

AND THE BEAT ROLLS ON ...



A bulge of parade-goers greets Parade marchers near K Street on St. Patrick's Day.

Irish Hearts for Orphans invites
all to a dance for children in need

The 10th annual Irish Hearts for Orphans benefit dance will take place on Sun., April 7, from 2:30 to 7 at the Boston Marriott Quincy, to benefit NPH USA.

The agency, its acronym name derived from the Spanish "Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos" (In English, "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") submitted the following about its work to benefit children:

"It isn't where the lights are shining you want to give... it's in the dark corners where we have to shine some light."

This phrase came up several times in a conversation with Patrick Kelly, a quiet force in the Boston Irish community who has been a beacon of light and goodwill for so many who find themselves in dark corners. Pat was born in County Roscommon and moved to the US in 1968, where he and his wife had two daughters, Courtney and Andrea. In 2015 his life was devastated after the tragic loss of his daughter, Courtney. He immediately began to look for ways to give back in honor of her memory and shine light and hope for others. He found a unique opportunity to

turn his loss into a chance to provide hope for others.

At the time of her passing, Courtney was enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies program at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, studying to become a nurse practitioner. In Pat's words, "...my thought after that, because I was so proud of her, was if I could find somebody else to carry the torch for her. So I decided to give a scholarship to somebody who would follow that course, do the work that I thought she would be doing." (Continued on page 15)



The 'Voices of the Foyle,' above, a 19-member choral ensemble from Derry & Donegal, gave a stirring performance at the ICCNE in Canton over the three-day St Patrick's weekend last month. See Page 9.
All photos courtesy of ICCNE

Éire Society hails
O'Toole with its
2019 Gold Medal

The Éire Society of Boston will present its 2019 Gold Medal Award to the multifaceted Kathleen M. O'Toole at its annual dinner on Sat., April 27, at 6 p.m. at the Seaport Boston Hotel. The citation is awarded annually to a person or persons who exemplify the best of Irish culture and ideals. It is presented to those who have made significant contributions in their field of expertise that have benefited society.

A graduate of Boston College with a law degree from New England School of Law, O'Toole, the first female Commissioner of the Boston Police Department, boasts a long and productive resume in public safety. She has served as Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety, as a member of the the Patten Commission that reformed policing in Northern Ireland, as chief of the Irish Garda Inspectorate, and, most recently, as the chief of police in Seattle.

She currently is an unpaid adviser to the Massachusetts State Police

Tickets for the Gold Medal Dinner and Award Ceremony are \$150 per person. For more information, email William J. Smith at WJSBoston@gmail.com or call Paul Doyle at 781-331-5188. For details, visit eiresociety.org or call 617-852-8732.



Kathleen O'Toole
Gold Medalist

– BIR STAFF

EU gives the UK
more time to deal
with Brexit crisis

It's just a few weeks

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRUSSELS —The European Union has granted Britain a few more weeks to overcome its political deadlock and chart a smooth road out of the bloc — or change its mind and seek a much longer delay. Here's a look at what might happen next: In mid-March, with Brexit due in little over a week, British Prime Minister Theresa May came to Brussels seeking a three-month delay so she could salvage her twice-rejected EU divorce deal.

Instead, the 27 other EU leaders offered a two-stage "flexextension." If UK lawmakers approve the divorce deal agreed between Britain and the bloc, Britain will leave on May 22.

If they defeat it, Britain has until April 12 to tell the EU what it plans to do next: leave without a deal, risking economic chaos, or seek a long delay to Brexit and chart a course toward a softer exit or even remaining in the bloc.

The key factor in the EU's decision is the election for the European Parliament due to be held May 23-26. The bloc is adamant Britain must not take part if it is leaving — hence the May 22 cutoff date.

April 12 is the deadline for candidates to be enrolled, so the UK must decide before then if it is putting its departure on longer hold, in which case it would participate in the elections.

Time will tell.



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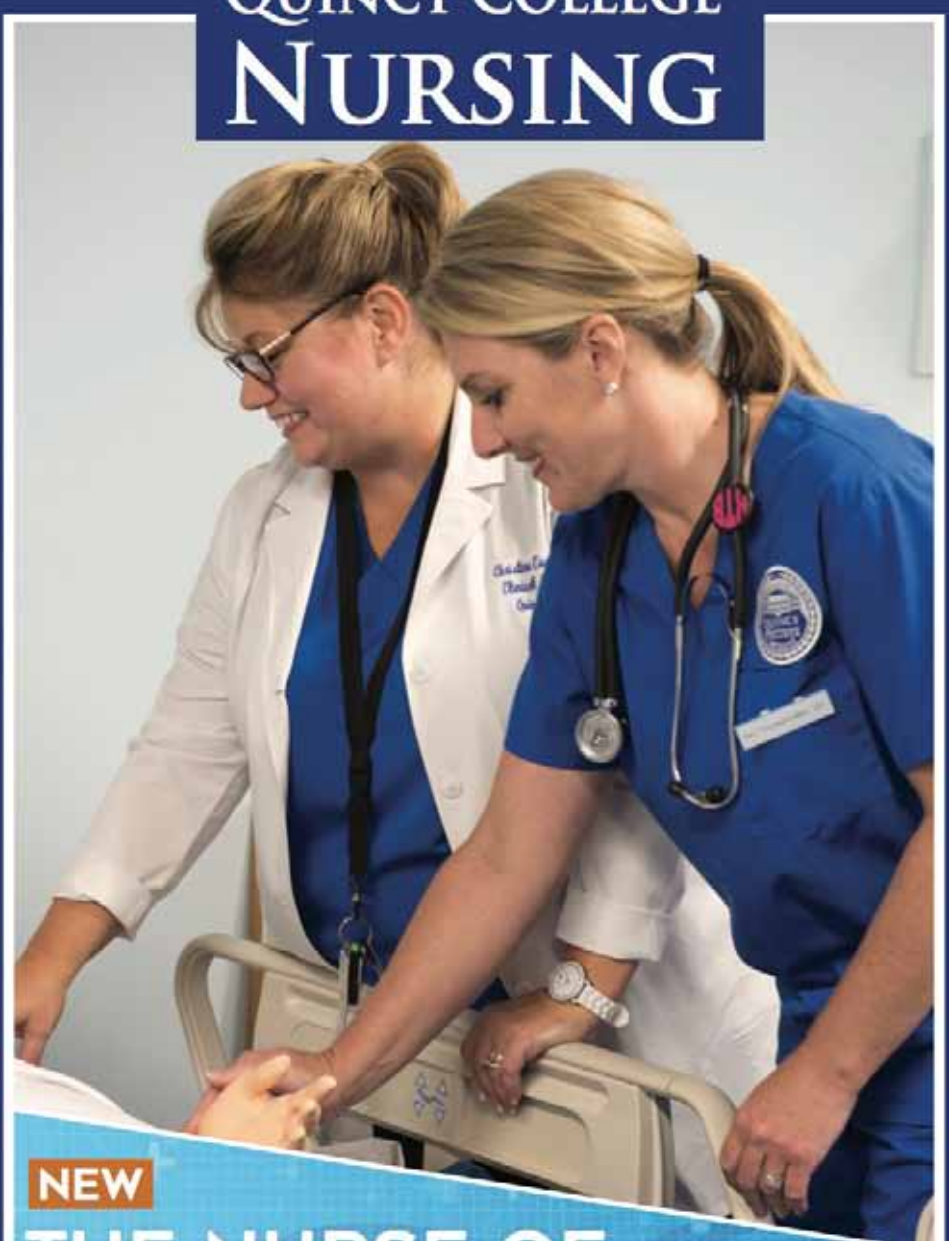
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City archive opens exhibit telling story of the Irish experience in Boston history

By DANIEL SHEEHAN
REPORTER STAFF

A City of Boston Archives exhibit on Irish Immigration that was unveiled Sunday at the annual St. Patrick's Day Breakfast will soon be on display and open to the public at City Hall.

