



iBAM! Visual Artist Awardee, Barry Butler's Photo, 'Christmas Interchange'

The baby-boom generation was the product of the sudden increase in U.S. births. What can you do to help your country? 2050: the year that many statistics elude to in research for concern and future care. Thirty years away, yet it will be here before we know it. Time does tend to fly. It is no

secret that the baby boomer era is about to explode, all those post-World War 2 babies born between the years of 1946 to 1964.

The health care system as we know it will not be able to meet the overwhelming need of the tens of millions of Americans born during this period! Home care, a relatively new type of care that many do not understand, will now take its place among the options for health care. It will fill the critical health care gap that exists and is growing, and this is not because of COVID-19. I read about this years ago and have heard whispers of concern since. "Who will take care of those in need"? How will our health care system manage this wave coming at us, known as The Silver Tsunami?

The United States is facing a shortage of Geriatricians as the number of older adults in the country outpaces the number of newly trained specialists in the field. In simple terms, a Geriatrician is a physician who specialize in the care of older patients. 30% of adults who are over the age of 65 will need a griatrician. Our senior population- who have at least three chronic conditions or are over age 85- are likely ideal candidates for a geriatrician. We currently have 56 million people over the age of 65 and by 2050 it is estimated we will have 84 million over this same age. I am no mathematician, but these numbers



assistant before even applying into the nursing program. Our certified nursing assistants are the work force who today, along with the doctors and nurses, are providing care to our seniors in nursing homes and memory care communities. Certified nursing

assistants can also work directly in the home, making a genuine difference in the seniors they are providing care to. This Christmas season, as we sit around the table and have discussions about the future of the US, let us pause for a moment and give some serious thought to the future of health care, knowing the facts as outlined above. Consider becoming a certified nursing assistant. I'm not appealing to just the young folks, but to all folks. Who reading this article has a few hours a couple times a week that they would like to fill? Any retirees who are bored at home watching the clock tick? Becoming a certified nursing assistant is a very flexible job when you can work three to four hours a day, three to five days a week. You get to pick your own schedule. Our seniors need us, and we need you! It only takes one person to make a difference in the lives of those they serve. Many of our seniors fought to protect us, now the tides have changed and it is our turn to protect them.

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Young Irish Fellowship Club News

Mission- The Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago is an entirely volunteer-based organization. As a group of young professionals, they work hard to raise funds and awareness for their charities.

The Board plans events and fundraisers, works to meet sponsorship goals, represent the club at networking events, and generally promote the YIFC throughout the Chicagoland area.

The Young Irish Fellowship Club is currently running a weekly **Queen of Hearts Raffle**. Tickets are 1 for \$5 and 5 for \$20, with the proceeds benefiting the Henry Schueler 41 and 9 Foundation and the Claddagh Foundation. The pot is above \$10,000, and continues to grow each week!

Tickets can be purchased at

www.youngirish.com, or on instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/youngirishfc> and the drawings, which often include



Irish music and dance performances, are Thursday nights at 7pm on our Instagram and Facebook pages. The raffle will continue to be pulled weekly until the Queen of Hearts is discovered!

Irish American Unity Conference Congratulates President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris

The Irish American Unity Conference extends warm congratulations to President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris on their victory in the US Presidential contest.



We wish them the very best in leading our government in a compassionate and progressive manner, and in helping to heal the painful divisions in our country, and we trust that God will guide them in this difficult undertaking.

We are also excited to wel-

come a President who identifies strongly with his Irish roots. President-elect Biden's great-great-grandfather came from Ballina in County Mayo and he also has ancestral ties to County Louth. He has proudly embraced his Irishness and is aware of the oppression to which its citizens have been subjected for many years.

We are confident that President Biden's knowledge of Ireland's issues will inform him of the need to counteract ongoing British efforts to surreptitiously jettison the Good Friday Agreement, which is critical to maintaining peace and justice in the North of Ireland.

The IAUC looks forward to working with the Biden-Harris Administration in advancing an agenda of fairness and full independence for the thirty-two counties of Ireland.

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CELTIC

AN IRISH JOURNAL FOR SENIORS



WELCOME

With so many people struggling with health and financial issues this year, it feels somewhat improper to celebrate the holidays with the usual joy. On the other hand – considering everything we've been through and continue to face – it seems only fitting to

take every opportunity possible to celebrate our community's ability to endure. At **Irish Community Services**, we're reflecting back on a challenging year and counting our blessings at having come through it ready to face whatever is next. In this month's **Celtic Magazine** we're trying to keep it upbeat with a

holiday bonanza in the **Celtic Kitchen** and a visit to two very fun friends for **Front Porch Profiles**. We wish you a healthy holiday season and look forward to being together again in 2021. We hope you enjoy the December issue – we wrote it with you in mind!

Paul Dowling

THE AMBASSADOR'S POEM PICK

When You Are Old

by W.B. Yeats

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) wrote many wonderful poems during the 1880s and 1890s when he was still a very young man, for example 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' ("I will arise and go now and go to Innisfree") and 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven' ("Tread softly because you tread on my dreams"). My favorite among Yeats's early poems is 'When You Are Old', which was written in 1891. The object of Yeats's admiration in this poem is Maud Gonne. Yeats met Gonne in London in the late 1880s and became infatuated with her, an infatuation that lasted a lifetime. Many of Yeats's poems are inspired by her. Maud Gonne was a fervent Irish nationalist and, having turned down proposals from Yeats, she married John McBride,

who later fought in the Easter Rising and was executed in May 1916.

'When You Are Old' is an exceptional poem, full of beautiful lines from start to finish – "When you are old and grey and full of sleep" and "hid his face amid a crowd of stars". My favourite line, however, is "one man loved the pilgrim soul in you". I like the idea of a "pilgrim soul", which I take to refer to someone who is always searching after something. We should all be like that!

I enjoy reciting this poem. It is easy to memorize and trips off of the tongue. When I was in India in the 1980s, I met Mrs Pandit, the sister of India's first Prime Minister, Nehru, who recited the poem beautifully. This proved to me that Yeats's poetry is not just something for the Irish but is part of world literature.

Dan Mulhall
Ambassador of Ireland



WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

The Celtic CHRISTMAS Kitchen



Depending on our background, beliefs and experiences, the holidays can mean something different to each of us. However, there does seem to be a consensus that it ought to be one of the most delicious times of the year! We've ramped things up in the Celtic Kitchen and have a slate of delectable ideas to share with you that are guaranteed to make whatever you're planning merry and bright!

Melia's Iced 'Hot' Chocolate

Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup chocolate ice cream
- 1 sachet hot chocolate
- 1 cup ice cubes

Directions

To make this cool twist on a cosy holiday classic all you need to do is combine all of the ingredients in a blender and give it a quick blitz. If you're feeling particularly festive we suggest adding a dash of peppermint or serving with a candycane stirrer!

Irish Whiskey Syllabub

Ingredients

- Rind & juice of 1 lemon
- 6 tbs clear honey
- 8 tbs Irish whiskey
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Nutmeg

Directions

1. Combine the lemon juice and rind, honey and whiskey in a large bowl and leave to stand for as long as possible allowing flavors to develop.
2. Whisk in cream until mixture begins to thicken.

3. Spoon into wine glasses, top with grated nutmeg and chill. After several hours the mixture will separate into a thick cream on top and a clear liquid on the bottom. Serve as a creamy mixture or as a two layered delight - it's up to you!

Parsnip and Fennel Soup

Ingredients

- 1 medium-sized onion
- 4 medium-sized parsnips
- 2 large fennel bulbs, stalks removed
- 1 stick of celery
- 2 tbs chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 5 tbs butter
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 6 cups vegetable stock
- 1 cup milk

Directions

1. Peel the onion and parsnips and chop finely. Chop the fennel bulbs, celery and parsley leaves.
1. Melt butter in a large pot. Add the onion, parsnips, fennel and celery, and season well.
1. Cover pot and cook for 10 minutes on a gentle heat.
2. In another pot, boil the stock and add to the vegetables. Simmer on medium heat until vegetables are tender.
3. Add the milk and parsley, and blend with a hand blender until completely smooth and creamy.
4. Check the seasoning and serve with a swirl of cream.

Jameson Old Fashioned

- 2 oz Jameson whiskey
- 3/4 oz Bénédictine liqueur
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters
- 2 dashes Orange bitters
- Garnish: Orange slice



Front Porch Profiles

This month we'd like to introduce you to one of our favorite Mother-Daughter duos: Brigid Madden and Tricia Libby who were both raised in County Galway and now live on the Northwest Side of Chicago.

Tricia Libby

Where are you originally from?

Born in Brooklyn, grew up in Roundstone in Connemara.

What were your favorite memories of Christmas in Ireland? Midnight Mass in Roundstone church and then the gathering with Grandma, Great-uncle Thomas and all the aunts, uncles, and a load of cousins for a hot one in front of the fireplace and our family's gift exchange; having the craic and then grandma would write in her diary.

What are you looking forward to doing once the pandemic is over? Visiting family.



Brigid Madden

Where are you originally from? Roundstone, County Galway!

What neighborhood/ Parish do you live in? St. Paul of the Cross, Edison Park

What were your favorite memories of Christmas in Ireland? Family gatherings and exchanging presents.

What have you been missing most since the pandemic started? Going to the Irish-American Heritage Center and going walking in the Park.

A Window onto Genius

by Theresa Choske

Thomas Augustin (Gus) O'Shaughnessy (1870-1956) & The Celtic Revival

The windows at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago are influenced by the Celtic Revival stained glass works in Ireland. Thomas O'Shaughnessy is perhaps better known in the Chicago area for his stained glass windows of the Old St. Patrick's Church that were inspired by the Book of Kells (the 9th century illuminated manuscript). One art critique praised his work in these words: "Not one artist from our country or abroad exhibits the gift of genius as does Thomas O'Shaughnessy". At the turn of the century, he had been one of Chicago's most celebrated artists. He was a tireless promoter of Irish culture. It was O'Shaughnessy that transformed St.

Patrick's Church into a masterpiece of Irish ecclesiastical art. He was born in 1870 in Newhall, Missouri, the son of James O'Shaughnessy and Catherine Mulholland O'Shaughnessy. His interest in art, he said, began at age 13 when he studied under Sister Ledwina at the Loretto Academy in Kansas City. It was there that he was introduced to early Christian art and the works of St. Bride in the 5th century. O'Shaughnessy designed, constructed and personally installed the fifteen beautiful stained glass windows of Old St. Patrick's between 1912 and 1922. The twelve side windows were inspired by the Celtic designs of Ireland's Book of Kells. They are studies of the Irish saints, scholars and missionaries who played important roles in fostering faith and learning throughout Europe after the barbarian invasions. The final triptych windows, "Faith, Hope & Charity" are done

in an art nouveau style and installed in the eastern facade of the church. These windows are also known as the Terence MacSwiney Memorial Triptych.



Window detail from Old Saint Pat's



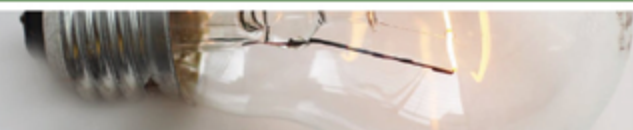
Thomas Augustin (Gus) O'Shaughnessy

Why do Dasher and Dancer love coffee?
Because they're Santa's star bucks!

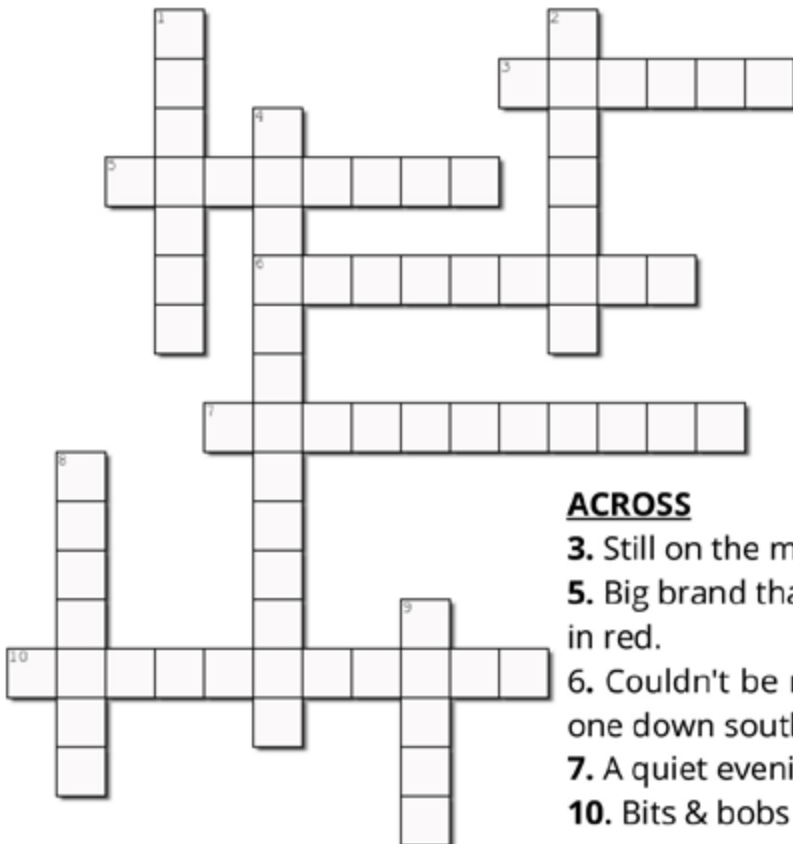
Why didn't Rudolph get a good report card?"
Because 'he went down in History!'

What do snowmen call their offspring?
Chill-dren

Watch our Comedy Club videos online : go to www.youtube.com and search for 'Irish Community Services'



Think it Over



DOWN

1. The original Christmas Grinch.
2. A festive cake good for burning?
4. Santa's Christian name.
8. Something given here and now.
9. It makes a BERRY merry winter scene.

ACROSS

3. Still on the menu since November?
5. Big brand that dressed Santa in red.
6. Couldn't be more different than the one down south.
7. A quiet evening hymn.
10. Bits & bobs to glitz and glamorize.

Christmas Cracker

P	I	G	I	F	T	S	R	D	B
L	B	A	A	M	H	C	F	P	F
Q	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E
J	E	T	A	R	O	C	E	D	Z
O	Z	Y	T	S	A	E	F	Y	T
V	H	L	I	G	H	T	S	U	A
U	Z	I	G	N	N	O	J	A	E
W	Q	M	P	Z	P	A	R	T	Y
N	E	A	X	T	E	J	Z	V	K
Y	J	F	E	V	I	T	S	E	F

Festive Feast	Lights Family	Party Decorate	Gifts Celebrate
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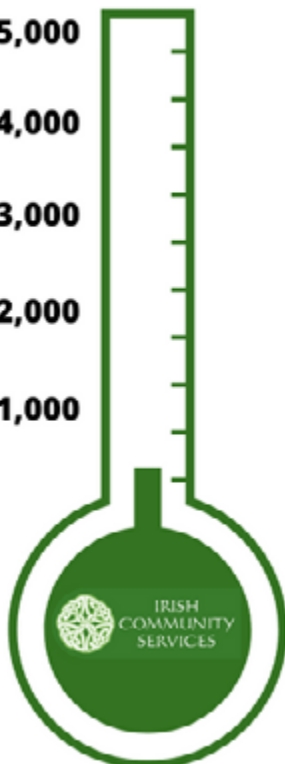
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We thank you in advance for your generosity and support. Everyone at ICS wishes you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season.



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- 30** Memory Support & Enrichment Sessions Hosted
- 724** Letters, Cards & Face Masks Sent to Seniors
- 51** Memory Support Participants

Immigration Services Program

- 435** Individuals Served Through Our Legal Services Program
- 22** Applications For US Citizenship Filed
- 24** Legal Clinics & Immigration Workshops Held
- 112** Requests for Irish Services (FBR & Irish Passports)
- 135** COVID Related Assistance Provided
- 518** Pastoral Actions Taken (Funerals, Counselling, Tele Support, etc.)

Youth & Family Engagement Program

- 101** Individual Play Group Participants
- 12** StoryTime Videos Recorded
- 318** Total Play Group Visits
- 9** Craft Videos Recorded
- 6** Memory Box Episodes Recorded
- 8** Fáilte Youth Group Participants

Father's Sage Advice Leads Aishling Dalton-Kelly Into Companion Homecare

by Katie Iannitelli

"Families don't know what they don't know until they are up against it, so to speak," says Aishling Dalton Kelly, (pictured) founder and CEO of Aishling Companion Home Care and the Aishling Care Academy for certified nursing assistants, both based in Orland Park, Ill.

She speaks from personal experience. In 2010, Kelly, a then-neophyte certified nursing assistant (CNA) in a southside trauma emergency room, received a call from Dalkey, her coastal Irish hometown nine miles southeast of Dublin.

"My dad had six weeks to live," she says. Despite the prospect of losing her job, Kelly packed her bags and caught the next plane home.

Kelly recalls that, to her surprise, her father's greatest concern was not his impending death, but rather the wellbeing of his wife, who was in the early stages of dementia.

"That's really where my whole journey with homecare, started," she says. "I knew nothing about hospice care, or dementia, for that matter."

"He sat the nine of us down one by one. He told us to take care of one another, to stand strong together, and to take care of the love of his life," she says. "I cherish those intimate conversations with my dad. I observed how you prepare to die while you're still living. He was so incredibly brave and honest with each

and every one of us. I was so thankful we had that opportunity to speak honestly to him and to hear his wishes while he was well enough to have that talk."

Navigating her father's hospice journey stirred a new calling, and Kelly returned to the US, determined to open her own home care business.

After a brief stint with a business partner, one that ended in irreconcilable differences after a few short weeks, she decided to go it alone.

"I sat up for the whole entire night and filed an entirely new corporation (by myself)" she says. "I was trying to think of a name that would represent who I am, something

from my heritage and a name that would do my parents proud." After hours of consideration, she settled, somewhat uncomfortably, on her own name.



"Aishling in Gaelic means 'a dream,'" she explains. "It seemed so practical to use my own birth name for my new company, and that's what this entire journey has been for me, a dream in the land of opportunity."

Today, nine years later, she has a booming home care business, but it came with bumps and bruises that many new small-business owners encounter.

"I didn't get any manual that tells you how to be a businesswoman," she says. "I've made a lot of mistakes, and I can honestly say that when you make a mistake once, you don't make it a second time. You pivot fast."

For Kelly, the learning curve has been steep but welcome.

"There isn't a day that I don't go home and say, 'Well I learned something new today,'" she says. "I don't ever want to be a hamster on a wheel. If you are not expanding your brain and learning something new every day, you're actually killing yourself slowly from the inside out. You should always be reaching further and growing to keep yourself in the game and ahead of the curve."

More often than not, Kelly encounters families that have been caught unprepared, and she and her team provide a wealth of information on home care and everything it encompasses.

"For me it's important that we help families. We want to be a resource to let them know what's out there in the community. Many times families are simply not aware. This is their first time dealing with this."

With that in mind, Kelly encourages people to plan ahead.

"I can't stress that enough," she says. "Fail to plan, plan to fail! I'm a firm believer in this. You have to educate yourself on future matters before you need them, not when you need them. Now is the time to give some consideration and thought to aging and the possibility that one day you may be sick," she explains, emphasizing that if individuals think ahead about their own mortality, they may spare their family members and themselves a lot of stress,

drama, regrets, and sorrow.

She doesn't just dish out that advice, she takes it herself.

"One day I am going to die. It's a certainty. No one escapes it. And I want to have things in place so my family can enjoy me for whatever life throws at us and not have the worry or pressure to make decisions for my care needs. That's simply not fair to my family."

Regarding the home care piece, Kelly and her team work to help people maintain their independence and to keep people at home as long as possible.

"Everybody thrives at home. They're in their safety net," she says. There simply is no place like home, most especially when you are unwell, and your health is failing."

Frequently, Kelly receives inquiries from families who are forced to hire a caregiver in an emergency manner, she says. "Someone at home is suddenly sick, but they often don't understand how to select a home caregiver and all that it encompasses. They want to hire an agency because they like the sound of a voice on the phone. I tell them, 'You never pick (a home care provider) by talking to them on the phone. You should always interview two at minimum, three if possible, so you have a choice.'"

At that stage, she says, agency owners, like herself, arrange for a free assessment where "the good, bad, and the ugly" are discussed. The agency goes to work and selects the caregiver who is the best fit

based on the family's level of care needs.

Often, Kelly says, families are unable or unwilling to initiate a conversation about hospice, despite caregivers witnessing a client's steady decline.

Family members "don't want to be the burden of bad news. (They feel they are) commissioning their loved one to death," she says. "I say, 'Hospice is not about dying. It's about living the fullest life you can for the time you have remaining where the medical professionals come to you and compassionately work alongside home care and family members. I witnessed this first hand in my personal story with my father, and I can't emphasize



Back: Jacqui, Aishling, Ann, Bernadette, Laura. Front: June, Yvonne, Caroline, Sandra



Nurse Ann, sister Samdra and mom.

enough the truly amazing work palliative and hospice companies deliver to families.”

