society, he's posting photographs of his dining tastes; but if mashed avocado on toast isn't your bag, he'll happily pose with his latest pair of novelty socks. ('Ah, bless him. He's so down to earth.')

Look, he's a career politician. The very last thing this fraud is, is 'down to earth'.

He is as ruthless, ambitious, narcissistic and self-centered as they come. In fact, about the only time that I think I ever sensed him being genuine was when Kylie Minogue was playing in Dublin and he sent a message to her hotel, begging to meet her because he was such a big fan. As the country cringed with embarrassment, I like to think of lovely Kylie opening his message, looking puzzled - who is this bloody toss pot? - and deciding it was yet one more nutter who was stalking her, before binning it.

At this stage I would have thought that most people were just simply appalled at the idea that we have to excavate the Mother and Baby home in Tuam. We should be hanging our heads in shame that it has ever reached this, that so-called Christians have fought to have the death of hundreds

of children covered up and have battled tooth and nail to find reasons for denying exactly how this happened.

It was an outrage that took place in Tuam; it was an outrage that took place throughout many counties; it was an outrage that took place throughout this entire supposed Christian country.

It was an outrage because these children were born to women who were an inconvenience, who were themselves perceived by Church and State as being worth nothing. And as to the fathers, the cowardly swine who turned their backs on these women, their lovers, don't even get me started. These were 'men' that - for at least a moment in time - were intimate enough with a woman to create a life.

Then again, these women were worth nothing to them either - else how could they have been cast aside so easily, so readily?

And our beloved leader and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar only added to the hurt and outrage in his bitter and loathsome, 'I didn't get my own way' statement some weeks ago:

"We estimate that the cost to the taxpayer will be 800 million Euros, which is 800 million Euros that could otherwise be spent meeting the needs today or trying to build a better future..."

In other words, increasing - again! - the pension pots of our politicians and senators. Ach Varadkar, you bullshit artist, who the hell do you think you are kidding?!

Do you know something, Leo? I have written here for years - years! - on how I consider you to be a vile and awful person. But until you came out with that, I really didn't know how just plain rotten you were.

Are.

Breda Timbre, who was adopted in the 70s and sexually abused:

'The hurt and hopelessness I feel today is immeasurable. Leo Varadkar, I thought you were being coached to think before you speak. Your words during leader's questions were unacceptable. How dare you!'

Carmel Cantwell:

'What an awful statement. It shows what contempt he has. If he wants to build a better future, he should properly address the past - a past that affects many today.'

Properly address the past. But we don't do that anymore, not in this Orwellian world. People like Varadkar want the past ignored - unless it suits them otherwise, of course. Tear down that statue, it honours a racist; remove those

Namibian sculptures, they're not politically correct

And then he - this fraud, this creep - made it worse, by explaining how he and his loathsome toadies saved the day: it was indeed because Katherine Zappone made them all cry by reading them a poem that she had written that day.

You think I'm making this up? Varadkar was so moved by a poem that everything changed that day. ARE YOU kidding me?!

A little bit of sanity from Independent TD Catherine Connolly:

'The Government was forced every step of the way to do something. Catherine Corless, who fought gallantly, raised this back in 2012 (!) ...how dare the Taoiseach take pride in what the Government has done when it has been forced every step of the way?'

Indeed.

I have absolutely no doubt that Leo Varadkar is a sociopath. He has no feeling for others so it's unfair to think that he could ever think as most of us do.

And, of course these views are my own, not those of this newspaper.

If Varadkar wishes to sue me then I will HAPPILY take him on in court. If I haven't made it quite clear, Varadkar, then let me repeat myself: I believe that you and all of your poisonous ilk are sociopaths who care only for yourselves. You are the enemy of the ordinary Irish person.

YOU ARE THE ENEMY

Several years ago, I wrote a review for another publication on Jon Ronson's Book 'The Psychopath Test'.

I found it fascinating, just how exactly this study captured the likes of... well, every politician I ever met. And how - like Varadkar - they passed the test.

Just a few random ones:

Item 7: Displays of emotion are dramatic. Check.

Item 2: Grandiose sense of self-worth. Check.

Item 4: Pathological lying. Check - but come on, pathological lying and politicians in the same sentence? Surely not!

Item 5: Cunning / Manipulative. Check.

Item 9: Parasitic Lifestyle. Check.