"The Irish and Boston: An Immigrant Saga" is a 14-panel display featuring a collection of historical photographs, documents, and statistics pertaining to the Irish presence in Boston from the initial waves of immigration to the time of the Great Hunger to the Irish rise to power



Sen. Nick Collins and Gov. Charlie Baker in the political arenas of the city. While the breakfast is typically characterized

by levity, the exhibit, curated by City Archivist John McColgan and his team at the Boston City Archives, lent a measure of solemn historical perspective to the event. Although it focuses on migration from Ireland, it also recognizes the parallels between all immigrants who have come to Boston over the generations as well as the ways that all immigrant groups have contributed "significantly to Boston's business growth, employment, and tax revenue, as well as its cultural diversity."

State Sen. Nick Collins of South Boston, the host of the breakfast, hailed the timeliness of the exhibit: "I was blown away at the scope and presentation of the exhibit curated by John and his team," said Collins. "It helped set the stage for the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast, but it also highlighted that immigrants are not our enemies, they are our neighbors, our friends, they are us."

"I can't thank the Archives enough for this impactful collection, and I hope everyone in the city has an opportunity to see it."



The Irish Network/Boston (IN/Boston) hosted its annual St. Patrick's party at Fenway Park on Thurs., March 14. Michelle Serpa (above left), the recipient of the group's inaugural Spirit Award, is pictured with Lisa McKelvey who presented her with a poem to mark the presentation; Michelle is also pictured with IN/Boston chair Cathal Conlon, photo below, and in the audience was Irish Minister Séan Kyne T.D., who carried the greetings of the Irish government to the Boston diaspora.



Bualadh festival is set for April 5 and 6

Bualadh BOSTon, the annual Irish literary festival, will return this month with another accomplished lineup of writers and poets who will discuss their work in a series of three events at the Harvard Club on Fri., April 5, and Sat., April 6.

On Friday at 5 p.m., the festival's first session will feature award winning novelists Mike McCormack and Alice

McDermott. McDermott, a Brooklyn-based Irish American author, will read from and discuss her latest novel, "The Ninth Hour." McCormack, of Mayo, will read from his 2016 novel "Solar Bones," winner of the Dublin International Literary Award.

On Saturday afternoon at 1 o'clock, the poets Peter Fallon and Aifric MacAodha will read

selections from "Calling Cards," a new anthology of Irish-language poetry that they edited.

That session will be followed at 3 p.m. by a conversation between the memoirist Mary Cregan and former Irish archivist Catriona Crowe about Crowe's memoir "The Scar: A Personal History of Depression and Recovery," written after the death of her newborn

daughter, Anna.

All events are free and open to the public. Registration is available online at eventbrite.ie.

Bualadh BOSTon is presented by the Irish Writers Centre, Poetry Ireland and the Consulate General of Ireland, with support from Culture Ireland, the Global Leadership Institute at Boston College, and the Irish American Partnership.



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Editor's Notebook

University of Limerick comes to Boston, makes music, offers some news

By Ed Forry

The month of March is always a busy one on the Boston Irish social scene, and the last week of the month featured a showcase of Irish traditional music, song, and dance highlighting the city of Limerick.

Our city was visited by representatives of the University of Limerick, which sponsored a free concert on Sat., March 30, at the Irish Cultural Centre (ICCNE) in Canton. A statement from UL said the performance was scheduled “to feature special guest appearances by world renowned musicians and professors from The Irish World Academy of Music & Dance, Dr. Sandra Joyce, Dr. Niall Keegan, and Dr. Orfhlaith

Ni Bhriain.

The night will also feature performances by internationally recognized (sic) Irish World Academy of Music & Dance alumni.” Performers included, among others, the well-known Boston-based Irish harpist Aine Minogue, a native of Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary.

Also that week, at a reception at the Copley Square offices of the Irish Consulate General on Wednesday as part of UL’s Irish Cultural Week in Boston, the university announced the launch of a new academic program, a masters in Global Irish Studies.

A statement announcing the new degree program said: “The University of Limerick (UL) is delighted to announce the launch of their new Masters of Arts in Global Irish Studies at the Irish Consulate General, Boston.”

The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance (IWA) is the center of academic and performance excellence housed at the University of Limerick, Ireland, described by UL as “founded in 1994 by Professor Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, the IWA is found on the beautiful banks of the River Shannon at the University of Limerick. The state of the art facilities, which include two theatres, a recording studio, individual practice rooms and dance studios, provides and inspiring creative space for all those who study there.

“The Academy has a strong international presence with students from over 40 countries. With a faculty of excellent performers, academics, and industry professionals, the experience of studying at the Irish World Academy second to none. The IWA offers a suite of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in music and dance related subject areas and its research is at the forefront of these fields of enquiry worldwide.”

The University of Limerick was awarded the *Sunday Times* University of the Year for 2019, a salute reflecting “the university’s commitment to graduate employability, dedication to the student experience and industry-relevant programmes. UL, moreover, places more than 2,000 students in paid and semi-paid work placements annually with 30 percent of these placements based internationally. This work experience has contributed to ensuring UL is Ireland’s leading university on employability.”

The school said that “the aims of this interdisciplinary programme are: To broaden and deepen the students’ knowledge of Ireland and the Irish from a global and transnational perspective; to foster student awareness of Irish local, national, and transnational identities and to encourage lively intellectual and practical work in re-imagining the ‘nation’ and its role in the world; to enable students to engage knowledgeably with current critical debates in the areas of Irish literature, history, and culture; to support and facilitate opportunities for independent research and self-directed learning; to develop students’ analytical and critical thinking skills in preparation for future academic study or careers outside of academia; and to assist students in the identification and development of future employment or study plans.”



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Off the Bench

In the winter of my life, I think of what I believe

By James W. Dolan
Special to the Reporter

Well, I made it! Days are shorter, clocks are louder, and everyone’s younger. I’m eighty. I have loved and been loved, laughed and cried and observed the immense goodness and profound evil of which mankind is capable. I will die with few regrets after a long and fortunate life. Will it be quick or slow and debilitating? I pray for an expedited passage. To where, I’m not sure.



James W. Dolan

I can’t quite accept the idea of oblivion although non-existence is not so frightening. After all, it’s where I came from. I was quite content to be a non-being before my birth in 1939. Having had no choice in the matter, I accepted my fate and enjoyed a good life, often for reasons having nothing to do with merit. My advantages were no more deserved than the disadvantages that others, less fortunate, experienced. Life is just too complicated for me to believe it’s all arbitrary, without purpose or design? Are poverty, pain, and suffering just accidents of birth?