In addition to providing home care, Kelly’s company offers community-based educational events for seniors that cover topics such as Medicare; fraud; wills, trusts, and guardianship; reverse mortgages; benefits for veterans; and many other topics.

As her job and the responsibilities of her home care providers have become more challenging in the face of COVID, she has also found silver linings.

“We’re all being forced to do things technology wise that perhaps we were not doing before, and that’s a good thing,” she says, reflecting on a Zoom call she facilitated for a large family. “Afterward, the sister just called me to say thank you and said,

‘I’ve never talked to seven of my family members about my mother before, in an organized fashion where we don’t all speak over one another. To all be in one Zoom room and have the opportunity to have a civil, focused conversation was truly amazing.’”

An educator to the core, Kelly also offers advice for future entrepreneurs planning on going into business.

“Number one is you need to get it all legally in a contract - you can’t afford not to put the documents in place.”

After that, she says, it’s imperative to have a well thought out business plan, so you know where you are going at all times.

“Keep that vision up front, know where you want to go,” she says. “I never let anybody talk me out of what I want, and believe

me, many folks have tried and failed! Make a commitment to



Aishling’s family (l t0 r): Aishling, Grainne, John F, Helena, Kate, John Kelly.

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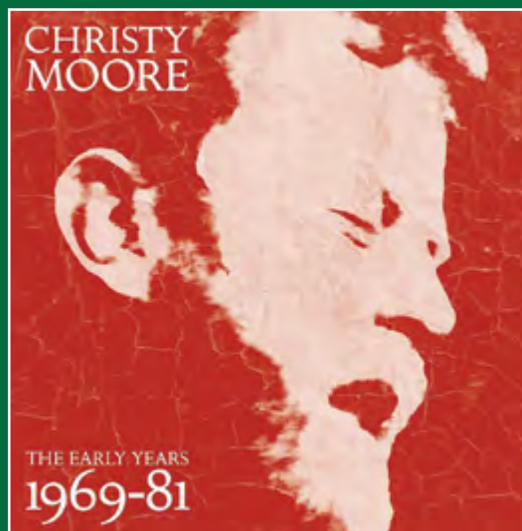
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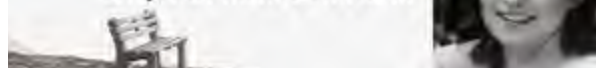
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GOOD GRIEF By JOSEPHINE COLEMAN



Hello everyone. Well we did it we are just weeks away from Christmas. I remember back in summer wishing 2020 was over so we could get closer to a vaccine. Thankfully according to our scientists it's here Hurray!! It may be awhile before it is circulated but I think for most of us mentally it is a great comfort that there is light at the end of the tunnel. We will never forget those who didn't make it but will keep them forever in our heart and prayers. I have been going over to the outdoor beautiful Grotto at our lady of Guadalupe a lot lately. Lighting candles for sick friends and especially our front line workers in every capacity who is risking their lives for our families. We are forever in their debt. I read this on someone Instagram." You are not stuck at Home. You are safe at Home. "Yes indeed just hang in there a wee while longer.

Christmas, everybody loves Christmas. Growing up in Ireland it was always traditional to bake Christmas fruit cakes and plum pudding and of course the sweet mince pies. I will not give you my recipe for Irish whiskey fruit cake as I gather folks over here have javelin throwing contests with them. The sweet mince pies used to be filled with actual meat not sure when it all changed but I only remember sweet sugary mince pies. Heres a bit of historical information. Mince pies originally called Christmas pies or crib cakes or shred pies can be traced back to the thirteenth century to the time of the crusaders. They were used as symbols of Christ birth. Originally they were made larger and shaped into ovals representing the baby Jesus manger or crib. Also pastry was shaped in the form of baby Jesus and placed on top of the mince pie then eaten on Christmas day celebrating the birth of Christ. Not sure as a child I would have liked to eat baby Jesus!! You cannot have Christmas without a hot mince pie. So here is the recipe. It's very simple you can tweak it around a bit. You can freeze them for up to two or three months. I

love to have them available after thanksgiving leading up to Christmas with my morning coffee. The smell of them reminds me of my mother baking for weeks before Christmas always brings a nostalgic tear to my eye. Here goes this is the mincemeat filling.

5oz rasins.5oz currants.2oz mixed peel. Few tbsp. Brandy or whiskey. (Whatever you have around the house or you can buy miniature bottle from your local store or you may have some from Air Lingus.) One apple peeled and diced.5oz butter.4oz brown sugar. one tbsp. ground mixed spice. Juice of a lemon and orange also zest it a little bit for extra flavor. Few tbsp. of vanilla essence or vanilla pod. (I always have a bottle of essence hanging around in my cupboard). Gas mark 400.Standard 12 cup muffin tin. Powdered sugar for sprinkling.

Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan. (Some folks like refrigerate them overnight to marinate before cooking. Your choice) Bring to boil simmer for ten minutes. Let cool while you prepare the pastry crust.

The pie crusts in the stores are just as good and so handy keep them in your freezer.

For the pie crust you will need.

Two and a half cups of plain flour. Two sticks of cold butter diced.Tbsp of sugar. Pinch of salt. Six to eight tbsp. ice water. My mother used to use half lard, half butter it's up to you it does make a flakier crust.

Mix the flour, sugar, salt together then add cold diced butter. Blend all ingredients together with a pastry knife.

Stir in water gradually until the dough is blended akin to playdough if it's too sticky add little bit of flour. Roll out half of your pie crust onto a floured surface about one eighth inch thickness. Cut circles to fit into muffin tin. Add a few spoonful's of your mincemeat filling. Then add another circle on top. Using a little milky egg wash to seal the circles together. Lightly brush rest of egg wash on top so you have a nice shiny pie. Bake for ten to fifteen minutes .When baked let them cool. Remove and dust with powdered sugar.

Congratulations you did it!! If you do not feel like doing all this prep work you can buy jars of the sweet mince in your local Irish import stores and use store bought ready to roll out pastry and of course you can pass them off as your own. I won't tell!!!If you're still not up for messing around in the kitchen but you want a little taste of Ireland. Great news you can actually buy them ready made complete with royal icing on top at. Guess. Yes!!!Our local Irish import stores. The ladies in Gaelic Imports assured me they will have all our traditional baked goods plus our favorite Sherry trifle fixings. Christmas stockings, boxes of biscuits for you to enjoy over the Holidays. So give them a call. Support your local Irish import stores. Get your orders in as they go FAST. Christmas would not be Christmas If I did not get my grown up kids their Irish Christmas stockings. Oh ye and the big kid too. Lots of blessings and good cheer to you all. Bring on 2021.

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Lately the meat industry has been on my mind. I will explain a few things on Irish meat specifically, which includes beef, lamb, chicken, and pork. COVID-19 has hit the meat industry hard; meat factories are a hot spot for the virus. Countless people have been infected with COVID-19 from factories and some people have died that worked in meat factories or abattoirs. The environment is a breeding ground for bacteria and employees being in proximity for long periods of time only helped increase their risk. Factory work is a fast-paced job that's physically exhausting and this often leads to a drop in a person's immunity to infection.

The beef situation with farmers has been an issue way before COVID-19 however, protesting outside processing plants over what they feel is a discrepancy between the prices they receive, and the prices paid by consumers in the stores.

In Ireland, some traditional meat dishes include: crubeens (boiled pigs' feet), Dublin Coddle (made of leftovers like rashers & sausages) Guinness pie (beef) bacon & cabbage, Irish stew, Irish sausage & black & white pudding. In Ireland many of the dinners were boiled years ago.

Ireland has some of the best pastures in the world which allows farmers to produce the best beef. Over 80% of all Irish beef is grass fed. Ireland is the fifth largest beef exporter in the world & the largest exporter in all of Europe.

Pork was probably the most common meat consumed in Ireland years ago. Raising a pig for home consumption was commonplace. However today I think chicken is the most consumed meat. Bacon used to be suspended on a hook and cured. (fletch). Sausages made of salted pork was a common ingredient.

Despite the decline of sheep in Ireland sheep production is still an important farm enterprise. Donegal has the most sheep out of all the counties. The most common sheep in Ireland is the Scottish black face. Farmers paint their sheep to distinguish which sheep belongs to which farmer. We get mutton and wool from sheep. Irish lamb is highly rated in Europe.

The times are changing in Ireland

Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler



and in the world in that meat isn't the main player anymore. In 2019 Dublin was named most vegan friendly city in the world. People are turning to meat alternatives such as Beyond meat, Quorn & tofurky.

I suppose it is healthy to cut back on meat, but I still enjoy my Irish breakfast at the weekend. Our daughter doesn't eat meat so it's a familiar topic in our household.

I will leave you with this story:

"The Trouble Tree"

"The carpenter I hired to help me restore an old farmhouse had just finished a rough first day on the job. A flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric saw quit, and his pickup truck refused to start.

While I drove him home, he sat in silence. On arriving he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the branches with his hands. Upon opening the door, he underwent an amazing transformation. His face had a huge smile, and he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss. Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed the tree. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier. "Oh, that's my trouble tree", he replied. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but troubles don't belong in the house. So, I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home. Then in the morning I pick them up again. But "when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before."

If you have any comments please call: (708) 425-7021

This past year I have really enjoyed the phone calls I have received about my short editorials. A warm thank you to Cliff & Cathy for everything they do.

My wife Mary & I would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas & Happy New Year- Let's toast to yesterday's achievements & tomorrows bright future. Wishing all of you health, wealth & happiness in 2021!



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On the Upbeat

By *Maryann
McTeague Keifer*

Happy Christmas to you all and may everyone be hanging in there going into our second winter with Covid—may it be our last! I did purchase Christmas themed masks for the family, have to give the teen grandkids something to roll their eyes about...

Speaking of family, I do not believe there is any country with

more well known and respected musical families than Ireland, and one of the newest has joined us here in America making quite a name for itself. The Byrne family, Dad Tommy and sons Luca, Finn, and Dempsey are all All Ireland and Ulster winners of instrumental and dancing awards, as well as becoming oft seen on TV and

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video. Mam Julie, is the Jack of all Trades and the glue who holds all together. After being offered a gig and playing at Ragland Road in Disney World, the family bravely sold their home in Donegal and moved to the United States intent on travelling, performing and letting all here know who The Byrnes Brothers are. To say they have been successful is an understatement.

I became aware of them just a bit prior to their arrival through a good friend, Sherri Stone Weigman, who had met them in Ireland and was wild for them. To say she pestered me to look into them and their music would have been putting it mildly. When they came through Chicago and performed at the Heritage Center, seeing was believing. Their live performances are completely captivating. There is the "cute factor" that can't be overlooked; the lads are more than handsome. Once they begin to play and perform, though, you become completely involved in their music. Your toes will be tapping and hands clapping. You'll be chair dancing, and if like me, you'll be helpless to not give into air playing. You'll be on your feet cheering as they get up to dance and send those kicks high into the air setting sparks on the stage with their stepping!

They have travelled across the States in a trailer loaded with 5 people, instruments—guitars, banjo, accordion, bodhrans, pipes, whistles...and their belongings which include surf boards, cameras, and computers. Yes, Julie is a sainted woman.... They were able to play in fests, including Milwaukee where they had a major stage, as well as getting up to play with bands like We Banjo 3. Dempsey challenged Fergal Scahill to a bodhran play off that had the crowds roaring! They were able to get to Hawaii and learn to major surf and have experiences



that led to Finn's compositions "Waikiki Reel" and "The Snapped Leash Jig," a tune about scaring 10 years off Tom's and Julie's lives when two boards came back after a big wave, but only one son. "Texas Tornado Reels" will have you experiencing the tornado they just missed being flown to Kansas in, and of course, Florida adventures with "Stevie the 3 Legged Alligator."

As they have travelled and spent time with many other musicians, the lads have taken every opportunity to expand their repertoire and hone their skills. In three short years, I have been truly blown away by the growth and maturity Luca, Finn, and Dempsey have shown in their playing, both individually and as a band. Julie and Tommy marvel at how self motivated the boys are in increasing their skills and expanding their styles and arrangements. They have taken on additional instruments and are continually playing around with tunes and composing. They look to other musicians to learn from such as Fergal Scahill and Colin Farrell.

Music is not their entire life, however. In addition to home schooling, they are into water sports, golf, photography, and videography just to mention a few. Back living in the Orlando area, they like the rest of us, have been trying to exist with Covid. They still play on Saturdays and Sundays at Ragland Road where you can catch them from 12-4PM. They

have also just released their brand new album which celebrates their life here in the United States titled LIVING THE DREAM. Comprised of eight tunes, several mentioned above, and two songs, this album is well thought out and brilliantly done. The combination of their own compositions and Trad pieces with smooth and interesting transitions displays ability well beyond their years. Whether you are brought into the tune with Luca's deadly accordion or Finn's blazing banjo, you can't sit still. You'll be involved from beginning to the last set. Dempsey has become an accomplished bodhran master, and kills on the song "Home to My Donegal," which has been a favorite of their live audiences. Add in Tommy's guitar, fiddle, and pipes, and you have a versatile and exceptional band that happens to be a family. Keeping with the family theme, their only slow piece is one of my favorites on the album. "Yvonne's Waltz" was composed to honor of their granny and is beautiful!

The album is loaded with photos of their travels and experiences, and the cover is a band shot with their camper taken by Finn. This is an album well worth having, and a band we will be hearing about and enjoying for many years to come. Head to their website and Facebook pages to purchase and to follow! Also, there is a promise of a Christmas video you will be able to enjoy!

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



This is the hundredth anniversary of Bloody Sunday. During the Irish War of Independence, Britain brought Secret Security Agents from its world-wide empire in a bid to defeat the Irish. They wanted to find Michael Collins and kill him. But in 1920, Michael Collins and his followers struck first and defeated them. This event had a huge impact on war. It led to Ireland becoming a free country. It also encouraged independence movements in many countries.

Michael Collins and Bloody Sunday, 1920

Michael Collins was a 16 year old bank clerk who returned to Ireland in 1916 to join the Easter Rising and fight in the war for Ireland's independence. The Easter



Rising was overwhelmed by the vastly greater forces of the British Empire. When Collins was released from the British POW camp, he returned to Ireland to lead a guerrilla war for Irish independence, 1919-1921.

He had been born in 1890 at Woodfield, near Clonakilty, in County Cork. In 1906, he went to London to be a clerk in the Post Office Saving Bank. He worked there until 1916, when he returned to Ireland. Collins "knew from Irish revolutionary history that British informers and spies had betrayed all past rebellions..." His "objective from the beginning was to put

out the eyes of the British..."

The sources I have used for this article are:

Bloody Sunday—How Michael Collins' Agents Assassinated Britain's Secret Service in Dublin on November 21, 1920. James Gleeson

Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War. J.B. E. Hittle

James Gleeson was director of the London News Agency and a journalist and author.

J.B.E. Hittle is a highly decorated analyst of U.S. military intelligence.

Collins and the Irish Republican Army in their guerrilla war with the British. He had a total of about 2,500 men under arms in all of Ireland, with about 1,200 of them in Dublin.

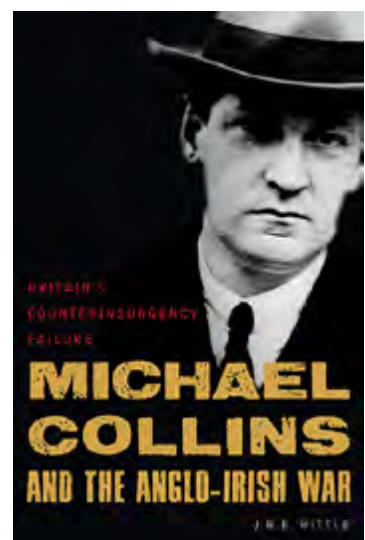
That small force opposed 44,000 British Army soldiers, who were aided by the RIC, the Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries.

Hittle says Collins was "an organizational genius with a natural gift for espionage. Collins established an intelligence department within the IRA designed from the beginning to 'put out the eyes' of the British in Ireland. That he succeeded so effectively is quite remarkable considering the size and determination of British forces arranged against him."

The guerrilla war was so effective that by 1920, great savants of Ireland could no longer be administered by the British. The

situation had become so critical that the British brought their best espionage agents from all parts of the empire. They were to find Michael Collins and kill him. They got close to finding him, however, Collins struck first. This was on Bloody Sunday, November 21, 1920.

Gleeson says: "The probing of the British force and the building up of evidence by the Irish force became a dreadful contest that



could only end in death for one or another."

Collins had agents throughout Dublin. Gleeson tells this story. "A maid in Dublin tells her boyfriend about the Englishmen in her boarding house. This puzzled her because they slept during the day and went out every night. She was puzzled also because they did not dress like soldiers. The boyfriend was a member of the Dublin Brigade IRA and he passed this information on, and was instructed to obtain any further news he could. He asked the maid about paper left lying about the

rooms occupied by these men. She agreed to hoard all the papers from their wastepaper basket. She handed over the scraps, which were pieced together and scrutinized by the IRA."

"Englishmen who went out after dark, even though they preferred to be travelers, writers, or engineers, aroused suspicion. Maids in other boarding houses were approached by members of the IRA and much valuable information was obtained concerning the movements, correspondence, and habits of the British Intelligence officers."

"A list of thirty-five names, addresses, descriptions, and where possible, photographs, was eventually drawn up, and thirty-five portfolios giving detailed accounts of these agents and their activities accompanied the list.

Hittle says this about British agents, "Their swaggering, high-profile behavior, lack of concern for compartmentalizing sources and information, loose lips, and indiscrete liaisons brought disaster."

"The officers assassinated on Bloody Sunday had no inkling they had been compromised with until the second before their assassins pulled the trigger."

At 9:00 in the morning of November 21, church bells pealed and 14 agents were killed. That put great fear and terror into the British government. Bloody Sunday led to a truce being called in 1921. And eventually peace terms and a treaty were negotiated.

After the treaty, the British left part of Ireland. They had invaded and controlled it since 1177! Ireland was the first country to become independent and leave the British Empire.

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Tom Boyle



father of Gabi (Ed), Maebh, Cormac, John "Jack," Colin, and Maura. John was a fond brother,

godfather, uncle, cousin, and friend to many. Memorial donations may be made in John's name to the Irish American Heritage Center or the Francis O'Neill Club.

Thoughts from FON Members about John O'Grady

Theresa Murray, former FON President
Two memories of John:

John was calling a sixteen-hand reel once at an IAHC event with a lot of newcomers. Halfway through the dance, things had gotten so off track, John gave up trying to save it. He just sat back and laughed his jolly laugh at us while we tried to finish!

Second memory about John - he and Eddie cornered me in the dim back hall-

way of the Fifth Province during a Ceili Mor in 2012. They were simultaneously so intimidating and endearing as they informed me I would be taking over for John as FON president. They weren't asking, they were telling. I was so deeply honored to be trusted by him with something he loved so dearly.

Linda Green, former FON Secretary

Ed O'Callaghan called me at work to let me know. I said "That's the end of a Legend." Ed said, "That's the end of a Library." Ed was right. All the Irish history, language, folklore, and stories John had inside his head and was always freely willing to share will be gone.

Linda Burch

I first met John O'Grady in the 1970s, when he, Father Dwan, and Michael Flannery were teaching ceili dancing in the basement of the Mayfair Church across from what is now the IAHC. The first night I walked in, I was apprehensive. I was the youngest person there. For some reason -- maybe I was late -- they started with the High Cauld Cap. I remember John's brilliant smile, hearty laugh, and warm welcome as he invited me to try it.

Kelly Lambesis

The passing of John O'Grady is such a loss for the FON Club. He was very friendly to all, and such a welcoming presence to newcomers. John also called and taught us so many of the dances. When I think of the warmth and joy of attending FON Friday nights, John is one

of the first people that comes to mind. John O'Grady will be greatly missed!

Laura Steenveld-Hamilton

My best memory is that John would greet everyone at the door with such a jolly smile! I would pay my money and stay by him to chat for a while....so welcoming. It was also great when his kids and grandkids would come to dance the ceilis with us.

Patricia McHale

John was a remarkable man with a vast wealth of knowledge of things Irish, and not just Irish of course but that was definitely his preferred field. History, geography, music, poetry, ceili dancing and a lot more...if it existed on this planet, John knew something about it.

Lorie (& Frank) Gagliardi

Although we first met John back in the 70's at a few of the FON ceilis at the VFW hall on Irving Park Rd., we didn't really get to know him until more than a decade later when we joined the IAHC and eventually found our way to the Friday night ceili dances which we attended up until several years ago. John taught and ran the ceilis, with Ed Callahan sometimes pitching in as well.

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Some of these comments are too lengthy for the paper, but you can find them all on their facebook page at FrancisO'NeillCeiliClub.

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Roaming in the Gloaming

By Estelle Shanley

The Irish Government issued dire advice in November, essentially a ban on cross country travel recommending that family gatherings be eased during the Christmas season. Irish living outside Ireland were advised bluntly: Don't come home! Thomas Ryan, an associate professor at Trinity College floated the idea in this pandemic year Christmas be postponed until the end of January. Makes some sense as the pandemic holds its deadly grip across the planet. However, in delaying the Christmas Season there's no guarantee when the pandemic will vanish. On a personal level I vote for postponing. What's the point of buying, wrapping and mailing Christmas presents to family and friends if we're not together to witness the festivity of opening box after box, applauding the contents even if old Auntie Maude continues to recycle the gift she received last year?