In case I haven't made myself clear, I find it depressing that our high achievers, who should be striving for something decent in life, instead strive for power.

God, they are all so pathetic.

And in the end, Leo, it will be worth nothing to you. You will die and be covered by just the same earth that I will be. But I'll have something you'll never have. And I'll leave you to figure that one out for yourself.

Apart from your crawlers and sycophants, who can be bought so easily that they mean nothing, exactly who do you have, Leo?

Exactly who do you have?
charleybrady@gmail.com

Choosing Joy

By Sally Blount, President and CEO, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago

We've been talking a lot about joy at Catholic Charities recently. You see, those of us called to work here truly believe we can make the world a better place -- one person, one family at a time.

But, as fulfilling as this calling is, our work can be difficult. Each day, we see the harsh realities confronting so many people - whether it be south-side parents, Latino migrants, west-side youth, or north-suburban seniors. In this time of high inflation and global uncertainty, the scope of need, both material and spiritual, is immense.

So we wrestle with the fact that, as human service providers, we can't fix everything; we can't meet every need -- no matter how much we dedicate ourselves. There is always more assistance we could offer, if only we had more resources, more funding. This weighs on us.

And yet, God calls us to serve with joy. Not with a sense of duty, or resignation, or even spiritual grit. No, we are called to serve with joy. So where do we find this joy? It can certainly feel elusive at times, especially now, at the end of winter, when each news story seems worse than the last.

A few months ago, when I was struggling through a particularly challenging day, I had a late-afternoon appointment with the Cardinal. As we were settling into our meeting, I said I needed to ask him a question: "How is it that you can stay so joyful and positive amid the hardship you see and carry each day for the Church?" He immediately smiled and answered, "Several

years ago, I realized that I had to decide: Who do I really believe is in charge? Is it me or is it the Holy Spirit?" And he looked at me, "It's your choice--you get to decide."

That conversation has stayed with me; I have taken his point to heart. If I really believe all of Jesus' teachings as deeply as I believe I do, there is only one answer. And it is a wonderful one. It is not me - I am not in charge!

As Jesus beckons in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. . . ." You



see, in those moments, when I allow myself to fully trust, to find that rest, my work is so much easier. I find joy all around me. It is the feeling I have when we help pay a family's utility bill, or the delight when a teammate surprises us with a cookie bake, or even the awe of an unexpected donation to support our work. I find it, too, in the faces of those who supper with us each night at Vincent Hall, as the enclosed photo reminds us.

I love the words of the late poet Mary Oliver who wrote, "If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it ...whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb."

May we all give into joy in this month-wherever and whenever we encounter it. It is truly a gift from God. Oliver is right, we shouldn't be afraid of its plenty. God did not make joy to be a crumb!

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GOOD GRIEF

By JOSEPHINE COLEMAN

Tales & Craic!



Hello everyone hope this finds you all well and enjoying our Spring weather. Few weeks ago my husband and I took a run out to The Kane county flea market. Admission six dollars each . We'd always heard it was massive. There were some stalls outside and quite a few inside .They had everything from your great, great grannies block iron to cheesecakes and fruit . We were pleasantly surprised how nice

and welcoming the stall owners were . After living here over thirty years We still get "I love your Irish accent, I could listen to you talk all day"! A lot of them had visited Ireland, saying it was the best vacation / holiday they ever had, others said they had grandparents, great grandparents from certain counties, and wanted to know what we did back home for Saint Patrick's day . We told them growing up in Ireland it was

a Holy day of obligation. You went to mass and came home, took off your Sunday best clothes and helped your parents around the farm . We would break lent for some of our mothers' fairy buns and trifle . Later on as teenagers we would go to local fairs .Our parents didn't drink so going into pubs was never an option. I'd like to say living here over thirty years we have always been treated very well . The fact that Chicago and other states shut down their city to celebrate our patron saint and us is Amazing. I think people have to remember that a lot of our relatives fled Ireland during the famine to come here for a better life, also sending money home to their starving loved ones, so in reality just think about it for a minute. We are meeting their families today. I don't care if you're ten, fifty, hundred percent Irish. We all originated from Ireland . Thank you for still welcoming me after all these years . A few folks asked me how to make shepherd's pie for Saint Patrick's day. Yes I know it's over but as I told them, we Irish make it all the time. It doesn't have to be a special holiday . It's a great