Born and bred a Roman Catholic, I will die in the faith despite misgivings when the church so often fails to live up to the virtues it professes. Like a failed parent, it disappoints but I cannot abandon it. Human weakness is reflected, even magnified within institutions, secular and religious. I believe in evolution and reject the notion that an Original Sin was passed down through generations. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden are characters in a parable. It is the capacity to sin (an essential component of free will) that we refer to as “original sin.”

Prominent among the reasons for my faith are how I was raised and educated and my career as a judge. Man-made law is a necessary but inadequate vehicle to assure justice, individual or social. I believe in transcendent values, virtues necessary to order human behavior, and in ultimate justice, a reckoning in which we answer to a merciful God for how we lived. Christianity is not the only path to salvation. There are many ways to achieve union with God.

Without free will, we would be robots, incapable of choosing good or evil. Not responsible for our actions, we could not be blamed or rewarded for our behavior. Knowing that in the exercise of free will, mankind would make bad choices (sin), Christ died to atone for our failings, past and present. I view love as the fundamental virtue from which all others flow. Love, truth, justice, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness are not malleable human artifacts but transcendent absolutes.

Temporal justice is limited; it measures a person’s compliance with the law. Absolute justice is far broader; it measures a person’s capacity to do good or evil against his or her life. It takes into account a host of mitigating factors such as mental health, intelligence, education, genes, environment, opportu-

nity, poverty, and deprivation. It is a judgment based upon knowledge only a deity could possess. Under such an all-encompassing and merciful standard, many who broke man-made laws would be found innocent while others who never saw the inside of a courtroom would be found wanting. Hopefully, there is a reckoning when the unfairness of life is somehow balanced and those who suffered through no fault of their own are rewarded.

To be virtuous, one need only comply with two commandments: Love God and love your neighbor. For something more specific, the Beatitudes will do. Salvation is not exclusive to any religion or even a belief in God so long as you strive to lead a virtuous life. If you love God, you must love your neighbor (everyone), and if you truly love your neighbor, in so doing you are loving God even if you question his existence. I happen to believe in a loving and merciful God who condemns very few to what we think of as hell, which is more likely the denial of union with God than fire and brimstone.

To doubt is human. If faith is the affirmation of hope, one must confront and struggle to overcome doubt. Those who never doubt have not considered the contradictions so evident in philosophy, theology, and religion. I remain unsure but committed nonetheless. As winter’s chill becomes more pronounced, I trust in the Lord. What have I got to lose? If I’m wrong, I will never know. If I’m right, what a relief! Blaise Pascal, a 17th century French mathematician, scientist, and philosopher, first identified what became known as “Pascal’s Wager.” Since it is impossible to conclusively prove the existence of God, he concluded, the wiser course was to believe.

Lightning tears the night sky.
Thunder trembles in the distance.
A cool breeze from the north,
The leaves begin to fall.

The mornings, cool and crisp;
Formations of birds wing south.
Bright colors dance in the trees
And the leaves fall.

Dawns are bright but cold;
Walkers in sweaters and gloves.
Muted now, the colors fade
And the leaves fall.

The day is cold and gray,
Sweet holidays have passed.
Bare branches pray for sunlight
And the leaves are gone.

The storm envelops me
As snowflakes sting my face.
Looking down to gauge the depth.
I cannot see my footprints.

Like leaves, there is no trace
As we flash and drift away.
The fate we share in winter,
When footprints are erased.

James W. Dolan is a retired Dorchester District Court judge who now practices law.

BIR History

TALES FROM THE ROAD
April marks a pair of Boston Irish milestones – literally

By Peter F. Stevens
BIR Staff

What’s in a Name? On April 3, 1928, 62-year-old South Boston Congressman James Gallivan, who had checked into Ring Hospital in Arlington on the advice of his doctor, remarked that “he felt all right except that he was exhausted.” He then fell asleep early. When a nurse checked in on him at 5:15 a.m. on April 4, Gallivan was sleeping soundly. Half an hour later, he was dead, probably of heart disease.

At the news of Gallivan’s death, the US House members adjourned their April 8 session “out of respect to his memory.” James Gallivan’s funeral Mass was said at St. Augustine’s in South Boston, and he was buried in St. Joseph’s Cemetery in West Roxbury. A fitting bit of local immortality awaited the one-time street commissioner of Boston.

For the locals on Gallivan’s electoral turf, especially South Boston, Gallivan had been “their guy.” His savage political brawls with James Michael Curley, John “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, and a legion of other local and national figures were the stuff of legend and sometimes horror. Curley acknowledged that Gallivan was a fierce and effective campaigner who had two chief talents: the first was a knack for “unholy tactics that succeeded in stirring the passions of the mob.”

As to the second, Curley added, “I thought it might be providential to call the attention of the electorate to Jimmy’s elbow-bending. Congressman Gallivan has two degrees. One from Harvard and one from the

Washington Institute for Dispsomaniacs [alcoholics].”

To honor Gallivan, his supporters looked for a bridge or a stretch of roadway to name after him. Gallivan Boulevard, in Dorchester, did the trick. The running political joke became that in the end, Curley became a bathhouse and Gallivan a road.

A Marathon Mystery – It has lingered for some 121 years. In 1897, the very first Boston Marathon had a decidedly “green” hue – the first winner was a man named John J. McDermott, who ran for the Pastime Athletic Club of New York City. He has been hailed in most quarters as an Irish American and did possess Celtic bloodlines. Still, he remains something of an enigma. Nova Scotia claims him as a native who might have been either Irish or Scottish, and a Cape Breton newspaper recently stating that “John McDermott (or perhaps also known as John J. MacDermid) was born either in Ireland or Scotland or Cape Breton, Canada, between 1868 and 1871.”

Despite all this, it is indisputable that the first winner of the grand Boston race was a runner named McDermott, who also provided one of the all-time great post-Marathon quotes. After dropping nine pounds during his victory, he told a Boston Globe reporter, “This will probably be my last long race... look at my feet...”

McDermott ran again in 1898, finished fourth, never competed in the contest again, and dropped off of history’s stage. Fleet of foot, his turn on the Marathon stage proved equally fleeting.

Point of View

You Simply Can't Make This Stuff Up

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

Orders for sackcloth and ashes must be going through the proverbial roof. Democrats' D-Day, Deliverance Day, based on the premise that Special Counsel Robert Mueller would raze the House of Trump with undeniable proof that the president takes his orders from a certain autocrat named Vlad, arrived with a four-page Declination for Dummies from US Attorney General William Barr.

Barr, of course, is the man who presented a 19-page job application—"memo"—to the White House months ago professing his belief that a president cannot commit obstruction of justice because, in short, his presidential superpowers say so. Sagely, Trump knew he'd found his own deliverer.

Although Barr's "report" noted that Mueller himself had stated there was no exoneration for Trump on possible obstruction, the attorney general was able to ascertain in less than two days that the material Mueller took nearly two years to compile had no prosecutorial merit.