Changing the subject, was delighted Joe Biden and Kamala Harris secured the presidency. Biden's Irish forebears came from Cooley, County Louth on the east coast. Famed for mountains and scenic routes, a handful of kilometers from Dundalk where I was born. I've heard myself boast with no apologies that the Bidens were our neighbors. Chalk that up to Irish embellishment! During the campaign the Irish speculated whether the President-Elect would be good for Ireland. The

first time I heard him quote an appropriate stanza from Seamus Heaney's poetry, I teared up, the Irish were anointed with Biden's imprimatur. Quoting Heaney, Ireland's most contemporary poet, He sent rivulets of emotion down Irish spines. Biden was one of us!



I was privileged to know the Poet Laureate of Ireland as poet-in-residence at Harvard University. in the early eighties. Interviewing him following his appearance at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, was a defining moment in journalism. He responded to thundering applause in the university theatre admitting coyly to his audience, "narcissism has its own rewards." When he smiles his eyes disappear into slits of merriment and he declared that aside from sexual jealousy, literary jealousy is probably the most demented emotion. On that evening he recited verse transcending the provincial narrowness of his native County Derry as it rose above the corrupt surroundings

in Ulster. He managed to transcend the horror and devastation in Northern Ireland as well as demonstrating a capacity to absorb the atrocities and create them into poetry.

Heaney was accused by critics of ignoring in his work the crisis in the North, and in 1975 in an obvious answer to that criticism he published *North*, a book of poems demonstrating a continuing preoccupation with the political strife. The police, British army, rioting children, journalists, prison camps, poverty and devastation all come to the forefront of Heaney's verse.

During a lengthy interview he admits to the criticism but immediately ponders the question about the real function of art and the role of the artist in a time of crisis. "Because Bobby Sands fasted himself to death, does that mean there should be a poem written about him," he asks. Mulling over his own question, he answered it by discussing the role of French painter Henri Matisse. "During the Second World War, Matisse painted still life, landscapes and pictures of apples and other fruit at a time where there were concentration camps," Heaney emphasized. Although photographs of those camps triggered horror and distress in people forty years later, Heaney stressed that Matisse's art work proclaimed a certain continuity of humanity, a certain humane celebration of life. Heaney's questioned whether that is the function of the poet, pointing out the danger of shutting your eyes to the inhumanity. "I suppose as long as you can put images into focus, in intelligence defiance, that is one way of coping." Heaney deals with grief, and out of grief comes his poetry. One verse "The Strand at Lough Beg," a poem dedicated to the memory of his cousin, Colum McCartney returning from a football in Dublin one August evening, was shot dead in his car near Dundalk en route to his home in Armagh.

That night at the university in his one-night-only appear-

ance in Lowell, he recited the poem imagining the washing of his cousin's corpse. A poem that reads more like a rite of healing, than a vessel filled with bitterness.

I turn because the sweeping of your feet

Has stopped behind me, to find you on your knees

With blood and roadside muck in your hair and eyes,

They kneel in front of you in brimming grass

And gather up cold handfuls of the dew

To wash you, cousin. I dab you clean with moss

Fine as the drizzle out of a low

cloud.

I lift you under the arms and lay you flat

With rushes that shoot green again

I plait

Green scapulars to wear over your shroud.

As America moves forward into a new era of political kindness and respect, Seamus Heaney's poems will continue to emerge from the lips of President-Elect Joseph Biden.

Its appropriate here in this time of chaos to quote Heaney: "*The future is a verb in hibernation.*"

estelleshanley@aol.com

Aer Lingus Welcomes Changes on Entry to Ireland From US and Canada Announced by Irish Department of Foreign Affairs / Trade

New York, 20th November 2020: Aer Lingus welcomes the revisions by Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the testing regime which will reduce restrictions for passengers travelling from North America to Ireland. Effective from 29th November, arrivals from US and Canada will not be expected to continue to restrict movements following receipt of a negative/not-detected result from a Covid-19 PCR test taken a minimum of five days after arrival in Ireland.

Aer Lingus also welcomes the exemption for passengers with an essential function from the requirement to undergo restricted movement or testing while exercising this essential function. We note that this includes critical occupations, students and persons travelling for imperative family or business reasons. This exemption will allow passengers with an essential function to travel without restriction.

These changes represent positive steps towards facilitating increased safe international travel, which is critical to the Irish economy.

David Shepherd, Aer Lingus Chief Commercial Officer, "Aer Lingus believes that the changes

to entry to Ireland for passengers travelling from red zone areas and the US and Canada, along with positive developments regarding vaccines, the introduction of improved testing regimes, and our new flexible booking options - including the ability to change any flight on any fare type up to two hours before travel for free* - will help to encourage greater demand for international travel in 2021. And with great value prices on direct flights to Ireland, now is the time to book to have something to look forward to in 2021."

Aer Lingus 'Book with Confidence' allows for lots of new ways to keep your flights flexible in case your plans change;

- Free Changes*: You can change your flight for free as often as you need on any route and any fare until 31 May 2021.

- Guaranteed Voucher: Choose our Plus, Smart, Advantage or Flex fare and you can get a voucher if you decide not to travel.

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For further information, including testing options please visit www.aerlingus.com.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DECEMBER 2020

Happy Holidays! I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and are looking forward to the upcoming holidays! While we are celebrating differently this year, there is still so much to be grateful for, and many things to count as blessings.



Thank you to our very own Irish Heritage Singers for performing their winter concert online for us! It was a lovely performance and a great fundraiser; if you missed it, you can watch it on our Facebook page or on YouTube. We continue to host virtual programs, and this month we hosted Paints & Pints, and chose the winner of our annual Nimble Thimbles Quilt Raffle! Coming up this month, we have historical portrayals, iBAM!, our Ireland 2021 Raffle, and more! Be sure to check out our website for more information on these events and on how you can participate!

We have also kicked off our Annual Appeal. This year, we're making our Annual Appeal available online through our email appeal, mail-in donations, and through GoFundMe on our social media pages. I know this year did not pan out how many of us planned, and that includes the effect the pandemic has had on the Center. Even though we have shared many of our programs online, our building is our home, and we need your help to keep the Irish American Heritage Center going. I appreciate any consideration in supporting the IAHC during our Annual Appeal. All funds raised will go towards continuing the mission of the IAHC and providing Irish and Irish-American culture to our community.

I will see you next year, and until we meet again, I hope you all have wonderful holidays, and find some time to enjoy old and new traditions!

Best regards,

Nicole McDonagh-Tueffel

Nicole McDonagh-Tueffel, President

iBAM 2020:
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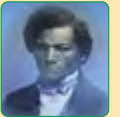
December 11, 12, & 13
Irish American Heritage Center

Take advantage of the IAHC's growing virtual program-ming by visiting the Irish American Heritage Center Facebook page, or by going to irish-american.org, where you can find offerings like these:



Memoirs and Creative Writing
with Virginia Gibbons
Every Tuesday 1pm,
Sign up on irish-american.org

Razz Jenkins recreates his successful IAHC portrayal of Fredrick Douglas in a live virtual performance **12/10, Register under Upcoming Events at irish-american.org**



Every Wednesday at Noon,
get centered with a weekly virtual yoga class!
Register at irish-american.org.

History of the Formal Tea
Virtual Lecture with Visuals
by Leslie Goddard **12/23,**
Sign up on irish-american.org



Irish American Heritage Center

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A Conversation With The Consul General of Ireland

An Online Event on
Thursday, January 14th

7:00 pm

The Honorable Kevin
Byrne, the new
Consul General of
Ireland to Chicago



Join CG Byrne as he
discusses the current state of
Ireland at home and abroad.

Register at www.wsirish.org



Free

Limited space
available

Skylar Thompson: Embracing His Heritage as Black, Irish and British Too

For a long time in his life, Skylar Thompson, a Midwest-native Black boxer and promoter, felt that there was a part of himself that he didn't have a firm grasp of.

"I always carried this spirit that I never understood," he explains.

His love of boxing came early for him, sparked by a desire to connect more closely with his father. "When I was a kid, my father and my brother did everything together. I was just a little kid, getting into trouble, (but) I always wanted to gain his attention.

"(One day) we were watching a Mike Tyson fight, and we had a few relatives over, and I went to my Dad and told him I wanted to box. And when I told him this, his eyes lit up. So that Monday when he came home from work, he worked in Chicago, in construction, we went to go see his boss, who had punching bags and weights and everything. We grabbed the punching bags, and when we got home, (my dad-Stanley Thompson) started training me."

In between his work on his training and perfecting his technique, he spent a lot of time at the racetrack with his father, and ended up getting jobs as a porter and then as a cook during his early boxing days. And although he experienced a lot of success in the ring, he still felt like there was that part of himself that he wasn't connecting with enough.

Then, serendipitously, he made a discovery that changed him.

On his way to Sheffield, England in 2003, Thompson flew the friendly Irish airlines, Aer Lingus, where he was very taken with the open and affable nature of the staff, and got to briefly experience the country's famous hospitality.

"At the airport (during a layover in Ireland), I had some chains and metals that my trainer wanted me to bring over from the United States to England... and I got stopped. When they saw the metals, they said, 'Oh, he's a boxer!' And they started singing chants to me, and telling me how great I was going to be... I was like a mini celebrity for the few hours I was there," he recalls.

When he got home a few weeks later, his Mother happened to ask him to look into her heritage and trace her ancestry on her father's side. Using an ancestry site to search his lineage, he learned of his relatives in the U.K, sparking a journey of self discovery that helped to give him a clarity about his own life.

"After I got back to the U.S. (from that trip), my Mom wanted me to locate her father's family. So I ended up coming across

a relative of hers, a first cousin, and she said, 'You sound like you're Black, African American,' and I said, 'I am.' She said, 'Well, we're Irish.' I'd just left Ireland not even a week ago.

"Throughout the years, I wanted to know which city and county my family



was from. Recently, I also wanted to understand where the fighting comes from... So as I traveled and I did research, I went into the ancestry (through 23 and Me). It showed where my family were located, it showed where we branched off in the U.K., in Ireland, and also from our African origins as well.

"I started to look at the characteristics... and finally, when I was able to understand (where I came from), I was at peace with myself."

In his research, he found that his maternal great-grandfather came from County Mayo, but left during the potato famine, ending up in Virginia. His father's Grandmother is also Irish, from County Cork.

"In the late 1800s into the early 1900s, on one side it traced more African, (through) my father. Then (through my mother), it shows more Irish and British. Past the late 1800s, 99% of my family is Irish and British on both sides."

In his professional career, he was a vet-

eran of forty fights, and in 2006, he signed a top 3 promoter. But being a boxer made finding other work difficult, as he traveled so much for various fights.

"Being around people who have a "giving up" spirit, where they give up on everything, I kind of gave in to that a little bit.

I took on a career as a Journeyman fighter," he says, speaking of a fighter who has adequate skill but is not of the caliber of a contender (boxing.fandom.com)

"Sometimes people look at it as just being in it for the money, but personally, I was going through something in my life.

"All of the top guys that enter into the sport, they all had to fight someone. And most of the time, these guys fought guys on short notice, or guys just going in for the money. And when you're confused or thrown off, a lot of times you don't look at a situation as going in for the money. Once you've been taken from that, you have time to sit down and think about why (you did that)."

Thompson has since retired from boxing, and has been working at Amazon, in one of their main warehouses. In his spare time, he's enjoyed brushing up on his cooking skills and perfecting his barbecue.

During these years away from the sport, he's also dug more into his heritage, and has grown to feel a strong kinship with his

Irish roots.

Having this new banner to work under has inspired him to make some big moves recently.

"Next year, I'm planning to open a food trailer for barbecue For now, I'm working and saving and building and putting the process together.

"Also, I've decided to come out of retirement and give another shot at my career... I plan to give two years. And the only reason why I did it, and this is for people to understand... for the Black Americans who carry and have Irish ancestry, the British as well, since that's also a part of my origin... to understand this. The fighting spirit comes from the British and the Irish. They fought with one another, throughout the years. Everyone is looking at skin color, but that's not the case. It's (in the spirit).

"Me, I represent the Fighting Irish. It's not a skin color. I carry it over me now, because now I understand where it comes from.

"When I travel, I carry a huge load on my shoulders because I put this on myself. When I step into the ring, I put this on myself.

"I have a mixed race family on both sides... You have relatives that carry British and Irish Ancestry... You still have to accept it. You have to embrace this period. I think most African Americans are able to understand that they are a part of these origins, and if they look at these British or Irish (sides), they will understand (these characteristics better)."

Taking the Irish spirit with him wherever he goes now, Thompson tries to live his life by it.

"The energy level has been extremely amazing to me. I carry this banner over me, knowing this fighting comes from Ireland, and from the British side. I walk into the ring as a celebrated star to myself, because I have something to fight for... I carry the Irish spirit when I step into the ring... I'm at peace with myself. I know who I am as a person."





Chicago Gaelic Park

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



A Cháirde

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise Duit.

prosperity in the New Year.

Happy Christmas to all of you from all of us! We look forward to being with you in 2021, and we wish you safety, freedom, health and

From the staff, volunteers, members and directors of Chicago Gaelic Park.

Is mise le meas,
Bill O'Sullivan

Selected Dates are Available for Your 2020-21 Weddings and Events in Our Newly Remodeled Emerald Room, Our Tara Room, Our Celtic Room, Our Patio and in Our Pub

Meet Our Volunteers



Tom Flannery is from Hollymount, Co. Mayo and a retired union carpenter. After retiring three years ago he was invited by his good friend Tommy Lally to join the volunteers at Gaelic Park. It's a decision he hasn't regretted. Tom says it's a wonderful place to go any day you like. Three is a great group of volunteers who all chip in an do whatever has to be done. Tom's main job is setting up the sound for all the different events that go on at Gaelic Park. Anyone who is retiring or if you are retired and need something to occupy your time, come and join the volunteers at Gaelic Park. It's a great organization!



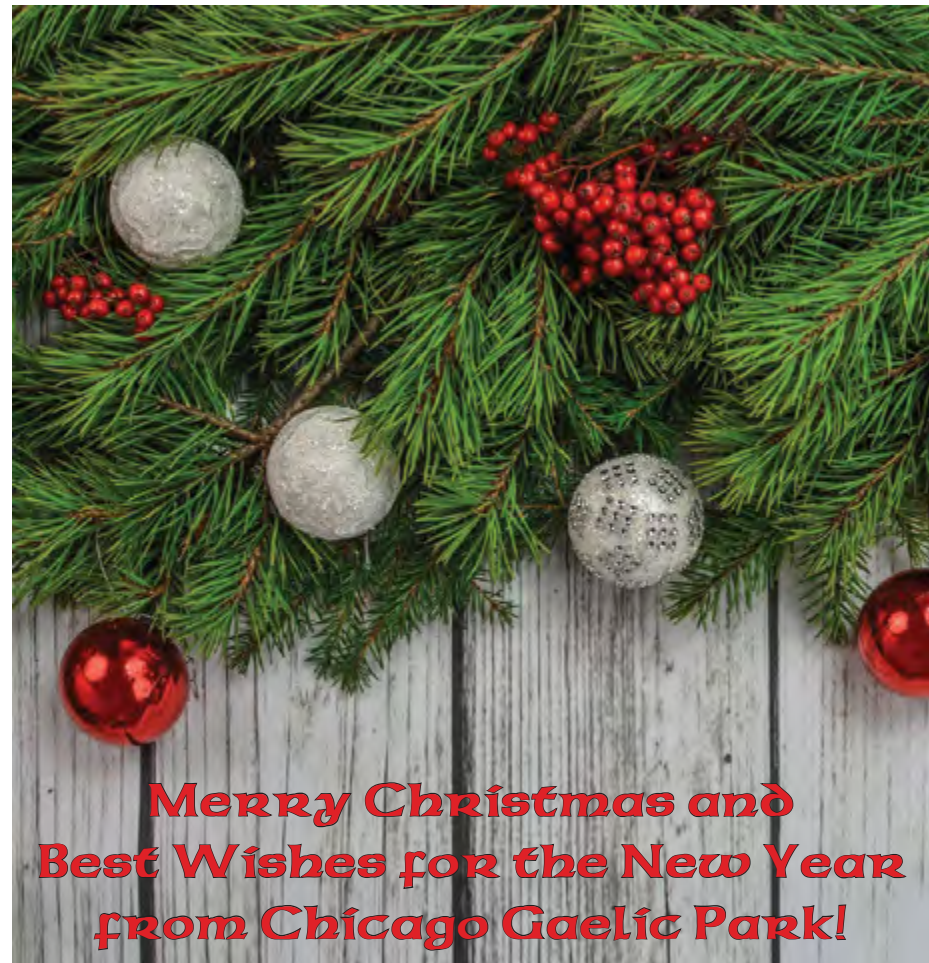
Jim O'Connor is a proud Kerryman from Castleisland who has been involved in Gaelic Park since the beginning and knows where every pipe in our buildings comes from and goes to. His nickname around Gaelic Park is McGyver because he can turn his hand to any task and will get it done in a timely fashion. His work background has always been in construction and he retired as an operating engineer from local 399. Jim and his wife Mary have a great love for the GAA and their native Kerry, which is only second to their love and support of Gaelic Park.



Tom Lally retired in 2012 and started volunteering at Gaelic Park shortly after. It's an opportunity to give back and help maintain the best Irish center anywhere. I enjoy working on the various projects with the other volunteers and the Gaelic Park staff. Getting to learn from and work with Mike Moran is special. The volunteers and staff are a pleasure to work with, it's a great place to hang out with great people.



P.J. Cunniffe is a native of Mounbellew, Co. Galway and he arrived in Chicago in the mid 1970's. P.J. is a retired carpenter and has been volunteering at Gaelic Park since he retired a few years ago. P.J. was a member of the first Wolfe Tones Team to win a North American League title in 1978, and his love for the GAA inspired him to join our band of volunteers at Gaelic Park. P.J. is one of the newer recruits to the volunteer force and has fitted right in just like an old shoe.



Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year from Chicago Gaelic Park!

Gaelic Park Book Club (Club Leabhar)

Library, 2nd Floor 1:00-3:00pm

September 2020 - May 2021

The first Sunday of the month we gather to discuss great Irish writers. Please join us!

There is no fee & we don't require perfect attendance.

If you have questions, contact:

Tina Butler at Molanive@yahoo.com

Dec 6	An Irish Christmas	John B. Kearne
Jan 3	Of Weddings and Wakes	Alice McDermott
Feb 7	Stalking Irish Madness	Patrick Tracey
Mar 8	The Magdalen	Marita Conlon McKenna
April 4	A Celtic Childhood	Bill Watkins
May 2	The Billionaire Who Wasn't	Conor O'Clery

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SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY AT GAELIC PARK

Several years ago, Gaelic Park purchased a residence adjacent to the main entrance which was known as The Lightholder Property in reference to the family who had been great neighbors for many years. Many ideas for optimum use of the 1-acre site were discussed with a consensus voting in favor of landscaping to enhance the frontage of the building and highlight the creek at the rear of the site.



In spring of 2020, plans were put on hold as COVID-19 stalled anticipated grant requests. The Park's normal business operations were severely impaired by the pandemic, but supporters of Gaelic Park stepped up with loans to fund this ambitious project, which has become a rallying point for us. Just as in the beginning, several sub-contractors and our wonderful team of volunteers donated their time to minimize the labor costs of the project.

Under the guidance and stewardship of former President, John Barrett, the project is almost complete. (John is pictured below with some of the volunteer force.) Gaelic Park Charities, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is offering **sponsorship opportunities** to fund the unfinished items which include a pergola and 6 park style benches dotted around the property. We are also requesting your suggestions for a name for this beautiful new addition to Gaelic Park..

Details and requests for sponsorship can be emailed to officecgp@chicagogaelpark.org, or you can call Gaelic Park at 708-687-9323. Suggested names for the new addition can also be mailed to Gaelic Park, 6119 West 147th St., Oak Forest Il. 60452.

AFTER



Please note the before and after photos. The photo beside the waterfall includes Mike Moran, Jim O'Connor, Tom Lally, Matt Ruane, Eamon Donnelly, John Murphy, Ken Hughes, Tom McGowan, Andy Davey, PJ Cunniffe, Marian Ryan, Philip Quinlan, Renate Walsh, Ann Bepis, Melody Dooley, Sharon Krygowski and Jose Nieto. (Bruce McShane and Charlie Hughes not present)



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Wishing all of our friends
Nollaig Shona Daoibh
and a Happy New Year



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On the Law

Martin Healy Jr.

John P. Scanlon



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

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

Unprecedented Impact of COVID-19 on the Courts and the Litigation Practice of Law

The effects of COVID-19 have impacted the lives of all of us. And it has had a severe impact on the operation of our judicial system and the practice of law as well. On March 23, 2020, all civil jury trials were suspended in the Circuit Court of Cook County with no date certain when they would resume.