go to quick comfort meal . My apologies for not getting back to you This is how my Donegal mum and her family before her made it .. Here's what you need . Few pounds of lean ground beef (we call it Mince) , one finely chopped onion . The smaller the better so kids won't notice . Large finely chopped carrot (cooks faster when smaller) Few pounds of peeled potatoes . In a large saucepan (pot) Add a few spoonfuls of olive oil or whatever you use for frying . Add your onions and carrots. Lightly brown then add your meat . Make sure you can't see any red anymore . Here's the secret ingredient. You may have to go to Gaelic imports or an Irish only store near you to buy these Oxo bouillon cubes . Yes they give it that meaty flavor ,of course you can use any beef bullion stock but you won't get the taste of growing up in Ireland. So I use one if it's only the four of us so you decide how many you're cooking for .Dilute in a cup of hot water, stir well then add to your meat mixture . If you want a thicker sauce you can add any beef gravy .

Again, Shhhh we have another secret ingredient called Instant Bisto gravy. you can only find it in our Irish import stores (no I don't own an import store) Okay so your meat is done you've added all your ingredients so while it's simmering on low heat boil your potatoes for twenty minutes or so jab them with a fork if they're soft to the touch or hear the starch bubbling as my mum used to say. Get them out of the water or Teem them as our mothers used to say which means we put a lid or plate over them and flip the pot sideways to let the water drain out but this can be dangerous as my kids found out so I gave them a colander cuts down on burn medication Put potatoes back in saucepan or pot on low heat to dry out just for few minutes.. Add a knob of butter (teaspoon butter) splash of milk or buttermilk . Take off the heat and mash until smooth . So now you're ready to put the whole thing together . In a foil pan or casserole dish . Add meat first then take dessert spoon and add dollops of potatoes all around the sides of the dish then fill in the middle. when it's all filled in take a fork and drag it through the potatoes from top to bottom making a nice pattern . If I'm doing mine fresh I'll just turn on the broiler or grill as we don't have broilers back home. It will toast the top. My kids love the crunchy bits .You can make it in advance and freeze it .So there you have it .. A very simple shepherds pie dish. Make as much as you want, leftovers always taste so much better especially the day after Saint Patrick's day celebrations. Huge shout out to our new Kane County friends Ken, John .Barbara Katie, Bill. kellyanne. James Sally. See you guys in summer .Till next time enjoy the spring flowers.

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As we all know Ireland is a Catholic country, and Easter Sunday is considered the holiest day of the year in Ireland followed by Christmas and St. Patrick's Day. The celebration of Easter is preceded by Lent, 40 days of Fasting and meatless Fridays to commemorate the 40 days Jesus fasted in the desert. Lent starts on Ash Wednesday when the faithful have the sign of the cross placed on their foreheads from ashes from the previous year's palms given out on Palm Sunday. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The day before Ash Wednesday is Shrove, or Pancake Tuesday. On this day

thin crepe like pancakes are consumed with a squeeze of lemon and a sprinkle of sugar using up ingredients like eggs, sugar, butter, and milk that are abstained from during lent. Not as extravagant as Mardi Gras but the same idea. Meatless Fridays were mandatory! In our house I don't recall eating fresh fish but I do remember my mother making salmon patties from tinned salmon that had a texture similar to saw dust. Thinking back on it, that was penance enough. During Lent you are expected to give up something you like. Smoking, alcohol, sweets, candy, or anything you enjoy. They say the laws of the Catholic Church are written in Rome and enforced in Ireland.



The Sunday before Easter is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. This is the day that Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and the crowd laid down palm leaves to welcome Him. I remember from my altar boy days doing the Stations of the Cross on Holy Thursday. In Ireland Good Friday was a day you refrained from doing any outside manual labor. It was a day you cleaned your home in anticipation of the priest coming to bless it, got a haircut and went to confession. The Intoxicating Liquor Act was passed in 1928 prohibiting Pubs from being open on Good Friday. Fortunately this act was repealed in 2018 so if you haven't given up drinking you can now get a pint on Good Friday. Holy Saturday was a day of peace and quiet. The day you got your holy water blessed and attended the Easter Vigil. Easter Sunday is celebrated with a family meal often consisting of potato leek soup, roast lamb, or ham, potatoes, vegetables, Cadbury chocolate Easter eggs. Over 17 million were consumed last year. Let's not forget Hot Cross Buns, a sweet, egg enriched yeast bun filled with mixed peel, orange zest, sultanas, apples, and

butter. Here is an easy recipe so you can enjoy these delicacies on Easter Sunday.
HOT CROSS BUNS
MAKES 12
INGREDIENTS
 18OZ FLOUR
 1 1/4 CUP MILK
 2OZ BUTTER
 1TSP SALT
 1/4 OZ YEAST
 3 OZ SULTANAS (GOLDEN RAISINS)
 2 OZ MIXED PEEL
 ZEST OF ONE ORANGE