The bottom line: Trump won big. Unless Democrats want to blow their still-strong chances to oust Trump the old-fashioned way—at the 2020 ballot box—the party might want to consider accepting Mueller's take on collusion/coordination and shelve talk of impeachment. That prospect is delusional. Instead, the Dems should pound the president not on his "Russia problem," but on the tried-and-true issue that even the president has called a "red line"—his gnarled finances.

Unless Barr crosses a legal red line and tries to gut the trail of highly questionable financial dealings that the SDNY (Southern District of New York) is relentlessly pursuing against Trump and his family, the federal prosecutors in Manhattan pose a far greater threat to the president and his entire family than did Mueller.

For the moment, Donald Trump can keep taking his victory lap. The real test, however, is yet to come.

A swing to healthcare

With the media and the political establishment obsessed with Mueller, Putin, collusion, obstruction, etc., the existential issue that unleashed a bonafide "blue wave" in last November's



Team Trump – Barr: A victory lap, tests to come.



Kellyanne and George: White House odd couple.

elections remains at the top of most polls. It's a little thing called health care. The president's and the GOP's unrelenting mission to deprive Americans with preexisting conditions any chance of affordable insurance has flown under the political radar since the Dems drubbed Trump and his repeal-but-replace-Obamacare-with-nothing crowd at the pools.

On Mon, March 25, however, Bill Barr's and Donald Trump's Department of Justice found a judicial ally in a Texas federal judge, a man with the

decidedly Celtic-sounding moniker of Reed O'Connor, whose ardor to destroy affordable health care mirrors their own. According to the DC publication *The Hill*, "the Department of Justice (DOJ)...announced that it is siding with a district court ruling [O'Connor's] that found the Affordable Care Act unconstitutional. The move is an escalation of the Trump administration's legal battle against the health care law."

Regardless of one's affinity or contempt for Donald Trump, for any-

one who believes that pre-existing condition protections and affordable healthcare is a right, not a privilege, the administration's support for Judge O'Connor's "grand" decision should be chilling. The commitment of Trump and his DOJ—with Barr, who is most assuredly Trump's DOJ—to eradicate the Affordable Care Act cost the GOP dearly in 2018. Nancy Pelosi, who made healthcare the issue of that campaign, knows that, and so do the gutless US Senate minions more afraid of the man in the White House than of their own constituents who like the Affordable Care Act so long as you just don't call it Obamacare.

If the Dems are smart, they should pay more than passing interest in 2020 to that guy sitting on a bench in Texas named O'Connor.

Conway Country

Of all the Irish Americans who worship slavishly at the feet of our President, one can count on Kellyanne Conway and Mick Mulvaney to provide verbal "gems" that truly reach Trumpian levels. The running Twitter salvos between Donald Trump and Conway's spouse, the noted conservative attorney George Conway, who has questioned the president's sanity and competence again and again, seems to be compelling his spouse, Kellyanne, to issue apologies to that country ditty "Stand By Your Man" by standing by *her* man.

Brett Samuels writes in *The Hill*: "White House counselor Kellyanne Conway said...that she believes the president is looking out for her in attacking her spouse as a 'loser and a whack job'... [The president] is protective of me and that's what people should take from this..."

Okay, fine, Ms. Conway, but what about when your boss said you're married to "the husband from hell" and that he's a "disgrace" to your children? Oh, yeah, the president's simply protecting you from your own spouse.

Then there's this from Mick Mulvaney, the president's acting chief of staff: Following Trump's tepid response to the massacre of Muslims in the Christchurch, New Zealand, mosques, Mick hit the Sunday morning pundit factories to assure us all that our president is not a white supremacist. Thanks for clearing that up!

One last lap for Charbo's Run

By BILL FORRY
BIR EDITOR

Mark S. Charbonnier died in 1994. There's a whole generation of Dorchester people—and many more who have just arrived here or in Boston from other points of origin—in those intervening 25 years.



Mark S. Charbonnier

So, it's no surprise that the March 24 Charbo's Run—the road race in his memory which had not hit the streets of Dorchester in a decade—might have been seen like a new event on the local calendar to many. But for those who

were around for the first Charbo's Run in 1995, the final run marked a poignant return to a dynamic salute to one of our fallen neighbors.

Mark Charbonnier was a Massachusetts state trooper who was shot and killed by a felon whom he had stopped on Route 3 in Kingston. His sudden, violent death at age 31 was a horrible moment for the law enforcement and, of course, for the entire region and state. But it was a particularly devastating blow in Dorchester, where Mark was born and raised.

He was a product of St. Peter's Parish who was revered by his peers, who saw him as a "class act," someone whose devotion to his neighborhood and friends was extended in due time to all his fellow citizens when he swore an oath to protect and defend as a state policeman. His abbreviated six-year career was one of distinction. The gravity of his loss ripples still in the neighborhood he loved passionately.

Last year, a group of his friends and former colleagues gathered along the Neponset River to dedicate a beautiful new memorial named for Mark and his childhood friend, Ricky Dever, another law enforcement officer from Dot who was killed in 2005. At the dedication last May, his brother Steve Charbonnier—a Boston police officer—captured the importance of remembering his brother and his sacrifice.

"I miss Mark every day. This memorial... tells the story of Mark and Ricky, but also much, much more. It tells the story of how they lived, who they were, and about the family and friends they left behind."

But, as Steve said that day, the

story continues. Over the ten years of Charbo's Run—along with an annual golf tournament in his name that is still going strong annually—Charbonnier's friends and family have raised close to \$1 million. Much of the funds have gone to set up perpetual scholarship's in Mark's name at schools like Catholic Memorial, BC High, New England School of Law, Wentworth Institute of Technology, and St. Brendan School. The funds have also gone more quietly to local causes, including youth sports leagues in his native Dorchester.

The 25th anniversary Charbo's Run

last month continued that effort and re-introduced Mark's story to a new crop of young men and women. At its peak, the race drew as many as 8,000 runners—making it one of the largest races in the state.

Here in Dorchester, it's considered an honor for our community to host an event that salutes one of our own and his family—whether they be related by blood or by the badge. A quarter century later, Trooper Charbonnier's life was celebrated once again on the streets of his hometown.



Bina McLoughlin dazzled a small region of Ireland for 70 years as the "Queen of the Connemara." This is the first narrative account of this woman's extraordinary life.

Now available on Amazon Prime Video and Vimeo on Demand

Immigration Q&A

About passports for US citizen children

Q. I'm an Irish citizen who recently gave birth to a child here in the US. I want to get a US passport for my child before we take a trip to Ireland this summer. Does the child's father need to come with me or sign something to get the passport?

A. A child born in the US automatically has US citizenship, irrespective of the parents' citizenship (exception: children of foreign diplomats). But because of child custody and support issues, the US Passport Office in the State Department has set out strict requirements for the issuance of US passports to enable children under the age of 16 to travel abroad:

- Both parents must appear together and sign the application for the child; **or**
- One parent appears, signs the application, **and** submits the second parent's notarized "Statement of Consent: Issue of a Passport to a Minor Under age 16," Form DS-3053, authorizing passport issuance for the child; **or**
- One parent appears, signs, and submits required evidence of sole authority to apply (such as *one* of the following):
 - The child's certified birth record listing *only* the applying parent; **or**
 - Consular Report of Birth Abroad (Form FS-240) or Certification of Birth Abroad (Form DS-1350) listing *only* the applying parent; **or**
 - A court order granting sole custody to the applying parent (unless the child's travel is restricted by that order); **or**
 - An adoption decree (if the applying parent is the *sole* adopting parent); **or**
 - A court order specifically permitting an applying parent's or legal guardian's travel with the child; **or**
 - A judicial declaration of legal incompetence of the non-applying parent; **or**
 - A death certificate for the non-applying parent.