All motions, which is an essential part of civil litigation, were continued, but for emergency motions.

In the Circuit Court of Cook County Law Division, which handles the large civil claims for injuries and damages, all cases that were set for a jury trial from March 17, 2020 through December

31, 2020 were continued. These actions were unprecedented in the operation of the Circuit Court.

Healy Scanlon Attorneys Receive One of the First Bench Trial Awards in Cook County Law Division Since the Start of COVID

Healy Scanlon represented two clients in an injury case set for a jury trial on May 18th of this year. Due to the shutdown, that date was stricken, and the matter was continued generally. However, H/S was able to get the matter set for a bench trial. A bench trial is a trial, without a jury - the trial judge plays the role of both the judge and the jury, resolving disputes of both law and fact.

On November 11, 2020, Dennis M. Lynch and Neil Schelhammer conducted a bench trial via Zoom before Judge Lorna Propes in the Circuit Court of Cook County. It was one of the first Zoom civil bench trials in Cook County Law Division. This was also a first for H/S, where the entirety of the trial was conducted through Zoom.

The case resulted from a multi-car auto collision. Plaintiffs, two sisters from Ireland, one living here and one visiting, were rear-ended by two other vehicles. The entire trial was conducted virtually through Zoom. Law Division Judge Propes was in her courtroom hosting on Zoom. None of the parties, their attorneys, nor Judge Propes were ever present together. All four parties, two plaintiffs and two defendants, gave their testimony through Zoom. Even more noteworthy, was the fact that one of the plaintiffs, the Irish resident represented by H/S testified real time from her home in County Kildare, Ireland. Due to the time difference, she testified first thing in the morning our time (late afternoon for her), but remained on Zoom into the night in Ireland to witness the entire trial. Following the trial, the judge returned a very favorable judgment for the two sisters.

Resolution of Workers' Compensation Claims have also been Impacted

This particular trial resulted from a non-work related accident. However H/S also represents injured individuals in workers' compensation claims. Hearings on these matters were also suspended on March 17, 2020 by the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission. Recently, H/S resumed trying these matters on behalf of injured clients as well. These claims were tried before an Arbitrator, so they do not present the challenge of trying a case before a jury.

The trials took place live and in person. The protocols required face coverings and social distancing during a hearing. However, because of the recent surge in COVID, as of November 13, 2020, these hearings have again been suspended indefinitely.

First Responders and Essential Workers get Rebuttable Presumption of Coverage

COVID-19 has also brought about changes to the Illinois Workers' Occupation Diseases Act. Specifically, the Act now allows for any first responder, front-line worker, or any individual employed by essential businesses and operations, who contracts COVID-19 to have a rebuttal presumption that they contracted the disease as a result of their employment.

This recent change is meant to protect workers who may be exposed to the disease as a result of their work. H/S represents numerous clients who have been exposed to the disease in their workplace. The presumption applies to all workers who were diagnosed with COVID-19 on or after March 9, 2020. The presumption may be rebutted by evidence that the employee was exposed to the disease by an alternate source.

To protect employers during this difficult time, the Act also provides that "under no circumstances shall any COVID-19 case increase or affect any employer's workers' compensation insurance experience rating or modification." 820 ILCS 310/5.

Healy/Scanlon remains committed to advocating for their clients even without the traditional courtroom settings. If you are injured during these difficult times, contact our office for further information.



Dennis M. Lynch



Neil Schelhammer

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A Global People: A New Diaspora Strategy for Ireland

An image of the Tilley Lamp in the window of Áras an Uachtaráin – a light to guide home those who have left our shores- adorns the cover of our new Diaspora Strategy. It symbolizes our commitment to the Irish abroad, and to Irish America in particular - a commitment affirmed in our very Constitution, whose second article observes that we cherish our special affinity with those abroad who share our cultural identity and heritage.

This Strategy is a concrete expression of that commitment, built around the pillars of Our People; Our Values; and Our Culture.

You, Our People, are our foremost priority. Since the launch of the Emigrant Support Programme in 2004, my Department has provided over €180 million in grants to Irish community groups worldwide. In the years ahead, we'll maintain and extend such support, prioritizing the welfare of those who are most vulnerable, including our elderly and our undocumented. And to strengthen ties to home, we will hold a referendum on extending the franchise in presidential elections to citizens living outside the State.

Our Values shape us. Here our strategy breaks new ground, adopting a broader, more inclusive definition of our Diaspora, one which celebrates its remarkable diversity. Our Diaspora is not limited to Irish citizens or people of Irish descent. It extends to "our reverse diaspora" - people who, having lived in Ireland for a time, have now returned to their home countries, but wish retain their connection with us. And includes what we might call "an affinity diaspora" - people who have no Irish heritage and may never have lived in Ireland, but who are connected to us through our culture.

Living our values means increasing outreach to traditionally under-represented groups, such as Irish Travellers, LGBTQ+ communities and Irish of mixed heritage. That's why we're supporting the new African American Irish Diaspora Network; why our Embassy and Consulates join Irish communities across America in parading during Pride, as well as on St Patrick's Day; and why we take such pride in the rekindled friendship between our people and those of the first nations of this continent, evidenced in the generosity of the Choctaw during the famine, and the Irish public's donations to the Navajo and Hopi through this pandemic.

As the founders of our Republic recognized a century ago, Our Culture – our arts, language and games are the bedrock of Irish identity. And they matter, perhaps, even more beyond our shores. The first St Patrick's Day parades were not in Ireland, but in New York. The world's largest annual festivals of Irish culture are not in Dublin or Mayo, but in Dublin, Ohio and Milwaukee. Riverdance was a creation of dancers from Chicago and New York, as much as a composer from Limerick.

Recognizing that culture is the thread that binds us, our Government is committed to maintaining significant financial support for Irish cultural organizations, associations and festivals here and around the world; to promoting the teaching and learning of Irish among our diaspora; and to continuing the development of Gaelic games internationally.

Sixty years ago this month, a young Irish American, John F. Kennedy, was elected to the highest office in this land. Addressing our Dáil in the summer of 1963, he remarked that Ireland was an extraordinary country, and quoted one of our Nobel laureates, George Bernard Shaw's



Minister of State for Overseas Development and Diaspora, Colm Brophy TD

observation that while other people see things and say "why?", we Irish dream things that never were and ask "why not?"

This month another Irish American, also fond of quoting Irish Nobel laureates, has been elected to the Presidency. Joe Biden is also something of a dreamer - believing that hope and history can rhyme. But he's right - with will, with ambition, we can achieve great things. Our ambition for this strategy is great, and delivering it will be a challenge. But Irish America is every bit as great. And with you - as well as for you - it's a challenge we will rise to.

Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025

Emigration is a core part of Irish life. There is scarcely a family on the island which has not been touched by it. However, the experience of emigration has changed dramatically over the years. It is not just that advancements in technology and travel have made it radically easier to stay in touch with family back home, but the reasons why people emigrate have also become more varied. Where in the past many left Ireland to escape hardship, nowadays people move for a wide variety of reasons.

The Government recognizes that our people are the greatest strength we have and takes its role in nurturing and strengthening Ireland's relationship to the roughly 70 million people worldwide who claim Irish ancestry, the Global Irish, very seriously. Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025, was written with that diversity of experiences in mind. It takes a broad and inclusive definition of the Global Irish, one that aims to reflect the diversity and complexity of our

diaspora and indeed of modern Ireland. This is reflected in the commitments to increase outreach to traditionally underrepresented groups including Irish Travellers and Irish people of mixed heritage, and to support the LGBTQ+ diaspora with targeted initiatives.

The Strategy divides this approach into five pillars: Our People, Our Values, Our Prosperity, Our Culture and Our Influence; each of these covers various aspects of support for the diaspora. It reiterates the commitment from the most recent Programme for Government to hold a referendum to extend voting rights in Presidential elections to Irish citizens resident anywhere in the world. It also pledges continued support for the celebration of Irish culture, which shines brightly across the world through Irish music and dance, St Patrick's Day festivities, Gaelic sports and of course Gaelige – the Irish language.

The welfare of Irish communities abroad remains at the heart of our approach, and central to this commitment is the Emigrant

Support Programme (ESP). Since its inception in 2004, the ESP has disbursed over €180 million in funding to Irish community groups across the world for a wide variety of projects. Minister Brophy has just announced a €500,000 increase in funding for the coming 2021-22 funding round, coming to a total of over €13 million. Last year (2019), €3.12 million or 26% of this funding went to 88 organizations in the United States.

In recent years, over half of annual ESP funding has gone to Welfare projects. Many of these serve older community members, for example by organizing regular social activities to alleviate social isolation. Other projects target specific vulnerable groups, providing services such as pro bono immigration advice; helping people affected by addiction access local services; counselling services for those experiencing mental health problems; or helping new arrivals find their feet and access the job market.

The immense value of this



The lamp at Áras an Uachtaráin, a symbolic beacon, lighting the way for Irish emigrants and their descendants, welcoming them to their homeland. Photo: Áras an Uachtaráin

thriving network of community organizations became even clearer during the Covid-19 pandemic. When the early effects of this global crisis became clear, Irish communities everywhere sprang into action to protect the vulnerable and help each other. The Irish Government supported them by setting up a new fund, the Covid-19 Response Fund to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and isolated, particularly the

elderly, and to alleviate the worst effects of the pandemic.

The common thread tying the Global Irish together is not just their pride in their Irish identity and heritage, but also their generous community spirit, creativity and innovation. We are proud to be able to support our people worldwide and are confident that this new Strategy will help them thrive and strengthen their connection to Ireland.

Our people

Ireland will ensure that the welfare of the Irish abroad remains at the heart of our diaspora support. Care for the most vulnerable and marginalized Irish emigrants will remain the primary focus of the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Programme. Irish welfare and community-based organizations play a vital role in providing support to Irish emigrants and we shall support steps to strengthen their resilience and build their sustainability as they face the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Cardinal, Archbishop of Boston, Seán Patrick O'Malley at the opening of the new premises of the Irish Pastoral Centre at Adam's Village, Dorchester in Nov. 2019

Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston

While Boston has long been a place of refuge and sanctuary for Irish emigrants, it is also a place where the Irish have thrived, prospered, and become an integral part of the fabric of the city. In times gone by, when the going got tough, this community would come together to support one another, and off er a helping hand to those in need. Today as we work to confront the challenges posed by Covid-19, Irish community organizations are once again providing vital services throughout the Boston area.

The Irish Pastoral Centre in Dorchester is one of the longest-standing Irish Diaspora

organizations in the Irish American community, and is the focal point for so many Irish people in Boston. Despite all of the difficulties the past months have posed, the Centre continues to provide their services with the help of the Emigrant Support Programme and the Covid-19 Relief Fund from the Government of Ireland. These services range from support for the elderly, immigration advice, welfare and counselling supports, as well as providing further frontline services to those in the Irish community who are on the margins, whose incomes have disappeared overnight, and who are in desperate need of assistance as a result of the impacts of the Pandemic.

In Chicago, the Irish community has also pulled together throughout Covid. Irish Community Services in Chicago provides immigration, social, pastoral and youth services to the Irish community throughout the Midwestern United States. Through their community support program, ICS cares for some of the most vulnerable members of the community including the elderly, the undocumented and those in need of social services supports. This assistance has been particularly vital during the Covid-19 pandemic, where those in already vulnerable situations have been at greater risk of isolation, unemployment and other struggles. Their youth and family engagement program focuses on connecting with the youth and younger generations of the Irish community, helping them to connect with their Irish heritage.



Irish Community Services, Chicago

Our values

Ireland is working with our diaspora to promote our values and celebrate the diversity of our communities abroad. Our diaspora is increasingly multicultural, in which Irish identity can be one element of an individual's broader cultural background. Our engagement with the diaspora will promote an open and inclusive approach to engaging diverse communities and address evolving needs.

African American Irish Diaspora Network

The African American Irish Diaspora Network (AAIDN) was launched at the Consulate in New York in late February, just before the onset of the pandemic. Dennis Brownlee, an Emmy-winning producer and entrepreneur, was inspired to establish the AAIDN through his own Irish lineage and on learning that as many as a third of African Americans shared Irish ethnicity. While much of this reflects the harsh history of slavery, it also spoke to much kinship and connection that deserved investigation. In the months since its foundation, AAIDN has taken great strides presenting a series of initiatives marking the 175th anniversary of Frederick Douglass's historic tour of Ireland. Dennis joined Foreign Minister Simon Coveney and Nettie Washington Douglass, the abolitionist's great-great granddaughter, on 29 September to announce a new Fellowship program which will see twenty students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities follow in Douglass's footsteps by visiting Ireland next summer.



Dennis Brownlee at the launch of the African American Irish Diaspora Network in February in New York



Washington Ireland Program participants with Minister Zappone at World Pride
Photo: Amanda Gentile

World Pride 2019 New York

Ireland participated in the World Pride March in New York in June last year with a contingent of over 350 marchers of all ages, orientations, and backgrounds and led by the then Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone. The Consulate in New York marched together with New York Irish LGBTQ+ group the Lavender and Green Alliance and the other participants to celebrate the diversity of the Global Irish Family behind the "Amach le Chéile - Out Together" banner. The evening before the March, Minister Zappone attended a screening of "The 34th" - a film that chronicles the road to marriage equality in Ireland.

Presidential Distinguished Service Award recipient, Michael Dowling

Ireland will continue to recognize work done for Ireland, or for Irish emigrants, by people living abroad, through the Presidential Distinguished Service Awards for the Irish Abroad. This year's awards recognized three US recipients, including Michael J. Dowling, who leads the largest healthcare provider in the State of New York, Northwell Health. Mr. Dowling has been at the center of efforts to manage hospital capacity for those affected by Covid-19 and ensure that other healthcare needs are met at the same time. He is one of a number of extraordinary Irish men and women contributing to the global response to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Michael Dowling at Irish America's 2nd Annual Healthcare and Life Sciences 50 Reception Photo: Nuala Purcell

Our prosperity

Our diaspora holds invaluable expertise and insights into trade, industry and innovation across the globe and has long played a pivotal role in creating and deepening economic connections with Ireland. Our diaspora can provide strategic mentoring and guidance to Irish companies and we will continue to build mutually beneficial economic ties with our people abroad by supporting linkages to advance Ireland's trade and investment priorities, including through sector-specific business and research networks among the diaspora.

Ireland Network Chicago

Ireland Network Chicago are one of the many branches around the United States under the umbrella of Irish Network USA. Irish Network allows members of the networks to connect with their peers and to develop relationships that will foster success in their business, economic, cultural and sports ventures. The work of IN Chicago in connecting people and business has been particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic as people struggle with unemployment and business shutdowns. IN Chicago works closely with the Consulate in Chicago to promote and organize events of interest to the business community and more. Through their annual Ball in February each year, IN Chicago also fund raise to give support back to local charities and in turn the Irish community.



Ireland Network Chicago Committee at the 2020 Ball

LEAP Program New York

The Irish Government is proud to support the Irish International Business Network New York's LEAP (Leadership & Executive Acceleration Program) program through the Emigrant Support Programme. LEAP brings together Irish and Irish American women to advance their careers by creating peer networks, building skills and providing access to professional leaders. Participants in the LEAP program undertake projects in support of the local community, using their skills to address corporate needs identified by partner community organizations.



Pictured here are the participants of the 2020 LEAP group taken at the launch in February Photo: Nuala Purcell

Ireland Week

Ireland Week, an annual event held in Los Angeles, highlights Irish achievements in business and the arts, and connects those who work in these areas in both the US and Ireland. Ireland Week includes IrelandCon, a business focused conference celebrating innovation in tech, trade, entertainment and cultural ties between Ireland and Los Angeles. Ireland Week also features events that focus on Irish contributions to the arts, and the entertainment industry. In 2019, the program included many standouts, including a Seamus Heaney Symposium, numerous panels with notable Irish writers and personalities, and a theatrical production featuring established and emerging Irish actors.



Kieran Hannon, CMO at Openpath, interviewing Airbnb VP for Community Support Aisling Hassell during Ireland Week in 2019.

Our culture

Irish culture is a fundamental component of our identity and the common thread that binds together Ireland's diaspora. The Government recognizes that supporting Irish culture internationally plays a key role in connecting Ireland with our diaspora. We are supporting Irish cultural organizations, associations and festivals around the world that celebrate our shared culture and heritage, and working with our diaspora to share Irish culture more widely.

Boston Film Fest

In October the Irish Consulate in Boston brought two of our Emigrant Support Programme funded cultural organizations together to host a Drive-In Irish Film Festival in Boston. Both organizations were hit by setbacks this year with the cancellation of both the Film Festival in March, and the GAA season at the Irish Cultural Center in Canton, Massachusetts, this summer. This collaboration allowed the Boston Irish Film Festival to go ahead at the Irish Cultural Center as they celebrated their 20th anniversary in a truly unique fashion. The two-day event opened with the Breakthrough Feature 'A Bump Along the Way,' starring Bronagh Gallagher. The festival drew a sizable audience and displayed a selection of the new talents, voices and perspectives that have emerged from the Irish film industry in recent years.



Our influence

Reaching out to the next generation of the Irish diaspora will be an ongoing commitment in order to build new diaspora connections. Ireland will continue to allocate resources for youth engagement initiatives and to promote educational and work opportunities in Ireland for members of the third- and fourth-generation Irish diaspora.

Foróige, Aisling Center, New York

Foróige is the leading youth organization in Ireland and has been working with young people since 1952. The Foróige program at the Aisling Irish Center in Yonkers is the first such program in New York and aims to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their development and in the development of society. Supported by the Emigrant Support Programme, the Foróige group at the Aisling Center brings Irish American young people together and gives them the opportunity to connect with their Irish heritage.



Foróige members visiting the Irish Naval Vessel the L.E. Samuel Beckett when it visited New York in 2019 Photo: James Higgins



Brona McGirl and Nichola O'Hare organizing food and other essentials collected by the Rockland GAA, New York

New York GAA

Our rich and unique sporting heritage, coupled with the values of community participation, provides our diaspora with a connection to Ireland. We will continue to promote awareness of Gaelic games abroad and support their development internationally through the Global Games Development Fund, which provides support to improve opportunities for those abroad to play Gaelic games. During Covid the New York GAA community has rallied round to help front-line staff in the fight against the deadly virus. The New York GAA, along with the Aisling Irish Center, Emerald Isle Immigration Center, New York Irish Center, and United Irish Counties, with the support of the Government of Ireland, came together to form a collective fundraising effort, Sláinte 2020, to assist the Irish community in the tri-state area during the Covid-19 crisis. New York footballers and team management did their bit for the cause by completing a 1,000km run, to raise funds for Slainte.

Celtic Junction Arts Center, Minnesota

The Celtic Junction Arts Center (CJAC) was founded in 2016 by Irish immigrant, dancer, and musician Cormac O'Sé and his Minnesota-born wife, playwright and theatre director Natalie O'Shea, with a mission to celebrate, promote, and preserve cultural arts and community. The Center is based in St Paul and is the only dedicated facility in Minnesota with the goal of educating, preserving



Outdoor concert at Celtic Junction Arts Center. Photo: Celtic Junction Arts Center and sharing Irish arts, heritage and culture. CJAC is also home to three independent arts organizations: O'Shea Irish dance, Center for Irish Music, and Irish Fair of Minnesota. CJAC have been recipients of Emigrant Support Program funding for a number of years and continue to embody the core objectives of the ESP in celebrating, maintaining and strengthening the links between Ireland and the Global Irish and fostering a vibrant sense of community and of Irish identity.



Pictured is Jessica Militante at the Kindred Spirits monument in Midleton, Co.Cork. The monument was created to commemorate the connection between the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the people of Ireland

The connection between the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the people of Ireland is a deep and meaningful bond that dates back to the Great Famine in 1847. Less than sixteen years after their own dislocation which became known as the 'Trail of Tears', the Choctaw people were moved by stories of suffering in Ireland and responded with a generous contribution towards Irish famine relief efforts. This act of solidarity was the foundation of a truly unique bond and the Government of Ireland has established the Choctaw-Ireland Scholarship to support a member of the Choctaw Nation to study in Ireland each year.

Jessica Militante was the inaugural recipient of the scholarship and completed a master's degree in Creative Writing at University College Cork earlier this year. Ciara O'Donnell, the second recipient of the scholarship, is currently working towards a master's degree in Film and Screen Media.

The Choctaw-Ireland Scholarship represents a vibrant new addition to the legacy of empathy which exists between the Choctaw people and the people of Ireland, a legacy of which we can all be rightly proud.

21-year old Morgan Bullock of Richmond, Virginia, came to international attention in May when a clip she posted of herself dancing to Beyoncé went viral. Alongside millions of views, Morgan's blend of classic Irish steps and hip-hop drew praise from Beyoncé's mother, Tina Lawson, and an invitation from Riverdance to join the troupe when it next tours the US. Having started Irish dancing at the age of ten, Morgan has been competing with the Baff Academy of Irish Dance at an international level for some time, travelling regularly to Ireland where, she says, she has always been embraced. Over the summer, she was one of forty artists to contribute to "Shades of Green", a series curated by the Embassy in DC to celebrate the diversity of Irish culture across the US, and she has already accepted an invitation from Ambassador Mulhall to take part in St Patrick's Day celebrations in Washington next year.