1 APPLE PEELED AND DICED
 1 TSP CINNAMON
 1TSP MIXED SPICE
 HEAT MILK AND BUTTER IN A SAUCEPAN

cinnamon. Easter is the time for Hot Cross Buns. You will see them in any store or shop selling baked goods. They are best served warm with Irish

UNTIL MELTED. LET COOL TO ROOM TEMPERATURE.

IN A MIXING BOWL, ADD FLOUR, SUGAR, SALT, AND YEAST. WITH MIXER RUNNING SLOWLY ADD THE MILK MIXTURE AND EGG. CONTINUE MIXING UNTIL DOUGH IS SMOOTH. PLACE DOUGH IN AN OILED BOWL AND COVER WITH FILM WRAP. LET IT PROVE IN A WARM PLACE OR UNTIL DOUBLED IN SIZE ABOUT 1 HOUR. TIP IN FRIUTS AND SPICES AND MIX UNTIL WELL COMBINED. COVER AND PROVE AN ADDITIONAL HOUR.

DIVIDE DOUGH INTO 12 EQUAL PIECES AND FORM EACH PIECE INTO A BALL. PLACE DOUGH BALLS ON A COOKIE SHEET LEAVING ROOM FOR THE BALLS TO DOUBLE IN SIZE. COVER AND PROVE FOR ANOTHER HOUR.

MAKE A PASTE OUT OF 3 OZ OF FLOUR, AND 5 TBL OF WATER. A SQUEEZE BOTTLE WORK PERFECT FOR THIS. MAKE A CROSS ON EACH BUN AND BAKE IN A 350 DEGREE OVEN FOR 20-25 MINUTES UNTIL GOLDEN BROWN.

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY

DINNER A HUGE SUCCESS

The Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago kicked off the civic celebration of St. Patrick's Day with their annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner on Friday, March 10.

Chaired by Mark McNabola, founder of McNabola Law Group, almost 1000 guests celebrated at the Hilton Chicago. Mr. McNabola commented, "On behalf of the Irish Fellowship Club and Foundation, I want to thank our sponsors, donors and guests for their generosity and enthusiasm in sharing the joy of Ireland at the St. Patrick's Day Dinner."

The program began with Hon. Michael McGrath, Minister of Finance from Ireland bringing greetings to the audience. After dinner, IFC Vice President, General Chairman of the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Business Manager of Plumbers Local 130, James Coyne, introduced the Grand Marshal of the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade, Tim Drea, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO and presented him with a medal recognizing the event.

Irish Fellowship Club President, Bob Flood of Flood Brothers, introduced the Guest of Honor, Councillor Danny Collins, Mayor of Cork County Ireland who received a plaque in recognition of his honor. In addition, Mr. Flood recognized Irish Fellowship Club Chairman, John P. Wrenn with the Richard J. Daley Award for his two years of leadership of the Club. Former IFC Chairman, Patrick Daley Thompson joined Mr. Flood for this special presentation.

Mr. McNabola also introduced special guests who celebrated with the Irish Fellowship Club including Senator Dick Durbin, Chicago Consul General from Ireland Kevin Byrne and his husband, Aris Byrne, Chicago Consul General from Ukraine, Serhiy Koledov, Hon. Chris Welch and his wife Shawn-Te Raines Welch, Hon. Toni Preckwinkle, Hon. Alexi Giannoulias, Hon. & Mrs. Michael Frerichs.

Guests were entertained by the Gleason Trio, soloist Nicoletta Dowd and the Shannon Rovers. Proceeds from the Dinner support the Irish Fellowship Club Education and Cultural Foundation providing scholarship assistance to Catholic High Schools across the Chicagoland area as well as small grants to Irish cultural organizations. Said Mr. Flood, "This event is always one of Chicago's best celebrations of the St. Patrick's Day. We are grateful to all of our members and guests who made it a remarkable evening."

(Thank you to Michael Kardas photography).



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