Note that these requirements apply to all US citizen children under 16, irrespective of their place of birth or the citizenship of their parents.

More detailed information about applying for passports, as well as any necessary forms, can be found at the US State department's website, travel.state.gov/passport/.

For a free, confidential consultation about any issue of immigration law, visit one of our weekly legal clinics as advertised in the Boston Irish Reporter.

Disclaimer: *These articles are published to inform generally, not to advise in individual cases. Immigration law is always subject to change. US Citizenship and Immigration Services and the US Department of State frequently amend regulations and alter processing and filing procedures. For legal advice seek the assistance of IIIC immigration legal staff.*

Save the Date: Irish for Pride!

The IIIC will participate in Boston Pride Parade again this year, under the banner "Irish for Pride." Pending City of Boston approval, the parade and festival will be held on Sat., June 8, at noon. We welcome everyone to march alongside us. Stay tuned for more details! Please email Francesca Paranzino at fparanzino@iicenter.org with any questions and to get involved! You can learn more about the parade at bostonpride.org/parade/.

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER
IMMIGRATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The Irish International Immigrant Center's immigration attorneys and social workers are available for all immigrants during this time of uncertainty and concern in our community. We are closely following the changes in immigration policies, and are available for confidential, legal consultations, and case representation. At weekly legal clinics, you can receive a free and confidential consultation with staff and volunteer attorneys. For information, or if you or anyone you know would like to speak to an immigration attorney, please call us at (617) 542-7654.

Upcoming Clinic Schedule

Clinics are in the evening.

Please do not arrive more than 30 minutes before the clinic begins for registration.

Downtown Boston

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston MA 02109
Tuesday, April 2nd and 16th at 4:00pm
Registration begins at 3:30pm

Brighton

The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington Street, Brighton, MA 02135
Monday, April 8th at 6:30pm
Registration begins at 6:00pm

South Boston

South Boston Labouré Center, 275 West Broadway, South Boston 02127
Wednesday, April 23rd at 6:30pm
Registration begins at 6:00pm

Citizenship Clinics

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston MA 02109
Wednesdays from 10am-1pm
Walk-ins are welcome!

Our Downtown Boston location is fully accessible by public transportation.
Phone: 617.542.7654 | Fax: 617.542.7655 | www.iicenter.org

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER



An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109 (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655
Website: iicenter.org Email: immigration@iicenter.org

IIIC sends a delegation to St. Patrick's Day Parade

The IIIC troupe had an outstanding time at the 2019 South Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17. The Saint's Day is always a special holiday for all of us at the IIIC, and we were delighted to share in the celebration with our fellow parade-goers.

As we made our way through the streets of Southie, we could not help but recall Boston's vibrant Irish heritage. We are proud to carry the Irish values of social justice and hospitality, which have contributed towards a stronger Greater Boston community, in our services for immigrants from across the globe today.

Shares the IIIC's Ann-Marie Byrne, "It was so special to march in the parade this year for the first time ever – a historic event for the IIIC as we celebrate our 30th an-



The IIIC delegation gets into the spirit of the parade.

niversary. It was lovely to have people shout out messages of support for our organization from the sidelines. The one that stands out in my head the most was when one lady walked up to our group

and stated that she is so glad that we are part of her community."

Thank you to all who made this year's parade a truly memorable one! We would like to extend a special shout out to this

year's parade organizers Bryan Bishop, director of Parade Operations and Dave Falvey, Commander, South Boston Allied War Veterans Council, for a job well done.

IIIC, Montserrat Aspirers Black and Green
Gathering set for Sun., April 7, 2 to 5

The IIIC and the Montserrat Aspirers invite you to hear from Suffolk County District Attorney Rachel Rollins, historian Bridget Keown, and IIIC immigration attorney Megan Parker-Johnson as we honor women's leadership and voices at the annual Black and Green Gathering at Hibernian Hall on Sun., April 7, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

In 1920, the United States finally embraced women's suffrage, and today, women's voices – and their votes – are shaping political discourse more than ever. Still, others, including many immigrants and refugees, do not have a say about policies that dramatically impact their lives.

At the IIIC, we empower our female clients

in many ways, through legal services that lead to permanent residence and, eventually, citizenship; through English and technology classes; and through civic engagement programs. We hope to give our clients and students the tools to help shape the future of this great nation of immigrants while continuing to advocate for policies that help im-

migrant women.

Join us as we explore the courage of women, what we have learned from the past hundred years, and the ongoing struggles of the movement for women's empowerment.

Refreshments will be provided. Please contact Francesca Paranzino at fparanzino@iicenter.org for more information.

Matters of Substance

Suicide awareness and 'The Ripple Effect'

**By RACHEL REISMAN
IIIC WELLNESS SERVICES**
Many aren't aware that the months ahead are a time for higher suicide attempts, months where we see increased depression, mania, and despair. It's a time to speak up for increased mental health services in our Commonwealth and to advocate

for state attention and resources for suicide prevention.

Wellness Services at the IIIC is honored to be a part of a free screening of "Suicide: The Ripple Effect," on April 16, at 5:30 p.m. at 89 South Street, Boston, hosted by the Greater Boston Coalition for Suicide Prevention.

Suicide survivor Kevin Hines has made a masterful film about his regret for his suicide attempt over 15 years ago when he jumped from the Golden Gate Bridge, about the pain his attempt cost many others, and about the hope that has surfaced by his speaking about suicide to thousands around the world.

The film is about the power of our human connections, the ways our choices both hurt others and save others. It's not to be missed.

More than one million people end their lives by suicide every year. We know that for every suicide, 150 others are impacted. For every life lost to suicide, there are families, friends, co-workers, police, EMTs, hospital staff, teachers, coaches, neighbors, and strangers caught up in the ripple effect of grief, confusion and anger.

Kevin Hines speaks to this in his film "When I jumped from the Golden

Gate bridge at age 19, I shattered many lives," while he "instantly regretted jumping," it took years to heal the horror of that instant in his family and in his community.

When we lose someone to suicide – a husband, wife, child, neighbor, "friend of a friend" or a celebrity in the news, we, too shoulder fear, sadness, shame, and guilt, and we often blame ourselves, our culture, and our reflex to look the other way. We are left with something cold and hard to swallow.

Kevin's film, and his worldwide advocacy, speaks not only to those fighting suicidal thoughts and hopelessness but also to all of us left to worry, cry, and question why. "The Ripple Effect" is a conversation about the power to save a life through the direct question: "Are you thinking about suicide" and the power that honesty has to save all from the pain of suicide loss, both the victim and the survivors.