21-yr-old dancer Morgan Bullock

Irish Dancer Morgan Bullock

Neylon Family Benefit: Raffle Still on 12-6 But Get Together Postponed Until April 11

As we adhere to current recommendations for Covid we are sorry to announce that “The Neylon Family Fundraiser” for December 6, 2020 at The Emerald Isle will be postponed until April 11th, 2-7 at Emerald Isle. The Raffle will continue to take place on December 6th at 4:30 pm

live from our Facebook page - Neylon Family Benefit. Please tune in on December 6th and visit our Facebook page for other updates on Raffles, Bingo night, Card game, Bags game, Football squares. Thank you to everyone for your donations and continued support. Stay safe!

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FROM THE MOTHERLAND

By
SEAN FARRELL



A Close Run Thing - A Personal View From Across the Pond

I write as someone from Ireland with deep affection and admiration for the USA and its people. I have lived and worked enjoyably in the USA over the years. My daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren are US citizens (he with a pedigree going back to the early settlers) and I have many American friends. I am immensely proud of the great Irish American Community and the part the Irish have played in US history. My admiration is not uncritical, particularly regarding some of the obvious flaws and injustices in US society as well as some aspects of US foreign policy. However, I am also acutely conscious of what we owe to the USA in terms of defence of freedom and human rights and to the gradual improvement in the condition of Mankind. The "American Century" was not perfect but the alternatives which were faced down were worse. The near future, particularly regarding the World's climate and population looks bleak and, with xenophobia and nationalism rampant, probably never has there been a greater need for responsible and inspiring leadership from the USA. I don't know how well Joe Biden or his successors will meet the challenge. But nothing could be as bad as Trump. With his defeat the USA has won back its dignity.

Anyone with access to Amazon and a taste for escapism could do worse than take a look at the "Man in the High Castle" TV series. It's alternative history hokum set in the 1960s in which the USA had "lost" World War II and is now occupied and partitioned

between the Nazis and the Japanese. Nonsense? Of course. The plot gifts the Nazis the Atomic Bomb (shown detonating over Washington D.C.) while the Red Army and Churchill never get a mention.

In real history the 79th anniversary of Pearl Harbour takes place this month. The months that followed were the grimmest of the war. The Japanese swiftly overran most of Asia, inflicting humiliating defeats on the USA and Britain. In Europe, despite being repulsed before Moscow, the Nazis consolidated their hold, launched major new offensives on the Eastern Front and in North Africa and, only weeks after Pearl Harbor, at Wannsee devised the Final Solution to murder all Europe's Jews.

The USA, Europe, and the world, were fortunate that Roosevelt was the President at the time. He gave leadership, galvanised and mobilised the US nation against the existential threat that the Axis powers represented in a war that saw 400,000 plus Americans die. What if someone else had been President, someone who had listened to the loud isolationist voices urging against US involvement in the War, or had listened to Ambassador Joe Kennedy in London, who was sure Britain would be defeated, or had listened to those cheering on the Nazi campaign against the Communist Soviet Union? Or had even played footsie with the Dictators? What if the President in 1941 had been his inept predecessor Hoover, or somebody just as bad, incapable of giving national leadership, strengthening morale and inspiring the USA to organise and win?

I was reflecting on this as the 2020 Presidential Results saga unfolded. Trump is now gone - for the moment at least - but the movement that gave him, warts and all, over seventy million votes has not gone away and is likely to be a factor in future US politics. As an aside I note that the division in US society - more or less fifty-fifty - is eerily similar to the divide in Britain over Brexit, with the difference that in Brexit the Bad Guys are still triumphant! The lesson there, btw, is that a fractured society does not mend easily; and President -Elect Biden takes office with two strikes against him - the Virus running rampant and the Economy in tatters.

Moreover, it turns out that "the Economy, stupid" very nearly won Trump a second term. Exit polls identified the Economy rather than the Corona Virus as the dominant issue for voters. Here Trump had been on a winner, inheriting an economy

in good condition, which he pump-primed energetically through tax cuts breaks for the wealthy and the removal of restraints, including environmental restraints, on US business. With most of the economic indicators positive, on paper at least, as 2020 dawned Trump stood a reasonable chance of being re-elected on economic grounds alone, despite many having to hold their noses to vote for him.

This also despite Trump's foreign "policy." To the outside observer it has seemed that since 2017 US foreign policy has careened without coherence, subject to Trump's whims. His apologists will argue that it was about time other NATO countries stumped up more of the Alliance's costs, and that it was time also a (metaphorical) warning shot was fired across China's economic bows before the entire North American and European manufacturing base was damaged beyond repair by the tightly controlled and regimented Chinese behemoth. "Bringing the troops home" was also popular with the isolationist lobby. Yet against this who cannot have cringed at Trump's antics over North Korea, his infatuated pursuit of friendships with the leading gangster autocrats of the world like Putin, Bolsonaro, Erdogan and others (Xi Jinping would be there also were it not for the Corona Virus) and his insulting treatment of his North American neighbours and his traditional Western European (democratic) allies, Boris Johnson excepted?

There is a defining moment or circumstance for every US President, by which ultimately they will be judged. FDR had several. For Truman it was the Bomb and the Berlin Airlift, for JFK it was the Cuba Crisis, for LBJ it was Vietnam, for Nixon Watergate, for Jimmy Carter the Hostages, for Reagan victory in the Cold war, for Bush 41 the Gulf War, for Clinton Bosnia, for Bush 43 Nine Eleven and Iraq, for Obama, Bin Laden.

Last year I would have identified Trump's defining issue as the brazen, indefensible, irrational and delusional decision to pull

the USA out of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. The Paris Agreement is toothless, inadequate and already wrong-footed by five years of continued global growth in emissions and population, but at least it has provided a framework and targets for action and a wakeup call that the world was in peril. The scientific evidence is overwhelming and there can be few outside those actually paid by the fossil fuel lobby who doubt the reality. Yet Trump, with a grisly Luddite consistency remains a denier and has abdicated on behalf of his country the leading position the USA should be taking. This while the growing numbers and seriousness of forest fires and the increased annual battering from hurricanes taking place before his eyes bear testimony to what is happening.

But then, in 2020 came the Corona Virus. Yes it came from China, yes it is global and has hit many countries hard. Yes everywhere people are dying. Deaths are currently over 1.3 million - that we know of - and identified cases well over 50 million and climbing. Some countries have worse mortality rates than the USA (which is currently at 756 per million), Belgium and Spain among them, while a clutch of seven Latin American countries, together with Britain, have roughly similar rates. All true. Yet Canada's rate is 287, Germany's 150, the Nordics, even Sweden, very significantly lower; Ireland's rate is 398 - roughly half that of Trump's America. The bald unadulterated truth is that the USA, the world's wealthiest, most advanced and developed country, a leader in medicine and medical research, with 4.25% of the world's population, has 20% of the dead (250,000) and recorded cases, with infections spreading exponentially.

The Virus has been Trump's Pearl Harbor - and his Nemesis. From Woodward we know he knew early on how serious it was - indeed the swift and decisive actions of his erstwhile friend Xi offered proof if it were needed. He downplayed it; he denied it, fully in the knowledge of the mega consequences. He ignored and belittled a constant stream of medical advice. He provided no leadership. He ducked reality; he ducked responsibility. He is bequeathing a mess from which it will be difficult for the USA to emerge with casualty figures less than World War Two. America deserves better.

For Joe Biden the task of restoring the USA, internally and externally, to its rightful place in the world will not be easy.

Sean Farrell is a retired Irish diplomat and former Irish Consul General in Chicago in 2006-2007.

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*To the **IASCW** members
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...until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand*



View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



The White House is Green Again

The U.S. presidential election result represents a disaster for the British government. Chair of the Ways and Means Committee, Richie Neal, and Speaker Nancy Pelosi have repeatedly stated that they will not grant passage to a U.K. trade deal with the U.S. if peace and an open border in Ireland are jeopardised. Now the president-elect of the U.S. is of like mind. On September 16th Biden tweeted: 'We can't allow the Good Friday Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a casualty of Brexit. Any trade deal between the U.S. and U.K. must be contingent upon respect for the Agreement and preventing the return of a hard border. Period'.

The traditional umbilical cord between the U.S. Department of State and the British government is also severed. During his tenure as Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo threaded a line between supporting British inter-

ests and sympathising with the Irish, but resolutely prioritised the former. His replacement will openly oppose the roguish tendencies of this British government, particularly the flagrant breach of international law through its violating the Northern Irish Protocol of the Withdrawal Agreement between the E.U. and the U.K. with the Internal Markets Bill.

Hostility to the Internal Markets Bill also pervades in the upper house of the U.K. Parliament. On November 9th, the House of Lords hammered it in a vote by 433 to 165. That defeat puts Johnson in a comparable position to Theresa May whose repair work in Europe during her prime ministership was continually vitiated by her failure to pass legislation central to her strategy through the U.K. Parliament. Still more dramatically, it leaves Johnson with just a few weeks to reach a trade deal with the E.U. since the 27 national governments of the union would need to approve it and the European Parliament to ratify it before Christmas—or face a no-deal catastrophe on January 1st.

In addition to moral opposition to the U.K.'s recklessness vis-à-vis Ireland, there is a real-world incentive for Washington to make a trade deal with the U.K. conditional on protecting peace and an open border in Ireland. By next January, the concentration of the new president and the new congress will naturally be on public health and the economy. Neither the new president nor the congress can afford to make an economic mistake on the scale of

enabling the British government's behaviour.

Under Biden, the Speaker's Lunch, a lunch hosted by the Speaker on around St. Patrick's Day, will again involve the U.S. president. The Speaker's Lunch began as a Washington institution when Tip O'Neill invited Ronald Reagan to attend in 1982, and it became an instrument of policy for the Irish. The only president to have rebuffed the speaker's invitation to cross town to celebrate Ireland's national day in the congress was Donald Trump, earlier this year. The incipient global lockdown in mid-March diverted attention from the disruption and the diplomatic setback that Trump's refusal represented from Ireland's perspective. At such events, Biden will announce his pro-Irish measures. Biden will almost certainly travel to Ireland while president, taking in the two counties (Louth and Mayo) where his distant cousins reside. The replacement Biden picks for Mick Mulvaney as U.S. Special Envoy for Northern Ireland will not channel—as Mulvaney did—the British agenda in his/her dealings with the Irish government.

Trump's bromance with Boris Johnson sustained a Brexit fantasy that a deus ex machina intervention by Washington would vindicate Britain's position and deliver a splendid trade deal. The reality for the British now is that they have alienated the two biggest economic blocs in the world—the U.S. and the E.U. The only route open to the British is to negotiate in good faith and to accept their diminished and diminishing role in world affairs.

The Irish lobby has existed in multifarious guises in U.S. politics since the Great Irish Famine heralded mass emigration from Ireland to the U.S. However, the sole pressure group to have ever successfully moved U.S. presidents to intervene in Anglo-Irish relations was created by John Hume in the 1970s. A civil rights and political leader, Hume persuaded Ted Kennedy in the Senate and Tip O'Neill in the House to mobilise their colleagues through the vehicle the Congressional Friends of Ireland caucus to trade their political capital with successive U.S. presidents in return for support for Ireland. The results were: the Carter Statement on Northern Ireland in 1977, White House coercion on Prime Minister Thatcher to sign the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, the full-scale White House support for the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and a series of seven (so far) U.S. Special Envoys for Northern Ireland. That lobby coexisted with Britain's assiduous efforts to countervail it. There were victories and losses for both sides, with the Irish prevailing for the most part. Given the calculus of power in Washington now at this crucial juncture, the outcome for the British is foregone. In this backdrop, a no-deal Brexit would be even more injurious to British interests than it was before Biden's victory. Britain has no cards left to play. The only exit from its dilemma is to agree on a deal with the E.U., one which Ireland has to approve. Such are the fruits of a Brexit campaign consecrated to the cause of 'taking back control'.



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Covid-19: Much Like U.S., Ireland Still Not Out of the Woods

Much of 2020 has been dominated by the omnipresence of the coronavirus, which, at the time of this writing, has taken the lives of over 1 million people worldwide. The US, which has had almost 8 million confirmed cases of the virus, has consistently reported 25,000+ new cases nationwide every day since June. In Ireland, the virus has had a much smaller impact, but new cases have recently begun spiking.

It seemed that daily new cases in Ireland peaked on April 16th, when the country reported 1,040 new cases. Over the summer, new cases plummeted to just double digit numbers, but have slowly begun climbing back as

of late. On October 14th, 1,084 new cases were reported in Ireland, breaking the previously held record. The virus shows no signs of slowing down: on October 15th, 1,205 new cases were reported, according to the Irish Times.

As a result, measures are being taken by the Irish government to contain the virus. Under the government’s Plan for Living with COVID-19, five levels with different restrictions associated with each, have been outlined by the government to stop the spread of the coronavirus. As a result of the recent spike in cases, Level 3 has been enacted across the Republic, except in counties Cavan, Monaghan, and

Donegal, which are at Level 4 as of midnight on October 15th.

Life Under Level 3:

Prohibits visitors to the home or garden, with exceptions for essential purposes, specifically caring for the elderly or providing support to those who live alone.

Citizens are asked to remain in their county except for essential purposes such as work or health.

Weddings and funerals may proceed, but with a maximum number of attendees set at 25.

Bars and restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery.

Public venues (museums, libraries, etc.) will be closed

Public transportation capacity will be at 50% to ensure safe social distancing

Religious services moved online while places of worship will remain open for private prayer

By the time this article is published, however, many, if not all, of the counties in Ireland may be placed under Level 4 restrictions. Given the current trend in daily

new coronavirus cases, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Simon Harris, has come out and said that it’s “likely, though not inevitable” that the rest of the Republic will go to Level 4 restrictions.

Life Under Level 4:

No visitors from outside a household will be allowed.

Citizens must remain in their county of residence except for essential work and health

Weddings may proceed with up to 6 guests in attendance for a ceremony and reception

Bars and restaurants will remain open for takeout and delivery

Public venues will remain closed

Public transportation will be reduced to 25% capacity

Religious services will remain online, and places of worship will be open for private prayer

Visits to nursing homes will be suspended except in essential and immediate instances

Like the United States, Ireland

has been having trouble managing the coronavirus. Unlike the U.S., however, it seems that its citizens haven’t made the pandemic a political issue. After Donald Trump was discharged from Walter Reed Medical Center after having the coronavirus earlier in October, he immediately went on a campaign of misinformation in an effort to continue downplaying the virus’ effects on the United States. What Donald Trump can’t downplay is the fact that over 200,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus, and that the rate of infection shows no signs of easing up.

As we as a people continue to quibble over the threat of the virus, how many lives it’s taken, and whether or not it even EXISTS, more Americans will continue to fall ill and perish. This isn’t a seasonal flu. This isn’t a hoax. Perhaps it’s time that we took a page out of Ireland’s playbook and take this virus seriously. If we don’t, thousands more people will die.

Books by Cynthia G. Neale



During the Irish Famine from 1845 to 1850 over a million people perished due to hunger and fever. Thousands of ships brought more than two million Irish people to North America in search of new lives. The Irish Dresser is the saga of the McCabe family who struggle to survive during this difficult time. When 13-year-old Norah McCabe crawls into the old dresser that sits next to the hearth holding a few pieces of her mother’s china, she dreams of luscious cakes and fairies as hunger pains grip her.



Hope in New York City continues the saga of Norah McCabe and her family now dwelling in New York City where they encounter poverty & racism as Irish Catholics & immigrants. Norah becomes a newsboy, meets Walt Whitman, visits Barnum’s Museum, meets new friends, but plots a plan to return to Ireland. After the Astor Opera

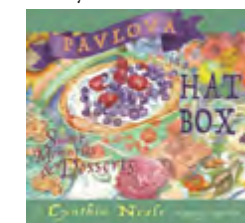
House Riot of 1849 occurs and her father disappears, will Norah leave or stay in New York and find the true meaning of home?



Norah, The Making of an Irish-American Woman in 19th-Century New York and The Irish Milliner (set during the Civil War period in New York City) “It became clear that much had conspired to bring her to this place, but that it was not just the place and event that she had been brought to. Revelation came to her that she, Norah McCabe, would live and not just live, but live like she had always wanted to live and had not known how.”



“This timely novel spans centuries to bring to our attention a topic as old as yesterday, as expedient as tomorrow - emigration. Cynthia Neale’s work, written with love and insight, reminds us that our neighbor is all mankind.” ~ Tim Pat Coogan, Irish broadcaster, journalist, writer and author of 1916 The Easter Rising, Michael Collins and The Famine Plot.



Pavlova in a Hat Box, Sweet Memories and Desserts is a collection of classic and new sumptuous dessert recipes redolent of the comfort of old-fashioned fare, but with a modern twist.

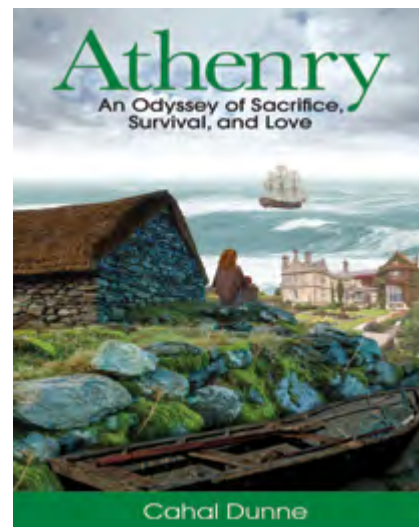


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Irish Music Retailer Golden Discs Opens in U. S.

Ireland's oldest home-entertainment retail chain sets up online sales outlet in time for the holidays

www.goldendiscs.com

Record retailer Golden Discs was established in 1962 by Jack Fitzgerald and Tom Rogers under the name the Trans-Atlantic Record Agency (TARA) in Dublin, Ireland. Today Golden Discs caters to a global customer base across more than 40 countries. It is Ireland's oldest music retail chain, with 22 outlets nationwide. The site's focus is on

getting inquiries from the US for years and have been promising to launch a separate site dedicated to traditional and contemporary Irish Music away from the full range we offer on our domestic site. With the renewed interest and resurgence in Vinyl we thought the time was right to launch this year."

"Ireland punches way above its weight in music talent and has produced some incredible artists over the past century... from Trad giants such as Christy Moore, Planxty and The Chieftains to more contemporary bands like Thin Lizzy, Van Morrison and U2 to recent upstarts like Hozier, Imelda May and The Script."

As well as all the Irish catalog product the site will also carry new releases such as the forthcoming new Christy Moore album, The Pogues - The BBC Session 84 - 86, U2 - All That You Can't Leave Behind 20th Anniversary edition released with Vinyl and boxsets, A Woman's Heart - re released later this month on CD and on colored vinyl, Thin Lizzy - Rock Legends box set and vinyl to name

but a few.

The success story and legacy of Golden Discs is testament not only to the vision of Jack, Tom, Stephen and the entire staff pool over the years but also to the millions of Irish music lovers that walk through its doors and log-on to its website every year in support of this fully Irish-owned family-run company.

For more information on the history of Golden Discs and how to purchase your favorite Irish artists or simply to sign up for our newsletter go to www.goldendiscs.com

Irish Music be it Traditional folk, 'Celtic' music and modern singer songwriters and bands. The site also sells books, t-shirts and merchandise. Golden Discs is now looking to reach the Irish American music fans with the launch of www.goldendiscs.com.

In 1966 the name The Golden Disc was chosen as the name of the first store in the first shopping center in Ireland; Stillorgan Shopping Center. "The Golden Disc" was originally associated with an accolade presented to artists upon sale of 500,000 vinyl albums, which at the time was very rare and impressive, thus a seemingly fitting name for the new store considering the achievements of the company in the previous years and every store thereafter was given the name Golden Discs.

In the 1990s the business was taken over by Stephen Fitzgerald, the son of Jack, who had spent many years in the States monitoring the evolution of the industry. The catalog of music the company carries reads like a complete history of Irish music. Says Stephen about the US launch, "We've been



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The Lion and the Antelope

I came across an interesting documentary on TV recently. It concerned a Domestic Appliances plant in Ireland that was losing money and fighting for its life. The documentary took up the story as they were competing with Portugal for the next new product introduction. Portugal had an advantage, having half the labour costs, and if the plant in Ireland failed to win this new business, they would be staring closure in the face. Costs would have to be reduced and the plant streamlined if they were to have any chance at all to compete with Portugal.

The Plant Manager decided to get into the heart of the plant and spend a full week on the manufacturing floor with the workers, getting familiar with all of the operations. The programme then showed him doing this, driving a forklift, delivering material to the floor, assembling product, testing, packing and other various operations. As he worked, there was constant dialogue between the operators and himself as they looked for the most efficient way of carrying out the various operations.