People worry that simply asking someone whether they are thinking about ending their life "will plant the seed, or push them to do it" when it's actually quite the opposite. Kevin Hines stresses "as I walked across the bridge that day, I was praying and hoping that someone would

ask me 'are you ok? Is something wrong, can I help?' " Speaking about suicidal thoughts out loud is a relief and a release. You won't push someone toward it, or get them thinking about it. The fear, self-hatred, panic, and hopelessness of suicidal thoughts is isolating and frightening. Asking someone you are worried about if they are thinking these thoughts, plants a seed of hope, grants permission to speak the truth, punctures the loneliness, and starts the planning about help and change.

Join us for a free screening of "Suicide: The Ripple Effect." Kevin shares his experience with honesty, humor, and love. He speaks about being the very rare survivor of a suicide attempt from the Golden Gate Bridge, and the "sea creature" who helped save his life. He gives us permission to speak about, and acknowledge, human pain, truth, and the power of an honest story.

For help or information, please contact IIIC's Wellness Services (free and confidential) at rreisman@iicenter.org or at 617-542-7654 or call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255.

Rachel Reisman, LIC-SW, is the director of IIIC's Wellness Services



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BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett
Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

The Sligo Association of Boston hosted its 11th Annual St. Patrick's Dinner Dance on Sunday, March 3 at Dorchester's Florian Hall. Guests enjoyed a traditional corned beef and cabbage meal. The group honored Raymond McVeigh of Dover, Dancing and merriment continued to the music of the Andy Healy Band, and raffle proceeds were donated to support a new center for children for disabilities now under construction in Cork. The association extended special thanks to Jim Brett, Andy Healy and band, Florian Hall, Heavey-Quinn Academy of Irish Dance, the Burke Distributing Company and Irish American Whiskey for supporting the event. The 13th annual Sligo golf tournament will be played on June 7, 2019 at Brookmeadow CC, Canton; call 617-293-4069 for more info.

Pictured are: 1.) Jim Brett, Dorchester, Ann Marie and Raymond McVeigh, Dover, Kevin Johnston, West Roxbury; 2.) Robby Gorman, Mary O'Toole Gorman, West Roxbury; 3.) Nuala and Paddy Sullivan, Milton; 4.) Seamus Johnston, Norwood, Kathy Sullivan, Dedham; 5.) Fr. Dan Finn; 6.) Ann Marie and Raymond McVeigh, Dover; 7.) Paddy and Frances Duffy, Raymond McVeigh, Dover; 8.) Tony Quinn, Alan Quinn, and Liam Duffy, all of Roslindale; 9.) Noreen Fitzgerald, Dedham, Mark Pumphret, Sudbury; 10.) Winnie Henry, Milton, Richard Gormley, "Lord Mayor" of West Roxbury; 11.) Carolyn Kenny, Dedham, Myra Kenny, Worcester, Ann Quinn Kenny, Dedham, Matthew Pieri, Worcester, Raymond McVeigh, Dover.



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helped make the 2019 St. Patrick's
Day Breakfast so special!



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Jeannie Saverse of Adams
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Surely, St. Patrick smiled at the holiday action at ICCNE

The feast of St Patrick continued for three days last month at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England. On Fri., March 15, the Voices of the Foyle, a choir from Derry & Donegal comprising 19 talented singers from Derry & Donegal, performed in the upstairs function room, and afterwards the Friday Night Session group played to a large and lively crowd. Thank you to the Harney Academy of Irish dance for a great show! On Saturday morning, it was children's day, with hayrides, sing-a-long, arts & crafts, storytelling, and Irish dance making up a fun morning. O'Reilly Irish dance & Kenny Academy of Irish dance performed for the kids, and the Hansen Keohane school of Irish dance joined in later in the afternoon! The ICC was delighted to welcome so many families to this event, to see children on hand and trying out new things – Irish dance, Irish football, hurling, Irish song – exploring Irish culture.

On Sunday, Consul General Fionnuala Quinlan and Ireland's Chief Whip and Minister of state for the Gaeilge Séan Kyne were special guests. There were great performances all around- from Irish dance schools and musicians, among them the Kenny Academy, The Haley, Greene O'Leary and Hansen Keohane schools of Irish dance.

All the while, the artist Kristi Johnston exhibited her watercolors "Interpretations of Ireland" throughout the weekend.



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Seaport Boston Hotel



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For more information, contact Gold Medal Dinner Committee Members:

email William J. Smith at WJSBoston@gmail.com or

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Tickets are \$150.00 per person

eiresociety.org

Love becomes tragic when justice isn't just

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The philosopher George Santayana warned, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Hub Theatre Company of Boston is launching its seventh season this month with Helen Edmundson's "The Clearing," a captivating drama that recalls a time in history that should never be forgotten. Performances run from April 5 to April 20.

The play is set in Ireland in 1652. King Charles I has been executed and Oliver Cromwell has just led a vicious reign of terror as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland.

The curse of Cromwell came as an English invasion of Ireland. His hostility to the Irish was both religious and political. Locals were driven onto barren land while the English took over their homes. Ethnic cleansing, forced deportation, and guerrilla warfare were all part of the heinous activity.

Given this historic treachery, Edmundson has fashioned a passionate love story between Robert, an Englishman, and Madeleine, a local Irish woman. Their loyalties are tested and their lives forever changed by the divisive politics and prejudices of the time.

Daniel Bourque, Hub Theater Company's Associate Artistic Director, is directing the Boston production. The play first came to Bourque's attention almost two decades ago when he attended a production at Hartford Stage Company.

He is a self-professed lover of Irish drama and literature. Not long ago, he staged a reading of "An Apple A Day," a nearly forgotten 1942 black comedy by the Irish novelist and playwright Elizabeth Connor.

With tongue-in-cheek, Bourque notes that he has directed plays in bars, churches, a tent, a barn, and the occasional theater.

In actuality, the acclaimed Bourque has an extensive history running from the Westport Playhouse and Capital Repertory Theatre to being a member of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab and Directors Lab West.

When this production of "The Clearing" was announced, he said of the play "... it is about love, war, conquest, immigration, morality, the rule of a tyrant vs. the rule of law, the place of women in society, and making difficult choices in perilous times. In other words, everything that is occurring in the world right now, both at home and abroad."

We spoke about the play during a break in his day. Here's an edited look at our chat.

Q. This play has been a long time coming to Boston, hasn't it?

A. I first saw this show when I was an undergrad ... This would have been 1998 or '99, and I remember being so impressed by it, by what a powerful piece of drama it was ...

Then maybe five years ago there was a production of it done in Wellesley. So it sort of popped back up on my radar. And over the last couple of years I've had the script and I've been saying we want to find a time to do this! When we were pitching shows for this season, I said how about "The Clearing?" Everybody read it and reacted really well to it and here we are.

Q. What makes this play stand out for you?

A. It stands out for a lot of reasons. First of all, it's about a very important historical event, and I think you can draw all kinds of parallels to the world today ... It's a great story about women. The relationship between husband and wife — the English husband who came to Ireland, basically as a settler, as a farmer -- and then the Irish wife, and how the conflicts in the play then tear these people apart. You can draw all kinds of



Matthew Zahnzinger is Robert and Brashani Reece is Madeleine in "The Clearing." Tim Gurczak photo

parallels. What happened when Cromwell went into Ireland; all the talk about immigration now. It's still very relevant.

Q. Two of the supporting characters are seen as members of the "proper" English group, but ultimately, even they are not safe.

A. These people were told when they emigrated from England to Ireland, "Oh you go here, this is what we want, the government wants this, here are resources, here's land." They were basically going along, minding their own business. Suddenly they find themselves in this huge conflict and being accused of treason, basically just for being there, or for having taken part in the war at all.

Q. The play has a very strong female voice. Some say it's feminist-tinged. Do you?

A. It absolutely is. The lead character (Madeleine), it's really sort of her story, her awakening in this world, in this very male-centered world.

Q. Even though the political battle exists more off-stage than on, do audiences need to be familiar with Cromwell and his purge?

A. No. I mean the conflicts in it are so present day. Life and love, war and morality, making difficult choices in difficult times. It's like many of Shakespeare's plays. You can see them and it doesn't matter if you know much about the history of it. You're still taken by the very human scale of things that are



happening in it.

Q. This 17th century brutality is not necessarily a significant part of our own educational landscape.

A. It's been interesting to me in terms of just thinking about this world-shattering event, the repercussions of which are still being felt today -- how little people know ... Which is not necessarily true if you're of Irish ancestry. A friend of mine, an actor, said when he read the play, "Oh, Dan, I think about this every day. I spit every time I hear that man's name."

Q. What do you all want audiences to take away from "The Clearing?"

A. I always say, in terms of theater, when I do a show like this, I'm not doing it for a specific political reason. I want people to think. I want people to talk. I want people to have some understanding. I want people to try to examine the issues a little deeper.

R. J. Donovan is editor and publisher of on-stageboston.com.

...
"The Clearing," April 5–April 20, Hub Theater Company, First Church Boston, 66 Marlborough St., Boston. All tickets are Pay-What-You-Can. Donations of non-perishable food items will be collected at each performance for local charities. hubtheatreboston.org.

After 40 years, the knowing voice behind 'Downeast Ceilidh' is stilled

Marcia Palmater is dead at 80

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Boston lost one of its foremost Celtic music connoisseurs recently, with the passing of longtime radio broadcaster Marcia Young Palmater on February 9. She was 80.

Ms. Palmater shared her love and encyclopedic knowledge of traditional music from Cape Breton and elsewhere in the Canadian Maritimes as the host and producer of the "Downeast Ceilidh" weekly radio show for more than 40 years.

The program, which ran on WMBR (the MIT radio station) and then WUMB, was a must-listen affair for Boston's large Nova Scotia and Cape Breton community — as well as ex-pats from Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick — who tuned in to enjoy the music of home.

Later on, as Celtic music grew in popularity, "Downeast Ceilidh" was an important resource for listeners interested in discovering the mainstays of Cape Breton and Canadian Atlantic music traditions like John Campbell, Joe Cormier, Brenda Stubbart, John Morris Rankin, Buddy MacMaster, and Jerry Holland, as well as performers with a contemporary bent, such as Ashley MacIsaac, Natalie MacMaster (Buddy MacMaster's niece), Mary Jane Lamond, and The Rankin Family.

Yet Ms. Palmater was not from that part of the world: She was a native — and proud — New Englander, born and raised in Concord, NH, who didn't discover Downeast music until well into adulthood. Nor did she envision herself as a DJ. Still, she thoroughly embraced her role and became a familiar and welcome figure at area Celtic music events — especially those featuring Canadian Maritimes acts, many of them at the Canadian American Club of Massachusetts in Watertown.

The Nova Scotian/Canadian Atlantic community, in turn, embraced Ms. Palmater as one of its own.

"It was a big ritual for families like ours to sit down and listen to 'Downeast Ceilidh' when it came on," recalls Peggy Morrison, a longtime Canadian American Club official, organizer, and member whose parents were among those who immigrated from Nova Scotia to "the Boston States." "To hear the music and the songs, especially those in Gaelic, was so important to everyone, and Marcia really understood that. She took it on as a great responsibility but you knew it was something she enjoyed doing."

"Being able to go to a dance or a concert and have everyone know her was very satisfying for Marcia," says her husband, Dave Palmater, himself a denizen of Boston-area folk music radio for many years. "It got to the point that almost everyone assumed Marcia was from the Canadian Maritimes. She just wanted to give back to the music and the community, and she cherished their acceptance."

Growing up, Ms. Palmater developed a taste for traditional folk music via contra and square dancing, and expanded her interests upon moving to the Boston area in the late 1960s. She found kindred spirits through the international folk dance crowd at MIT and the Cambridge Folk Orchestra. Along the way, she met Doug McPhee, a bank teller who happened to be a top-notch pianist in the distinctive Cape Breton style. McPhee took her to the Boston Highland Games, where she encountered Boston's Cape Breton community, which led her to the Canadian American Club. Soon afterwards, Ms. Palmater made the first of many trips up to the island.

"As soon as Marcia got there, she connected the music with the land," says Dave Palmater. "That was the beginning."

(Continued on page 12)

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‘The Infinite Dark,’ a program featuring Jane Yolen’s works and fine musicianship, on tap at Boston College (April 4, 6:30)

A fascinating union of song, music, poetry, and story-telling – with influences from Irish, Scots, and European folklore and tradition – is to be found in “The Infinite Dark,” a project centered on the works of award-winning, *New York Times* bestselling author/poet Jane Yolen and a trio of Western Massachusetts musicians: Donna Hébert (fiddle, vocals), Lui Collins (piano, banjo, vocals), and Max Cohen (guitar, percussion, vocals), known collectively as The 3 Ravens band.

Yolen and company will present “The Infinite Dark” on April 4 at Boston College, as part of the BC Center for Irish Program’s Gaelic Roots series; the event, which is free, takes place at 6:30 p.m. in Connolly House (300 Hammond Street) on the university’s Chestnut Hill campus.

In addition to her poetry, Yolen has written fantasy, science fiction and children’s books, including “How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?” which debuted at number 10 on the *New York Times* bestseller list. Among the honors she has received are a Caldecott Medal, two Nebula Awards, the World Fantasy Award, the Jewish Book Award, and the World Fantasy Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

On “The Infinite Dark,” Yolen’s poems and lyrics – many of them from her collection “The Last Selchie Child” – take a fresh look at the stuff of legends and folk tales, including selkies, mermaids, witches, and even Goldilocks. Some of the works are recited by Yolen; others are set



(L-R) Max Cohen, Jane Yolen, Donna Hébert, Lui Collins and Molly Hébert-Wilson are featured on “The Infinite Dark.” *Paul Shoul photo*

to music and sung by Collins and Hébert; these are supplemented by a pair of songs written by Cohen. Adding to the texture are instrumental passages, including a jig from the Orkney Islands, “The Fisherman’s Song for Attracting Seals,” and the Irish air, “The Mermaid.” (Guest performers are Sarah Bauhan on whistle and Molly Hébert-Wilson on vocals.)