The next Monday he met with his management team, he laid out his observations and they turned them into a survival plan by eliminating waste and embarking on a programme of continuous improvement. The programme had a happy ending as they eventually won the contract over Portugal because they were able to demonstrate and sustain these improvements over a period of time. There's a time to get involved and there's

a time to be strategic. Good Management is knowing how to weave and bob between the two of these.

It reminds me of the jungle anecdote. When the lion wakes up in the morning he has to run faster than the slowest antelope or he does not eat. When the antelope wakes up he has to outrun the fastest lion or he will get eaten. One thing is certain though, both the lion and the antelope have to wake up and hit the ground running.

It is no different in business at the moment. We must constantly remain alert, awake and vigilant to the threats and a programme of continuous improvement must always be in place to ensure competitiveness. We cannot afford to be complacent and live in the shadow of past glories. Cost competitiveness is a critical factor in modern technology and business. We must also look for ways to increase innovation over volume manufacturing on the journey ahead. In Ireland, we have been whistling a good tune for many years but we now need to take over the orchestra and start composing our own music.

It has been a different year across the world as we entered strange and unprecedented times, and I know there are better times ahead for us. Thanks to everybody who managed to read the column during the year and it is certainly very much appreciated. I hope everybody has a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and may you wear prosperity and happiness as a warm cloak during 2021.

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Reported this morning, including by RTE.ie here, that Dublin Airport's first Covid-19 test facility is open, while a second test centre will open next week at the airport. People will be offered the option of either a drive-through or walk-in test by two private companies. The costs of the test range from €99 to €159. The drive-through test centre will be available from today, with a separate walk-in testing facility to open on Monday. The testing facilities, which will be operated by healthcare firms Randox and RocDoc, are open to the public, whether they require a test for travel or for another reason. The tests will have to be pre-booked online. There is testing capacity for more than 12,000 tests per day, which will shortly be expanded to 15,000.

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Harrigan & Hart

The form we now know as musical comedy was initiated on Broadway by Edward (Ned) Harrigan and Tony Hart. Produced between 1878 and 1884, with book and lyrics by Harrigan and music by his father-in-law David Braham, these shows featured characters and situations taken from everyday street life familiar to most New Yorkers. Harrigan, Hart and Braham laid a path that Broadway musicals would follow profitably for more than a century to come.

Harrigan was a variety comic who had made his name in the variety melodeons of San Francisco, and Hart was a stage-struck reform school escapee with a rare gift for stage comedy. They met in the mid 1870's, when both were touring the Midwest, and soon developed a routine that poked fun at New York's infamous neighborhood militia's. These local "guard troops" were little more than uniformed drinking clubs sponsored by local politicians. Weekend parades to impress the public were usually so beer-soaked that the participants only managed to look ridiculous. To spoof this, Harrigan and Hart donned ill-fitting uniforms and staggered through inept military drills while singing a merry march.

Audiences all across the country loved the act and the catchy "Mulligan Guard's March" was soon heard all around the world. In the novel Kim Rudyard Kipling notes that it was a favorite with British troops in India who replaced the names of New York streets with various Indian locales.

When Harrigan and Hart reached New York, the "Mulligan Guard" act was such a sensation that it toured the city's top variety theaters for over a year. Inspired by this acclaim, they expanded the act into "The Mulligan Guard Picnic" in 1878. This sketch ran for forty minutes and it packed audiences into Broadway's Theatre Comique for a month.

In the Mulligan Guard shows the versatile Harrigan performed, produced, and directed while writing the scripts and lyrics. The action was always set on the scruffy streets of downtown Manhattan, with Harrigan playing politically ambitious Irish saloon owner Dan Mulligan, and Hart winning praise as the black washerwoman Rebecca Allup. Their shows still used the minstrel form of blackface.

It was the first in what would be a seven-year series of full-length musical farces. Most of these farces centered around Irish-Americans in New York. These farces proved extremely popular with New York's immigrant-based lower and middle classes, overlooked groups that loved seeing themselves depicted on stage. Powerful politicians made a point of showing up too, anxious to curry the favor of



voters.

With the success of their plays came financial gains. They were called The Merry Partners but by 1885 the partnership had run its course. Harrigan's penchant for hiring relatives annoyed Hart who felt he was being slighted. Hart went off on his own, but the crippling late stages of syphilis forced him off the stage a year later and he died in 1891 at the young age of 36.

Harrigan continued his busy life. In December 1890, he opened his own theater on 35th Street and Sixth Avenue in Manhattan. While his plays eventually became passe, with Vaudeville emerging, he still was sought out as an actor and continued to act through 1909. On June 12, 1911 Harrigan died.

While their songs and plays are rarely heard today their legacy is important to Irish-Americans. Prior to Harrigan & Hart most Americans looked down upon the Irish immigrants. "No Irish Need Apply" was the common phrase. After Harrigan & Hart's shows became popular, Irish-Americans were at least looked at differently. Harrigan & Hart's bumbling New York Irish cop, a precursor to the Keystone Cops, at least brought a smile to the faces of the many Americans familiar with their plays. This was a major step for Irish-Americans who had previously been depicted as apes and hoodlums.



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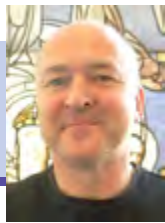


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Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle



FOR MANY YEARS, I taught Irish literature in Chicago, and I would always tell my students: the Irish love to debate, and argue about anything that's not personal. We like to pontificate with the best of them but when it comes to personal matters, we become awkward, uncomfortable, and unusually quiet. So, when it comes to approaching intimate subjects, decorum is required. You do not rush in where angels fear to tread. Instead, you avoid the subject.

For instance, my coming out was not accompanied by a fanfare. There was no great catharsis to be followed up by a rainbow party. I was forty years old and quite happy inside the musty old

closet of my own making. When it came to coming out, I simply moved from Ireland and took up residence with my partner Larry in Chicago. Everyone knew, but no one really said anything about the new situation. My father, a very pious Catholic, never suspected that one of his five sons might be gay. The closest we came to having a discussion on the subject happened quite accidentally. We were driving downtown, when all of a sudden, he pointed at a man walking down the street and said, "See him? He's a wee bit gay." When I later told this story to my partner, he said: "You should have asked him, which bit of the man was gay?"

In retrospect, this moment might have been the perfect opportunity for disclosure, but I'm Irish and we don't do that sort of thing. It's too personal. My father died none the wiser about my sexual orientation. But when it came to my mother, that's a different story. She and I never discussed

We were driving home from the casino. She loved a little flutter and, in Irish terms, our spell at the casino was quality family time. Joined by a common hope of winning, we bonded over the one-armed bandits. On the way back, from a not so lucky afternoon, we ran into traffic and were

grandchildren from me. It was at that point I wanted to laugh out loud. She already had twenty-plus grandkids as it was. One more from me would not have made her life any easier or fuller.

"I thought you'd get married and settled down with children." I tried to make light of the conversation. "You should be grateful that never happened. There's enough Boyles around to re-populate the world, should they be called upon to do so."

My diversion tactic came to naught. Mother could not be dissuaded from her mission. This was the conversation she had wanted to have for years, and I could not stop her. And given that I couldn't very well push her out of the car, I was forced to accept my fate. As I sat there in my discomfort, I began to understand what an important step this talk was for her. Since it was foreign to our culture to say the things she was attempting to put into words, it was quite a brave thing for her to do.

I can never remember my parents ever being very demonstrative. If they were proud of you or thought well of you, you heard it from a third party. When I graduated with my doctorate, I could tell they were pleased, even if they didn't fully appreciate the achievement. I didn't need them to say anything. They came to the ceremony and that was that. Academic accolades are one thing, but they are not personal. Mother was attempting to unlearn her own cultural conditioning, and all I could do was squirm in my seat.

In what seemed like an eternity, but was most likely only ten minutes, she had surpassed me in her ability to evolve beyond our Irish limitations. I was the one more traveled. I was the smart one. But she was the one more open to change. In those minutes, I knew that it is never enough to live with an open secret.

Terry Boyle, originally from Northern Ireland, is a playwright, poet, and former professor of literature who lives in the Palm Springs area with his husband Larry and their two dogs.



Terry and Larry

the subject, even though she had stayed at our Chicago home several times. She knew, and I knew she knew, and she knew that I knew she knew. It was an open secret after all.

There's no doubt in my mind that the matter of my sexuality was scrutinized, dissected, and interrogated by the other family members, but never directly with me. Having my domestic setup an open secret among the family worked for me. It meant that there were no embarrassing questions to answer and no awkward silences to quickly fill with mindless trivia. I could navigate my visits back home without fear of confrontation. At least, I thought I could, until one of the last trips back before my mother also passed away.

slowed to a crawl. Music played on the radio, and we laughed about our misfortune. All seemed good until traffic slowed to a halt. As if on cue, the conversation dropped to a more serious tone.

As soon as mother started with "I just want you to be happy," my heart started racing. I've never had an anxiety attack, and I'm not claustrophobic, but in those moments the car wasn't big enough for both of us, and my nerves were shot. I was convinced that the prelude to mother's opening comments was inspired by Jerry Springer. For a conservative Irish Catholic, mother enjoyed the freakish absurdities that Springer managed to find. I suppose I should be grateful to Jerry since against the backdrop of these offbeat characters my being gay must have seemed normal to her.

I desperately tried not to fixate on what she was saying. Watching the traffic lights in the distance, I prayed for a distraction, but none came. I'm convinced God was up there laughing his ass off at my increasing discomfort. Her speech hit a crescendo when she confessed to be disappointed at not having

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Tickets to the Gala are \$75 each, and there is a group discount. Tickets entitle you to a passcode to watch the one hour awards show, and it comes with an Irish Gift Box of Winston's Irish Soda Bread, Irish teabags, and other great surprises as a thank you for buying your ticket. Each ticket bought gets you the Irish Gift Box, so we will need the name and address of where to send it too (*in the Continental United States only!*)



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Person of the Year: Seamus Mallon (RIP) deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland from 1998 to 2001 and Deputy Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party from 1979 to 2001.

Music: Pete St. John; author of "Fields of Athenry," "Dublin in the Rare Auld Times," "The Kerryman," and many more.

Literature: playwright **John B. Keane** (RIP) and his son **Billy Keane;** a columnist in Ireland, and author of seven books.

Performing Arts: Tony Award winning Actress **Betty Buckley,** a

TV, film and stage star with 16 albums to her credit.

Visual Arts: Chicagoan, **Barry Butler,** an award winning photographer whose pictures grace the pages of the 2021 WGN Calendar.

Media/Journalism: Ray O'Hanlon gets the iBAM! award this year as editor of the influ-

ential weekly newspaper, the Irish Echo.

Person of the Year: Peggy Murphy, longtime volunteer at the Heritage Center.

On Saturday and Sunday, December 12, 13, there is a full program of film, storytelling music, theater, art, and more, available at ibamchicago.com.

There is a raffle available to buy online- one week's stay at a house on the Dingle coast in Ireland. Tickets are \$20 or 3 for \$50. Donations are gratefully accepted online, at 847-872-0700, or send a check to: iBAM! NPO PO BOX 7 - ZION IL 60099. Donations are fully tax deductible as iBAM! NPO is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit. www.ibamchicago.com

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iBAM! Virtual Programming Scheduled for December 12 and 13 (Free Both Days!)

SATURDAY - Message from the Music and Entertainment Association of Ireland
 Revolutionary Irish Women by **Dr. Sinead McCoole** (CWI Literary Salon)
 iBAM! 2020 Visual Arts Awardee, photographer, **Barry Butler**
 Grace O'Malley: Pirate Queen by **Maureen Smith** (CWI Literary Salon)
Crafters of Ireland: Sean Egan Art glass, **Shona Shirley McDonald** Mireog, **Mary and Keena:** The Celtic Fairy Collection, **Louise Carroll** Designer, **Liz Christy** Designer
 12 Patron Saints, 7 Celtic nations by **Mary Kunert** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Short Films of Ireland by **Mike Leonard** and **Mary Kay Walsh**
 How the Women of Ireland Transformed their Country by award winning author **Mary Pat Kelly** CWI Literary Salon)
Milwaukee Irish Fest Presents: Beautiful Affair compliments of Tradfest 2020
 Sound the Warning: Children of the War Book 1 author **Christie Sever**
 Music of **Joe and Declan McShane** (turn up the sound, and pour yourself a cuppa!)
 Women in Irish History by **Theresa Choske** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Songs by **Claudia Anderson** CWI Literary Salon)
 Author: New Book; Veil of Silence by **Sharon Bossard**
Conor Cunneen- An Irishman Speaks - Irish humor at its best!
 FILM: **Seamus Heaney: And the Music of What Happens** 90 min

TIMES TO BE DETERMINED and subject to change

SUNDAY - Award winning author **Turtle Bunbury**
Stephen Travers: Miami Showband Survivor Working for Peace
 Message from the Music and Entertainment Association of Ireland
 Recovering the Wisdom of the Celtic by **Dolores Whelan** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Film- **Bweeng** by **Mike Leonard** and **Mary Kay**
Cynthia Neale Author
 iBAM! 2020 Literary Awardee/Pub Owner in Listowel, Co Kerry, Ireland **Billy Keane**
 The Titanic **Jessica McCann** (CWI Literary Salon)
 March of Mill Children-reading by **Bridget Duffy** as "Mother Jones" (CWI Lit Salon)
 Singer **Orla Fallon** (Formerly of Celtic Women)
Cahal Dunne: Entertainer and Author out of Philadelphia area
Judy Lee Burke About her book, Blackrock Island
 Songs with **Mark Piekarcz** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Storyteller **Kathy O'Neill** (CWI Literary Salon)
 A Woman's History by **Rosemary Feurer** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Notable Manx Women by **Maureen Gary** (CWI Literary Salon)
 Milwaukee Irish Fest Film: High Kings, Makem and Clancy
 Closing program

TIMES TO BE DETERMINED and subject to change

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Catherine Finnegan's Boy Joey: Joe Biden's Presidency's Impact on Irish Chicago

By Michael Sean Comerford

"History says, don't hope
On this side of the grave.
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed-for tidal wave
Of justice can rise up,
And hope and history rhyme."

The Cure at Troy, by Seamus Heaney, often quoted by president-elect Joe Biden.

When all major media outlets earlier this month declared Joe Biden the winner of the 2020 presidential election, outdoor celebrations spontaneously erupted from Chicago to Ireland. Chicago bagpipers slung the pipes over their shoulders and joined crowds in Grant Park. People hung out of car windows banging on frying pans with soup spoons.

Biden won Illinois by 16 points, with 57 percent of votes cast. It was a landslide of historic proportions in Chicago, with Biden winning 82 percent of the vote and every ward in the city. In the 21st Ward on the far Southside, the ward went 95.6 percent for Biden.

The 19th Ward on the far Southside, which includes neighborhoods like Beverly, Mt. Greenwood and Morgan Park, were closer but still a landslide with 59.6 percent of the vote going to Biden, according to reporting by Block Club Chicago.

Biden's distant relatives in Ballin, County Mayo and in Cooley, County Lough crowded into public areas to cheer the second Irish Catholic president-elect of the United States of America. In Chicago, you'd have thought the Bulls won the world championship again and in Ireland, you'd have thought Mayo and Lough somehow won



the lottery.

"Joe Biden told me: 'I'll be back as president.' Please God he will," Joe Blewitt told the BBC when the announcement was made. Biden's distant cousin living in Ballin, Mayo, Blewitt's heating and plumbing service van carries the slogan "Biden for the White House, Blewitt for Your House." A giant mural of Joe Biden graces the side of a Ballin building wall.

President Barack Obama also traces his ancestral roots on his mother's side to Moneygall, County Offaly, Ireland and his 2011 presidential visit drew record crowds in Ireland. The first Irish Catholic president, John Kennedy's 1963 tour of Ireland drew unprecedented crowds.

The president-elect is known for his Irish "Bidenisms," which often quote his mother Catherine Finnegan.

"The President-elect is a man both hugely proud of and shaped by his Irish heritage,"

writes the Irish consul general for Chicago Kevin Byrne in an email. "You will no doubt be aware of his quoting of Irish Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney's "The Cure at Troy" during his acceptance speech at the Democratic Convention."

While President Donald Trump was still contesting the election, Taoiseach Michael Martin was one of the first four world leaders to speak to Biden after his victory was acknowledged by major media outlets.

On the call with the Taoiseach, Biden emphasized his support of the Good Friday Agreement on peace in Northern Ireland and that he wants it honored when it comes to any future trade agreements with the United Kingdom under Brexit.

Biden also spoke to Pope Francis and mentioned his opposition to the child-separation policy at the American border and his support of international climate change initiatives.

Much is being made of Biden's vice-presidential pick Kamala Harris's gender and heritage but there's a modern Irish story to be told there too. Byrne pointed out Ireland's current deputy prime minister, the Tánaiste, is the son of an Indian immigrant parent and currently 16 percent of all Irish residents were born outside Ireland (a higher estimated percentage of foreign-born residents than in America - at 14 percent).

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and some in the Irish-American community have been critical of new, tougher tactics of ICE, the US Immigrant Customs and Enforcement agency. Biden has expressed support for securing clearer legal pathways for citizenship. The Irish American Heritage Center named him to the Irish American Hall of Fame.

The economic ties Chicago and Illinois ties to Ireland are strong but lopsided. Abbott Laboratories, Baxter International and Motorola are just some of the bio-tech and tech firms with substantial operations in Ireland. Illinois imports an estimated \$1.8 billion in mostly pharmaceutical and technology products to the state. The state exports just \$300 million in products to Ireland, according to Tom Bartowski, director of international business development at World Business Chicago.

"Our trade goes through the European Union," said Bartowski, who proudly pointed out he is half Irish-American. "Any change in trade policy would go through the EU."

Since October of last year, the US has imposed tariffs against the EU in what is referred to as the WTO Airbus case. That has resulted in 25 percent tariffs on Irish foods and drinks sold in America. Biden has

criticized the tariffs. Supporters of Irish trade hope special attention will be paid to Irish goods.

Biden's top campaign aides have last names that could fit the lyrics of Mc-Namara's Band. A group named "Irish Americans for Biden" is credited with helping him win in swing states like Pennsylvania. Irish-American supporters expect the new president to be surrounded by advisors of Irish-American heritage.

Joe Biden wasn't born with the Irish gift of the gab, he partially conquered his stuttering by memorizing poetry. The Bidens were so poor in economically depressed Scranton, P.A. that they lived for years in the house of the Finnegan, his maternal grandparents.

What chance in life did a stuttering, poor Catholic and Irish kid have starting out in life in the 1940s?

Unlike John Kennedy, a child of privilege, Biden's upbringing was more typical of the struggling collective Irish-American story. He went to working-class Catholic schools and state colleges. He wears the rosary beads around his wrist as a reminder of his late eldest son "Beau" Biden, who died of brain cancer in 2015. His first wife, Neilia, and 13-month-old daughter, Naomi, were killed in a car crash while Christmas shopping in 1972. Sons Beau and Hunter were badly injured. He's a teetotaler who goes to church every Sunday.

The president-elect is known for his Bidenisms. Here are a few.

*In a 2016 letter to the government of Ireland, Biden once wrote about his personal feeling of Irishness.

"James Joyce wrote, 'When I die, Dublin will be written on my heart.'

"Well, Northeast Pennsylvania will be written on my heart. But Ireland will be written on my soul.

He often quotes former New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan: "To fail to understand that life is going to knock you down, is to fail to understand the Irishness of life."

*His grandfather Finnegan used to say, "Remember, the best drop of blood in you is Irish."

*Joe Biden's own saying, "We Irish, I like to tell people, are actually nostalgic for the future."

*His mother Catherine Finnegan's credo: "No one is better than you and you are better than no one."

Michael Sean Comerford is a Chicago-area journalist and author of the new book, "American OZ: An Astonishing Year Inside Traveling Carnivals at State Fairs & Festivals: Hitchhiking California to New York, Alaska to Florida."

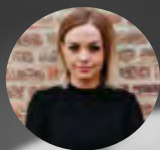
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Crock Of Gold; A Few Rounds With Shane McGowan

Reviewed by Mike Houlihan

Christmas 2020 will hit in a few weeks and I can't think of any Christmas song more perfect for this year of horror, death, and dystopian nightmares than "Fairy Tale of New York", by Shane McGowan of The Pogues and featuring the late Kirstie MacColl. The tune tells a haunting story with its lyrics of despair from the NYC drunk tank one Christmas eve and yet still manages to kindle the seasonal love and hope and promise of a new year. You'll be singing the chorus yourselves sometime this season, you know you will. The song's been called the best Christmas song of all time by various UK and Ireland polls and no doubt you've seen the video hundreds of times.

That video was my first introduction to Shane McGowan of The Pogues, maybe the most unlikely male torch singer I've ever laid eyes on. Pretty, he ain't.

But the guy is so damned committed to the music and the poetry and the craic, you can't take your eyes off him. Soul, he has in abundance. And this holiday season we're all about to be treated to a hilarious, and ultimately sad documentary film about this man who lit a stick of dynamite with a lifestyle and passion that appears to have finally taken its toll on his Irish body and soul.

The film is *Crock Of Gold: A Few Rounds With Shane McGowan*, and it's available through the Gene Siskel Film Center VOD starting December 4th.

You might want to have a cocktail or two handy when you watch it. Filmmaker Julien Temple finds a variety of ways to tell the story of Shane McGowan, including animation, historical and archived concert footage, old interviews, and a series of McGowan's friends, including Irish patriot Gerry Adams and film star Johnny Depp, probing him for details of his deliciously defiant life of



started drinking and smoking at the age of six.

We follow him and his family growing up in London, meet his mom and dad, his sister, friends, and girlfriends, all through the prism of Shane's wacked out psyche. There's plenty of Irish mythology and poetry and pints and whiskey, acid, and heroin to keep things interesting.

The tragedy of Shane McGowan is the tragedy of all the great Irish bards like Behan, Joyce, Flann O'Brien and plenty of others who dared to kiss the sky. We all ultimately share the same fate as Icarus. The film is packed with Irish history, politics, mythology, religion, and plenty of soul.

Gerry Adams reminds Shane of one of his own favorite lyrics from Fairy Tale of New York. "I could have been someone." And of course, the retort, "Well so could anyone!"

Do yourself a favor and watch *Crock Of Gold, A Few Rounds With Shane McGowan*. Just like Shane, it's a masterpiece.

To order a screener go to Gene Siskel Film Center's website at www.siskelfilmcenter.org.

performing traditional Irish music through drugs, sex, and rock and roll. I found myself laughing out loud at the comic absurdity of Shane's antics until falling under the spell of his poetry and staring into the abyss by his side. It's a wild ride.

Shane tells us God chose him as a little boy to be the one who saves Irish music, because of course, "God is Irish". Being born on Christmas Day has its perks, "I was born lucky."

The film takes you on the journey of Shane's life over sixty years starting idyllically in Tipperary where he would visit relatives in the summers and

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Irishwoman Pilot Helps Break the Glass Ceiling

by James Bartlett

Air travel has all but disappeared from our lives in 2020, but recently a Northern Irishwoman broke through another barrier to give some hope to youngsters thinking of a career in aviation when travel to foreign climes becomes something, we can all enjoy again.

Born in the small village of Corky in County Antrim, Pamela Forsythe created a little piece of aviation history when she landed the Qatar Airways 777-300 at Belfast International Airport a few weeks ago.

The B777-300 has some of the largest jet engines in the world, and it was the first time such a huge aircraft had touched down at the North of Ireland airport, an experience that Pamela, 38, described to CausewayCoastWomen.co.uk as "a dream come true."

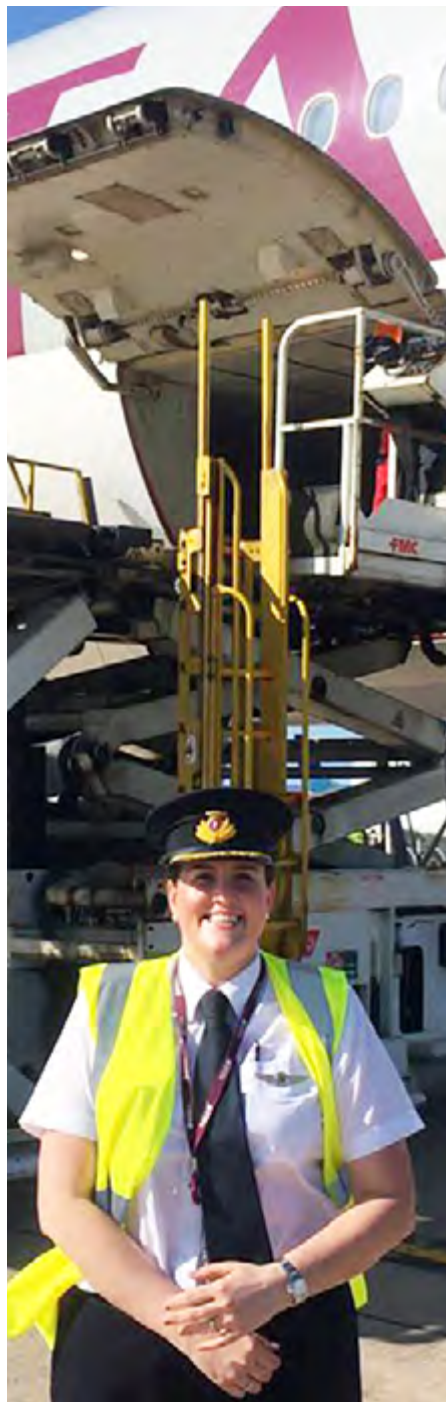
Pamela, who currently lives in Doha, Qatar, where her airline is based, developed her love for the skies at school in Dalriada, Ballymoney, and started her then-unconventional path by gaining a scholarship for 20 hours of flying towards her Private Pilots License (PPL) just after she completed her exams.

"I went to Liverpool University that September to study Aerospace Engineering, and with the help of some fairly

varied summer jobs over the next couple of years which included everything from working in hospital kitchens to selling vacuum cleaners, I had saved enough to go and finish my PPL the summer after I graduated."

A commercial license was next, and she admitted to a "few knock backs and rejections on the way - no one said it was going to be easy!" before she was accepted onto a cadet program with Thompson Airways, who sent her to a training academy in southern Spain to complete the 14-month integrated training program.

Thompson took her on as an employee on the Boeing 757, and she flew her first commercial flight just a couple of months later at the "ripe old age" of 24.



"I will never forget that day. Terrified, excited, focused and yet massively overwhelmed! A passenger asked me later that year if I was sure I was old enough to fly this airplane. I took it as a compliment. Pity no-one says that anymore!"

She was made redundant in the wake of the 2008/2009 recession, but it turned out perfectly as Qatar Airways took her on as a first officer on the Boeing 777, which she has been flying ever since, becoming a Captain in May 2016.

"I was a little older, a little wiser, and a lot less overwhelmed, but still with that same silly excited grin as I had on my first commercial flight 10 years earlier."

As Pamela enjoys a successful career, she is keen to encourage more young women to consider it as a career.

"Women have been flying airplanes for hundreds of years, so it's nothing new. They had a huge role to play in aviation during WW2 especially, but then it became a male-dominated industry in the 60s and 70s. Luckily times are changing and we are seeing more and more female pilots, so hopefully that trend keeps going. If you want it, go for it!"

Despite flying around the world, she still considers the North of Ireland home.

She and her husband bought a house in Ballycastle a few years ago and have been renovating it ever since, with a plan to settle there in the near future.

"I've been all over the world, but can't imagine a better place to live than Ballycastle."

Pamela usually visits Ireland every month or so, thanks to a flexible schedule, though Covid-19 has changed all her plans this year. Pamela described the pandemic as a worse crisis for the industry than 9/11, and thinks that all the airlines will be suffering for a long time yet, as will the employees, everyone from airport workers to cabin crew.

She's still been flying - there's been a huge uptick in cargo deliveries - but the public need to get confidence back in the industry, even if Pamela feels an airport is probably one of the safest places you can be in.

She hasn't been back to Ballycastle since January, and so this record-breaking flight, a charter to return Chinese students - was even more of a treat than usual:

"We only had two hours on the ground but it was still enough time to breathe in some of that clean Northern Irish air."

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A Republican Elephant in a Field of Thyme

Yeah, I know; I'm just looking at it. That's a hell of a big elephant in the room, isn't it?

But I'm guessing that you're as electioned-out as I am - a lot more so, seeing as you were actually living with it - so I'm going to ignore it just for the moment. It's not going to go away of course, not this elephant - not this one -- but we can leave it until we've taken a few deep breaths and are a bit more ready for it.

Instead, I'm going to be a bit of a Contrary Mary (just for a change, like) and stick up for an Irish film that has been getting the most unmerciful pasting here these past couple of days.

Opening Stateside on December 11th is a movie called 'Wild Mountain Thyme' and it stars Jamie Dornan, Emily Blunt, Jon Hamm and Christopher Walken. It's a romantic comedy that's set

in County Mayo, Ireland.

Well, it's a version of County Mayo. Judging by the trailer - which is all that the mocking social media commentators are doing also, by the way - it is a Mayo that is probably in the same charming dimension as 'The Quiet Man'. In other words, if it didn't exist then maybe it should have; maybe I would have liked it too. And tell me seriously, just at what point in our Rise and Fall from Celtic Tiger greatness, did we get too sophisticated for such basic tasty fare?

Look, maybe you're more in the mood for Tarkovsky's 'Stalker' or Bergman's 'Seventh Seal'. Fair play and off with you. I'll even lend you the discs if you like, since I've been known to wallow in a bit of doom and gloom myself. But

after nine months of a concentrated diet of Covid news, more Covid news and extra news of coming Covid misery (and that's before we even touch the American election) I'm in the mood for something happy, maybe



Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady

a bit corny, with a beginning, a middle and an end -- an essential ingredient being a happy ending. If it's a wee bit 'Oirish' in the bargain, I really don't care.

It's got Jamie Dornan, who female friends tell me is very easy on the eye - and they asked me to underline very; it has Emily Blunt, who I'm telling you is simply beautiful and who's talent I've admired since 'The Adjustment Bureau'. And it's got Christopher Walken, who everybody likes.

I don't know how Jon Hamm wandered onto the set but that's OK too - just kidding, Mr. Hamm!

Anyway, the Irish accents have been getting a battering over here. People have been calling radio shows, for crying out loud, which will probably tell you that cabin fever is thriving in many a home. I mean, even Jamie Dornan has been getting a ribbing over his accent and he IS Irish! I

guess the actor had never made it as far as Mayo before. (Actually, Walken's accent is pretty good, judging from the trailer. He looks great, too.)

And I have to admit that some of this is pretty funny: the Irish actress Hannah Mamalis did a clip of herself as the lovely Emily telling the equally lovely Jaime that even though she would obviously like to have his babies, as an Irish farming woman she 'can only give birth to potatoes'.

In this strange new world where every single word you write - even calling an actress 'lovely' - can cause offence to the Perpetually Offended, I hope that we can at least agree that the trailer's opening shots of Mayo are as gorgeous as the county itself. No, I'm not affiliated with the tourist board, but the reality is that it's only half an hour up the road from me and yet strictly speaking I can't travel from Oranmore in Galway to see it at the moment. Strange days indeed that the next time I actually DO see Mayo may be on the big screen - IF cinemas open again in December.

But do you know what? Even if 'Wild Mountain Thyme' turns out to be the most outrageous load of ould gob and begorra Paddy-whackery, I intend to enjoy every minute of it. *****

And so, to that elephant in the room.

I think it's probably unlikely that Donald Trump has spent a lot of time with the works of Dylan Thomas (unlike former President Carter, who I discovered whilst doing a piece from Wales, was quite the authority on him); but God knows he has decided 'do not go gentle into that good night'.

It is one of those things about having a monthly column: I'm writing this on the 14th of November so by the time you (hopefully) are reading it in December, all of this is sadly out-of-date. But it does appear that he's gone - quietly and with the dignified statesmanship that was his style.

Well no, of course it wasn't; and that was one of the reasons that he didn't bug me as much as he

seems to have bothered everyone else within a two-hundred-mile radius of me. What you saw was what you were going to get or get tweeted at you at an alarming rate. It wasn't the way a normal politician behaved and since I have less and less time for that species of career conmen/women, I found that all to the good.

I've never been shy about getting stuck into our own crew of chancers here in Ireland; but I don't live in the States, so I've always steered clear of commenting on American politics. It's just too easy to miss a lot of nuances. But I'll come right out and say that if I were living there, I imagine that I would have voted for Trump. In fact, I'm pretty sure of it.

Not that he would ever be on my dream list of people to have dinner with. I've never been a fan of his kind of blustering, pseudo-macho alpha male posturing. And yet it seems to me that you can dislike the man whilst liking what he is doing. And it further appears that 72 million Americans also liked what he was doing; well, either that or the protest vote against President Kamala Harris - my apologies, Joe Biden - were astronomical.

Watching from this remove, I was often in awe of how Trump - on a DAILY basis - got his job (and his tweets) done whilst simultaneously putting up with a biased media, twisted and hate-filled communications and a universally hostile group of 'celebrities' who really lost the run of themselves and felt that their opinion mattered to the person in the street.

Listen, all of you from silly little girls like Jennifer Lawrence all the way through to curmudgeonly old geezers like Robert de Niro, who many decades ago was my favourite actor: you are very good at memorizing other people's words. Stick to that. No one I know could give a damn about your opinions. On anything other than acting.

And on that cheerful note, I will wish you all - yes, even those of you who don't like me - a warm and loving Christmas. It's been a tough old year. Let's make next year a better one.

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pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



NO Ear Worms: The Great Music Pumped Out by WDSO 88.3 FM -from Chesterton High School

"If I should ever die, God forbid, let this be my epitaph: THE ONLY PROOF HE NEEDED FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD WAS MUSIC."

- Kurt Vonnegut

Music cradled me from infancy and, man, I jumped from its arms and on to the dance floor. The very first tune that I recall came from Spike Jones. It was Lulu Had a Baby (1953) and it had a maniacal tenor banjo driving these lyrics:

Lulu had a baby,
She called him Sonny Jim,
She put him in a bath tub
To teach him how to swim.
He swam to the bottom
And then he gasped for air;
Lulu got excited
And grabbed him by the -
Haircut, shampoo,
Ring the barber's bell;
If he doesn't like it,
Just tell him what the -
Hey there, say there,
How about a kiss?
Hey now, say now,
What comes after this?

Aside from Spike Jones and His City Slickers, I was transported by Irish, Classical, Country, Blue Grass, Blues and especially early/ mid 1960's Rock to my current Dionysian levels of human excitement. My home at 1755 West 75th Place (in Chicago's Englewood/

Gresham, or Little Flower Parish) pumped out jazz from the Admiral radio parked between the stove and the ice box in our two bedroom Georgian. The radio was fixed at WCFL 1000 khz AM. From the old Admiral, poured forth Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Errol Garner, Stan Getz, Oscar Peterson, Sarah Vaughan and the incomparable Joe Williams.

At my grandfather's house, a huge bungalow with a vast yard, at 7535 S. Marshfield, gathered the greatest Irish musicians in Chicago and possibly in America: Jimmy Neary, Terry 'Cuz' Teahan, Johnny McGreevy and Elinor Kane Neary. Every Wednesday they gathered while my grandfather, a musician of some small talents, cut the hair of his three score grandsons and sat in, as well.

Warner Brothers cartoons and Popeye introduced me to Wagner, Brahms, Rossini and Mozart.

The transistor radio introduced me to ROCK (circa 1962). The illicit ritual of plugging into a box, operated by batteries, that transferred sounds to the soul took place after homework, bath and prayers under the covers in the sack.

Interestingly, the sounds paralleled the dropping of my own voice from its piercing tones of a Castrati to a modest baritone.

Eddie Cochran, Wilson Picket,

James Brown, The Animals, The Yardbirds, The Zombies and the Stones awakened me to the fact that I was meant to shake my tail feathers and rooster it up aplenty! A poor writer would burden you and belabor the obvious to death and load up all sorts of 'coming of age and sexual awakenings' nonsense, but your genial host here will have none of that! Hell, music is cool!

I became a very discerning lover



Instructor Matt Waters with a WDSO Fund raiser poster.

of Rock - The Beatles? Ok, up to Sgt. Pepper. The Kinks? Superb. Same too for The Four Tops, Temptations, James Brown, Creedence Clearwater, Young Rascals, Eric Clapton, Johnnie Taylor, Jimmy Ruffin, Tyrone Davis and Mitch Ryder.

My first dance with Ginny O'Malley in 1968 was sparked by I Will Always Think About You, by Ronnie Rice & The New Colony Six. In 1982, I asked Mary Elizabeth Cleary to marry me while listening

to Little Feat:

If you'll be my dixie chicken,
I'll be your Tennessee lamb

And we can walk together
down in Dixieland

Down in Dixieland

Well we made all the hot spots.
My money flowed like wine

Then that low down Southern whiskey began to fog my mind

And I don't remember church bells or the money I put down

On the white picket fence and boardwalk of the house at the edge of town

But boy do I remember the strain of her ain

The nights we spent together,
and the way she called my name
She said, "Okay."

Music echoes our joys.

I moved to Michigan City last year and dial surfed. Like decent pizza, great music is tough to come by. Returning to Michigan City from my brother's home in Orland Park on the I-80/94 speedway from Lansing to Gary, I noticed that WDCB 95.9, Chicago's only Jazz and Blues station, was cutting out. I began the channel surf - ME FM? Oh, yeah, let's hear McCartney's We're So Sorry, Uncle Albert for sixty four miles? I think not. Country stations? Nope. What passes for C/W these days is White Boy Hip-Hop with fiddles.

Just past the Broadway exit in Gary heading east on I-94, I happened upon 88.3 FM and was treated to a magnificent magic carpet of tunes and heard not one ear worm* producing auditory abortions like Billy, Don't Be a Hero by Paper Lace or

ALL BY MYSELF ... by Eric Carmen. Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The first tune was Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto's haunting Girl From Ipanema, followed by Spencer Davis Group, David Allan Coe, John Hiatt, Gary U.S. Bonds, Johnny Rivers, The Buckinghams and a guitar duet by Mark Knopfler and Chet Atkins.

I am hooked.

WDSO 88.3 FM is Chesterton High School's radio station. In its 44rd year, this signature public high school's radio station has

become a regional legend.

Mr. Matt Waters instructs students in the broadcasting arts, news reporting and technical approaches and advances in broadcasting. Students operate the microphones and set the play lists. My compliments one and all.

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The radio station is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 charity and thanks to the efforts of the Duneland School Corporation, Mr. Waters and the fund-raising work of Ms. Emily Fletcher, people living in, or driving through, this beautiful region continue to be treated to magnificent music from Brahms to Tim Buckley.

You can purchase on-air advertising for as little as \$25 per spot (daytime) and \$10 per spot (nighttime) and have your business touted on air by the young people operating WDSO's airways. You may also wish to join me in sending a modest, or boastful, check to

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Irish American News is in the hands of many people who wander Indiana, especially those going to and from the Irish Riviera between Long Beach, Indiana and Grand Beach, Michigan, and their ears could use a treat.

You can pick up WDSO right around Ripley Street on the Frank Borman Expressway as you head toward your destinations near Michigan City and you will not be disappointed.

Avoid the ear worms, dial up WDSO 88.3 FM, or catch the live stream at

www.duneland.k-12.in.us.wdso

I'm listening to a toe-tapper by Johnny Cash at this very moment - Michigan City Howdy, Do!

*Ear Worm -An earworm, sometimes known as a brainworm, sticky music, stuck song syndrome

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It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane



Hello everyone,

Well, this is the month for the iBam (Irish Books, Art, and Music) this year. It's usually held in October but, this as we all know is one crazy year. It will be online virtually and it's free. In my opinion, it is the best festival in North America because it promotes all the arts of Ireland. Also, we've had people like Phil Coulter, Sharon Shannon, plus lots more perform at iBam in the past. So, if you mark your calendar for Friday, December 11th, which will be the Gala Awards Dinner (That's a ticket night). Then on Saturday 12th, and Sunday 13th, there is a fully packed program. You can watch it all from the comfort of your own home. Keep your eyes on the iBam FaceBook page for details. I believe Declan and I will be doing a set of songs and music, via our living room. I will put a short promo video up on my FaceBook pages and a poster.

On the 4th of this month, 2009, we lost one of Ireland's finest balladeers, Liam Clancy. He sang with a rare passion, and could hold you in his presence like a hypnotist, with his wonderful way of telling a story. Liam and his brothers Tom and Pat, and of course Tommy Makem were one of Ireland's finest treasures to land in America. Many have tried to revive their sound, but there will never be a replacement for a balladeer like Liam Clancy.

Just about a month ago, Ireland bid farewell to another national treasure, and that was Brian Coll, from County Tyrone. He was known and loved all over Ireland and abroad. He was another man who you could gladly pass the day listening to his stories of being on the road. He had such a great sense of humor. He was an outstanding singer. Brian will be sadly missed by all his friends and fans, all over the world. R.I.P.

Best wishes to Nathan Carter on his Anniversary album, which is now on sale. It has 20 great tracks. There is a very special song that Nathan wrote in memory of my brother, Nicky James. It's a beautiful song, and I know Nick would have been so proud of it. His memory lingers on in another song that Nathan has recorded. It's a song called 'Gypsy Queen', Nick sent it to Nathan last year. He was always looking out for songs that he thought would be good for Nathan. They had a great friendship, and I know Nathan is like me, missing Nick very much, especially in this, our first Christmas without him.

Here's a few famous birthdays this month, and I'd better start off with Declan McShane who will be 18, on Dec 11th. On the 12th, it's Daniel O'Donnell's and Sinéad O'Connor's birthday. On 16th, it's Barney McKenna's (Dubliners) R.I.P.

Recently, I've been doing quite a lot of writing with multi-instrumentalist and singer, Stephen Smyth. He came up with, as we say in the business "a hook line." We were talking about when we were on the road traveling from show to show, and how nice it was to enjoy the comforts of home, at the end of a tour. Well, we've been doing that since the pandemic arrived, and even though you can't beat the comforts of home, us musicians are

missing the road right about now. So, we came up with an immigration type song and I will make it the song for this month. After all, this is coming up to Christmas time and a good time to enjoy the 'Comforts Of Home'.

I hope you have a wonderful and safe Christmas in your home. And, until next time, be good to one another, Joe

'Comfort Of My Home'

Words and Music by Joe McShane and Stephen Smyth

verse 1

standing on the doorstep, a desire in me to roam
To take me on a journey, far across the foam.
The first time in my life I saw my father cry
With my broken hearted mother by his side.

Verse 2

As I reached the garden gate I put my suitcase down
With a heavy heart I turned and looked around
A bittersweet farewell the only place I've known
I know I will never forget the comfort of my home.

CHORUS. The comfort of home, I will not forget
The music, the laughter, the songs are with me yet
One thing I know is certain as from the nest I've flown
I won't forget my birthplace and the comfort of home

Verse 3

Now I'm settled in a city far across the sea
With unfamiliar sounds no birds singing in the trees
No mountains in the distant, no bright stars in the sky
Just a lasting memory of the day I said goodbye

Verse 4

Then I met some of my country men just the other day
It felt like I was home again as we pass the night away
It was great to join their company and not feel so alone
It's times like this bring to mind the comfort of my home

CHORUS. The comfort of home, I will not forget
The music, the laughter, the songs are with me yet
One thing I know is certain as from the nest I've flown
I won't forget my birthplace and the comfort of home

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Just Say No! to Arbitration Clauses on Nursing Home Contracts

Welcome to December IAN readers. What a strange, difficult year it has been. I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during these troubling times. A lot of families have suffered this year by the sweeping effects of the Coronavirus pandemic as it swept arbitrarily throughout our world. It has been well reported that nursing homes and their residents have been particularly hard hit by this deadly virus. Despite the worrying trend, placing a loved one into a nursing home is still a reality for many families and my focus this month is an attempt to educate IAN readers who might be faced with this step. During the admission to a nursing home, serious discussions will be necessary and many papers will be placed in front of you and/or your loved ones and you may be unsure what they mean or what to do with them. The admission papers to a nursing home, include admission contracts, health authorizations, Medicare documentation, power of attorney forms and do not resuscitate directives, to name but a few. This month I will focus on the increasingly popular phenomenon of presenting residents and their families with arbitration agreements as part of the Nursing Home admission process.

No one enters a nursing home imagining that he or she will be mistreated or neglected there. Everyone wants to start off on the right foot with nursing home staff and personnel. Unfortunately, even in the best nursing homes, things can and do go wrong. If they



Gallagher's Advice

By Caroleann
Gallagher



do, residents absolutely need to protect their rights to seek a remedy in court and the purpose of an arbitration agreement or clause, takes away those rights from residents and their families. The purpose of this article is to advise you at the outset, please know you DO NOT HAVE TO SIGN an arbitration agreement or arbitration clause to be admitted into a Nursing Home.

What is an Arbitration Agreement/Clause?

Arbitration agreements take away your rights to pursue a nursing home for negligence or wrong doing, in a court of law and set out alternative ways to deal with complaints of wrongdoing or negligence, which will deprive you or your right to a trial by jury. Generally, arbitration agreements heavily favor the nursing home as against the interests of the resident. They will generally entail a provision that any dispute will be heard by an Arbitrator, not a Judge and often times, the nursing home will be the entity to choose who the Arbitrator is. Generally, they will not allow a matter to proceed before a jury and your inherent basic right in that regarded will be lost. Often times an arbitration agreement will state that final decisions are binding with no right of appeal and the decisions are almost always confidential so the facility's wrongdoing or negligence will remain a secret. Sometimes Arbitration agreements they take the form of an actual separate agreement, which is easily recognizable but other times, the language of an arbitration Agreement can be buried deep within the rest of the nursing home resident's admission documentation. Thus, the admission process should not be rushed and you should be given sufficient time and space to look over and understand everything you are being asked to sign.

What are your rights?

If presented with an arbitration agreement or if you notice an arbitration clause within the nursing home admission paperwork your attention should be awakened and you should not proceed any further without fully understanding what you are being asked to sign. Fortunately, Federal guidelines do give residents and their families a number of rights that will protect you when confronted with such an agreement. Some of these are set out below:

- You HAVE the RIGHT to REFUSE to sign the agreement. Just say No!
- If the arbitration clause/paragraph is buried within your admission contract, CROSS IT OUT. Put your initials by the crossed-out section and date it.
- If the arbitration agreement is in a separate form on its own, just refuse to sign the actual form.
- A Nursing home CANNOT DENY your admission or discharge to a nursing home because you refuse to sign their arbitration agreement.
- Nursing homes are required to explain to you the arbitration agreement and its purpose. Often times they will ask you to sign a piece of paper to confirm that they did in fact explain the arbitration agreement

to you. Be careful when you are signing this, so as to ensue you are not actually signing the arbitration agreement, in lieu of just acknowledging that the nursing home explained it all to you.

• If you do sign an arbitration agreement, you must be allowed thirty days to rescind or undo the agreement.

My colleagues and I here at Dwyer & Coogan are always happy to discuss any questions or concerns you might have if you are facing the difficult decision to enter a nursing home or place a loved one in a nursing home. As always, our consultations are free and we would be happy to discuss any of your concerns in this area. I wish you all a Happy Christmas and may 2021 be kind to you and your loved ones.

*Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of personal injury law - including nursing home litigation, medical malpractice law, wrongful death claims, transportation injuries, premises liability claims, defective product claims, construction site injuries and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at cgallagher@dwyercoogan.com or at 312-543-4642.

We Get Letters

Good Night Democracy

This work is a parody of Margaret Wise Brown, Clement Hurd (illus.) Good Night Moon (New York: Harper & Row, 1947)

In the big white house
there was a louse
and a picture of Melania modeling a blouse
And there were three former aides
turning evidence in spades
some extraneous honeys
and a couple of bunnies
a porn star for the voyeur
with a hard-charging lawyer
and a comb and a brush
and some mouths full of mush
and a lawyer/fixer who was whispering "hush"
Good night house
Good night louse
Good night Melania modeling a blouse
Good night former aides
and good night raids
Good night to all of the pregnant young maids
Good night FBI
Good night prosecutors
Good night to all toady swamp-dwelling locutors
Good night influence for hire
Do svidaniya Veselnitskaya
Good night sleepy pachyderms already napping
Good night bell of liberty already cracking
Good night comb
and good night brush
Good night mouthpieces
Good night mush
Good night Putin
Good night slush
And good night to the lawyer whispering "hush"
Good night porn star
and good night air
Good night democracy everywhere

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Machine Politics

Propaganda is common to politics, corporate advertising and belief systems. The tools of the trade were formulated and sharpened by the grandson of Sigmund Freud, Edward Bernays, "the father of public relations". Named one of the 100 most influential Americans of the 20th century by Life, Bernays was both a very public and a very deep-state figure. Early on, he worked under President Wilson using fear and patriotism to convince a then isolationist America that entering World War I was justified and necessary. Successful propaganda relies on targeting (or creating) topics of public interest by playing on prevailing beliefs and attitudes, changing negatives by emotional appeals and peer pressure. The product (or idea) is made appealing, marking the viewer as knowledgeable, elite and part of an "in crowd". Bernays persuaded women to smoke by branding cigarettes as feminist "torches of freedom". He hired women to smoke their freedom torches while marching prominently in the popular Easter Sunday Parade of 1929. He also worked with the United Fruit Company and CIA to topple the elected government of Guatemala, replacing it with a military dictatorship.

I wonder if the left and its global-minded backers were surprised in 2016 by the effectiveness of propaganda when they released their "October surprise"- the 2005 Access Hollywood tape- and found how easy it was to herd platoons of American women into their crusade, parading about in pussy hats, chanting "not my president".

Michael Bloomberg, presidential candidate and one of the world's richest (\$48 B) men, uttered one statement that exemplified the power of propaganda to produce both dizzying wealth and piteous delusion. He declared in a speech at Oxford University's Business School: "I can teach anybody - even people in this room, so no offense intended - to be a farmer. It's a process. You dig a hole, you put a

seed in, you put dirt on top, you add water, up comes corn." That attitude is emblematic of leftist's outlook: imperial vs empirical.

Consider Movement efforts to "occupy" America that resulted in a pitiful, short-lived "CHOP garden" in Seattle's six-block "autonomous zone"- a few sprouts poking out of the ground- a new-age lemonade stand on the edge of the continent, earnestly and tenderly tended by hippie kids until dinner time arrived with the realization that supermarkets trashed in their joyous revolution were not going to be restocked for them.

The 'Movement', led by aging hip-replaced hippies and violent 'peace' radicals of the Vietnam era, preaches that the US is not good enough, and that its population of 328 million must be absorbed into some as yet undefined utopian world government 25 times its size, with an impossibly diverse population of 7.8 billion. How this might be accomplished when the world's most populous nation, China, imposes immigration policies strictly excluding all but a handful who are not ethnic Han Chinese, is not explained.

The left severed its obligation to America by ending the draft, one of the most unifying institutions in this disparate country that brought together sons of city shopkeepers to serve beside sons of sharecroppers. Few took a lesson from the sorry end of the Vietnam War they so vigorously resisted. The killing fields followed, repeating Stalin's bloody purges in pursuit of Alinsky's shining path dictum: the end justifies any means, even mass murder, to "purify" society. Democrats at the moment are calling for a political purge of all who resisted their "resistance", and want to dismantle constitutional buttresses of the republic, including the electoral college and filibuster. Packing the Supreme Court, opening borders and creating new states are also on the agenda, aimed at assuring



a permanent democrat majority and an end to America's great noble experiment.

When the Million MAGA March arrived in Washington to protest election irregularities, big media tried to downplay the size of the march. Studio anchors asked street reporters to comment on violence, guns, "white supremacists" and Proud Boys, none of which were evident that day. They studiously avoided mention of the Black Lives Matter and ANTIFA thugs on the streets, attacking lone marchers, usually from behind, in their standard cowardly fashion. Yet, as I write I'm surprised to hear that some major news outlets actually chided BLM for attacking "peaceful



marchers. I believe it's a sign that the puppeteer wizards are convinced of victory and are telling the useful idiots who caused \$2 billion in property damage this year, smashing, burning, looting and shooting, to go home; they are no longer needed.

BLM's Marxist co-founder Patrisse Cullors has requested a meeting with Joe Biden to discuss the movement's agenda and present expectations for the incoming administration. Cullors says Black people "want to be heard and our agenda to be prioritized... We want something for our vote... take your direction from Black grassroots organizers that have been engaged in this work for decades".

Meanwhile, President Trump's lawyer Sidney Powell told Fox News' Maria Bartiromo that CIA director Gina Haspel should

be fired for ignoring warnings about Dominion voter software. "We're collecting evidence now from various

whistleblowers that are aware of substantial sums of money being given to family members of state officials who bought this software... Nobody in our government has paid any attention to it, which makes me wonder how much the CIA has used it for its own benefit in different places."

In an interview with Judge Jeanine Pirro, Powell said she was "working on the massive aspect of system-wide election fraud, definitely affecting the 2020 election and going far beyond that. We're talking about the alteration and changing of millions of votes." Pirro mentioned that Democrats Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar had objections to the machines.

Powell: "Carolyn Maloney (D, NY) I think was the first one, and she mentioned a report on it ... all the articles she cited have been wiped from the internet in the last few days..." She went further: "The money creating it came out of Venezuela and Cuba. It was created for the express purpose of being able to alter votes and secure the re-election of Caesar Chavez, and then Maduro. They used it in Argentina... exported it to other countries, and it is one huge, huge criminal conspiracy. It should be investigated by military intelligence for its national security implications." Pirro appeared a bit shocked: "It... "Yes, yes. It ah it... Hopefully... the Department of Justice, but... but, who knows anymore."

So, who benefits when the gates swing open again and the

caravans resume? Only the new media moguls sweeping billions in profits out to offshore tax havens?

Ireland may point to a solution. Europe's top antitrust authority, The European Commission, claimed in 2016 that the Irish government had granted Apple an illegal advantage, keeping the iPhone maker's tax bill artificially low for more than 20 years. It ruled that Apple owed Ireland €13 billion (\$14.9 billion) in unpaid taxes. Now, you'd think this would have been great news to the Irish, since the monster bank bailout of 2008 made each person in the Republic poorer by an estimated \$10,000. But surprisingly the Irish Government instead defended Apple, saying it didn't want those billions in taxes that went to Bermuda; and Apple eventually won its case. (Facebook is facing a similar suit from the IRS for \$9 billion.) Ireland is happy being a tax haven, because foreign tech giants pay over 80% of all Irish corporate taxes and indirectly half of all Irish salary taxes. The estimated value of US investment in Ireland is €334 billion; that's higher than the Republic's annual GDP.

And here in Delaware it's hard to believe a tiny building at 1209 North Orange Street in Wilmington is headquarters to 300,000 corporations including Apple, eBay, Walmart, Verizon, Coca Cola, and American Airlines. In fact, Joe Biden's Delaware hosts over a million business entity registrations; more firms than people in the little state.

So, when already fabulously rich corporations which funded the "resist" chaos of the past four years head offshore again; and more unskilled, undocumented millions arrive, dreaming of la dolce vita USA; how will you benefit? Will the warm aura of holy left righteousness suffice through winters to come? Or can your state cook up a magic wand and become a tax haven like tiny Ireland and Delaware? Dream on.

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



Do Specific New Year's Resolutions Work For You?

This year has been a beast for many, if not most of us. The combination of the global coronavirus, the lockdowns used to control the spread of it and the endless political disinformation of the last 10-12 months would weaken the strongest of us. By the time this column reaches you it will probably be early in December and you may be

toying with your specific resolutions of 2021. Let's be serious about your page full of specific resolutions. In my experience, most people can't tell you about more than one or two resolutions by the first of February. Let me suggest a different approach to the process.

Here's what I propose: Decide to take control of your life and change your attitude. Let's agree to adhere to some "TECHNIQUES FOR LIVING LIFE WELL". I am indebted to an unknown author who compiled this list of techniques. Apparently s/he felt that this list would help us live our lives better. Here are the nine techniques; each with a little of my own commentary. Hope you find it valuable.

1. **KEEP YOUR LIFE SIMPLE.** This four word motto will no doubt lessen the pressure that we feel on a daily basis. Many of us will tightly schedule our lives and unwittingly overload our bodies. In essence, we have written checks that our body simply can't cash. Booking every minute of the day is probably not as productive as many of us think; we need some down time. Medical professionals are convinced that a very high percentage of hospitalized patients are there due to the stress load that they are carrying. Perhaps the expression, KISS (keep it simple stupid) speaks of great wisdom.

2. **PRACTICE BEING SATISFIED.** Haven't you heard the common expression, "He is just never satisfied"? Experts tell us that achieving perfection by completing the last 3% of any significant project probably costs nearly as much as the first 97%. Surely some of our readers will debate the 97% figure. Okay, make it 92%; which is an A in most grading systems, so why not declare victory and move on to the next challenge. Perhaps an exception to this rule is when you are building a very complex product or device.

3. **BE DECISIVE.** As my drill instructor said to me several times, "Just don't stand there, Fitzgerald, do something". His challenge was not intended to force me to make a bad decision, but rather to make me execute some decision. If my original decision was wrong, I could modify it and move on. General Colin Powell said, "Once the information is in the 40 to 70% of certitude, go with your gut".

4. **BE CHEERFUL.** You always have an option, you can choose to be cheerful or let yourself become a tiresome old grouch. Dr. Viktor Frankl, who was a prisoner in a German concentration camp, said that you always have the option to decide how to deal with extremely negative behavior; you can accept it or reject it. Practice being cheerful (aka optimistic) even if down deep you don't really feel cheerful. As some people say "fake it until

you make it". Optimism generates energy.

5. **LIVE AND LET LIVE.** I have strong opinions on many (some might say, most) things. Some other person may have very strongly held opinions different than mine. Do our differences really warrant going ballistic with the other person? Thomas Jefferson summed this one up when he said "In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock". Wouldn't we both be better off if we simply said, "Let's agree to disagree and go have a beer?"

6. **DON'T TAKE YOURSELF SO SERIOUSLY.** Realize that there are a lot of smart people in the world and the person you are arguing with may be one of them. Work on the operating premise that the other person may be right, so don't bet the farm based upon your point of view. Haven't you found that occasionally your memory has failed you?

7. **HAVE A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR.** I am sure that most of us have found that a good sense of humor can diffuse even a rather unpleasant situation. Believe this concept goes in hand with #6.

8. **PRACTICE OBJECTIVITY.** Before racing to a conclusion, which many of us do in a discussion, try to maintain your objectivity. Ask questions. Ask for a definition of terms that will be used. Are you and your protagonist talking about the same thing? Many of us belong to the "Ready, Fire. Aim" club. Would practicing #6 and #7 facilitate your practicing objectivity? Does a discussion have to be contentious? It seems to me that far too many discussions quickly become arguments.

9. **FORGIVE YOURSELF.** We all know people who have never forgiven themselves for some past mistake. Some silly incident plagues them for years after it happened. Find a way to forgive yourself for your past indiscretions. There are many good books that could help you do that. Please come to the recognition that what's bothering you was in your past: leave it there.

Perhaps you don't buy into each and every one of the above techniques, that's okay. But maybe adopting one or two of these techniques will serve you well during the New Year. Please let me know if the process worked for you. **CARPE DIEM.**

Best wishes for a wonderful 2021. And have a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year! God Bless

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past". President Thomas Jefferson.

"If the leader is filled with high ambition and if he pursues his aims with audacity and strength of will, he will reach them in spite of all obstacles". Carl von Clausewitz, author of "On War"

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Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler



I have been watching a little more TV lately, as we might all be watching more of something. The news, movies, sports, cooking shows, documentaries and or soap operas. I wondered what did I watch as a kid? I don't really remember shows other than my mom having soap operas on every day. She would call them her stories. Soap operas started in the 1930's, they were first on the radio. They made up 90% of all daytime radio programs. Soaps eventually made it to the big screen. Soap operas are usually about domestic/family situations with a lot of melodrama & exaggeration. They were sponsored by soap companies hence the name Soap opera.

Soaps usually end the show

with a cliffhanger/shocker. For example, a twin emerging after 30 years, a kidnapping or an unusual death. But somehow if you watch them long enough you start to believe in the story. Then you thank God for your ordinary, uncomplicated life. However, life today is anything but simple. In France they have the soap, "Tomorrow is Ours" & "Hollywood girls". In Mexico (telenovela)—Una Familia con suerte (a lucky family). Mexican soaps are known for overreacting with their mouths open in shock and slapping each other all the time. The cast on soaps are usually glamorous and wealthy in American soaps but in England/Ireland the characters are usually working class. A few soaps in America include Dallas,

General Hospital, All my Children & The Young & Restless.

Dallas was about an affluent family in Texas. I am going to delve into the Irish Soap operas Fair City & Ros na Run. Fair City started in 1989 it has won awards and is the longest running drama. It's set in Dublin in a fictional suburb. It addresses many scandalous & taboo topics like rape, homelessness, kidnapping, immigration & murder. The area includes a boxing club, reminds me of my brother Mike who moved to Ireland almost 30 years ago. He loved to box as a kid and boxed in Ireland. However, his sights are on bigger projects these days. Fair City makes use of real Dublin locations such as Grafton Street & Dublin Zoo. The series was originally focused on four families: The O'Hanlon's, The Kelly's, The Clarkes & The Doyle's. The Halpin family was gradually introduced and ethnic minorities have been introduced. The show's success might be that it doesn't focus on one family they have

variety in characters & themes.

Next, we have Ros Na Run. A Soap opera in the Irish language produced for the Irish language television, TG4. The series is set in a fictional village called Ros Na Run located near An Spideal. (the hospital) The town is in a Gaeltacht, an Irish language speaking region. And it focuses on the lives of its residents. The different topics in the show include abortion, theft, adoption, domestic violence, arson, murder, drugs & teen pregnancy. The title of the show plays on the double meaning of the Irish word run which means secret but can also mean a honey or sweetheart. Ros can mean either wood or headland or point. So, it can either mean Wood/headland of the secrets or wood/headland of the sweethearts. The show starts with a death and lack of a will. There are of course disputes over the inheritance. Some of the story lines include finding out who the biological father is, families struggling to settle

in their homes, closure of businesses, being framed for murder, extortion & cheating.

Soaps are an escape from our own lives & we enter a world in which other people's problems seem worse. The characters eventually become like family & they seem to never die either.

Gaelic for the month

Soap opera-sobalchlar
Drama-dramaiocht
Story-sceal
Fiction-ficsean
Seanfhocail

Is furasta slaghdan a ghabhail gcaisleán ri mar ata mboth shepars—"It's as easy to catch a cold in a king's castle as in a shepherd's hut.

Happy Christmas to all of you! My heartfelt thanks to the people that have sent me nice emails this year. I write these articles in honor of my loving parents.

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

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Special thanks to: the Anne Marie Herlehy Family, the Mike Roach Family, and the Mary Avery Family

*Nollaig shona
agus
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(Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year)
to
all the readers of *Irish American News*



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