It’s the latest turn in a long and eventful career for Hébert, who has studied and played a variety of traditional fiddle styles, including Irish, Scottish, French-Canadian, and Canadian Maritime, working with

distinguished musicians such as Seamus Connolly, Joe Cormier, Graham Townsend, and Allan Block. Her many ventures have included a project to document and present the music of Vermont fiddler Louis Beaudoin; a stint with Rude Girls, an all-female band that fused traditional music styles with contemporary songs on social issues for women’s perspectives; and directing the Great GrooveBand, an ensemble for young musicians that assembles at the Old Songs and Philadelphia Folk festivals.

She has mentored eight Franco-American fiddle apprentices through the

National Endowment for the Arts’ Master-Apprenticeship program and was named a Massachusetts Artists’ Fellow in the Folk Arts.

Hébert discussed “The Infinite Dark” in a recent interview with the BIR.

Q. How and when did you cross paths with Jane Yolen?

A. I met Jane seven years ago at a friend’s party. We bonded instantly as women artists. She invited me over for tea and sent me home with signed copies of books that would change my life. Lui Collins met Jane through her poem “The Ballad of the White Seal Maid,” which Lui set

to music before actually meeting Jane. Both Lui and I agree that setting Jane’s poetry to music happens naturally. They come out of our mouths as songs when we read them.

On “The Infinite Dark,” Lui has written music for five of Jane’s poems, while I have one. Max has scored some of Jane’s and written two of his own. Max engineered the whole thing and his guitar underpins Jane’s poetry with perfection. Jane calls us “her band,” and just celebrated her 80th birthday. She’s an inspiration to us all.

Q. What is it about her work that resonates with you, especially as a musician in Irish/Scottish/

Celtic traditions, to the extent that you wanted to do this collaboration?

A. Jane draws deeply from the folklore of Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, and Europe in her writing, just as we do in our melodic sources and inspirations. We spin a tapestry woven from the same threads. As for why, I am 70, Jane is 80, Lui’s in her 60s and time’s-a-wastin’! Also, because we still create art and this was on both Jane’s and my bucket list. I dragged everyone else into it and they were willing co-conspirators. We jammed at my house parties and it all evolved from there.

Q. In this modern age, fairy tales and folk tales seem to have been marginalized. They’re something viewed as being “just for kids” and often presented in rather sanitized form; or they’re fodder for ultra-stylish, gaudy TV shows and movies. What are we missing when we overlook these old narratives and stories?

A. Oh my, those archetypes are there for a reason. No one can tell me there’s no “big bad wolf” amid the #MeToo headlines. The shape-shifting female associated with wild things is a woman to be tamed by her actually giving up her skin – it gets put away in a box, on a shelf, and only when she finds it again can she free herself. That resonates for women not just in Celtic tradition, but all over the world. These tales have complete relevance for us today. The media trivializes the true power of story, which is so much of our humanity.

- SEAN SMITH

The BIR’s calendar of Irish/Celtic events

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Appearances by distinguished performers with lengthy and accomplished careers are a staple of Irish/Celtic events in Greater Boston/Eastern Massachusetts, and these next several weeks are no exception.

• **Kevin Burke**, one of the Irish folk revival’s most skillful fiddlers, will be at Club Passim in Harvard Square on April 28 at 7:30 p.m. Born in London but with family ties to Sligo and its storied fiddle tradition, Burke became a mainstay in London’s Irish music community as a teenager. Moving to New York City, Burke befriended such musicians as Irish ex-pats Joe Burke and Andy McGann, who inspired him to take up music full-time. He eventually wound up in Dublin’s fertile folk/trad scene, and became a member of the groundbreaking Bothy Band, going on to equally rewarding stints with Patrick Street and the Celtic Fiddle Festival. A resident of Portland, Ore., since 1980, Burke released his solo album, “An Evening with Kevin Burke” last year.

The trio of **Haas, Haas & Falquet** performs on April 21 at 8 p.m. This combo of the Haas sisters, Natalie (cello) and Brittany (fiddle), and Natalie’s husband Yann Falquet (guitar, vocals) represents a blend of musical styles and interests spanning continents: Natalie is perhaps best-known for her lengthy partnership with Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser, but she also has played with Irish acts like Altan and Solas, Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster, and explored folk traditions of Scandinavia,

Spain, and France; Brittney has been one of the more exciting young fiddlers to emerge on the American folk/roots scene, as a member of pioneering string band Crooked Still and in collaboration with Bela Fleck, Tony Trischka, and Steve Martin (yes, *that* Steve Martin); Falquet is renowned as one of the better Quebecois musicians and singers in the past decade or more, especially as part of the trio Genticorum, but more recently he has branched out to play with Cape Breton fiddler Katie McNally and Irish musicians Shannon Heaton and George Keith, as well as The Friel Sisters.

Scotland’s **Tony McManus** brings his mastery of the finger-style guitar to the stage on May 1 at 8 p.m. McManus, who is self-taught, renders the complex ornamentations of traditional music associated with fiddle and pipes, and the effect is spellbinding and often emotionally powerful. He has also teamed with an array of celebrated performers like Dougie McLean [see below], Phil Cunningham, Liam O’Flynn, Martin Simpson, Kevin Burke, Alison Brown, Natalie MacMaster, The Nashville Chamber Orchestra, Catriona Macdonald, and Andy Irvine. In recent years, McManus has branched out into classical and baroque, which resulted in his 2013 album “Mysterious Boundaries.”

For tickets and other information on Passim shows, see passim.org.

• The Berklee Performance Center will host a concert by **The Gloaming**, whose fusion of traditional Irish music with elements of contemporary classical, jazz, and other modern sounds has attracted great interest on both sides



Eileen Ivers appears at the Shalin-Liu Performance Center this month.

of the Atlantic, on April 7 at 7:30 p.m. The quintet’s membership reflects a solid footing in traditional styles combined with a willingness to explore and experiment: Martin Hayes, a master of the lyrical East Clare fiddle style; guitarist/mandolinist Dennis Cahill, who frequently collaborates with Hayes; Caoimhin Ó Raghallaigh, whose fiddling reflects the Sliabh Luachra tradition but also his own experiments in Scandinavian and American music; sean-nos singer Iarla Ó Lionáird, formerly with revolutionary Irish/world-fusion group Afro Celt Sound System; and Thomas

Bartlett AKA Doveman, a Vermont-born pianist who has played in numerous folk, contemporary, and other musical genres. The Gloaming’s most recent album, the much-acclaimed “Live at the NCH,” effectively captures its virtuosity and creativity.

The concert is sponsored by World Music/CRASHarts; for tickets and other information, see worldmusic.org.

• Another World Music/CRASHarts presentation this month is Quebecois powerhouse **Le Vent Du Nord**, at the City Winery on April 30 at 8 p.m. A

(Continued on page 13)

The knowing voice behind ‘Downeast Ceilidh’ is stilled

Marcia Palmater is dead at age 80

(Continued from page 10)

Not long after that, Ms. Palmater quit her job as copy editor and proofreader, and hitched back to Cape Breton for a more extended stay, getting to know the people as well as the places.

In the mid-1970s, Marcia and Dave— they had gotten married after having met, appropriately enough, at the Passim folk club in Harvard Square – were taking the journey to Cape Breton together: leaving after work on Friday in their VW Bug with a spare tire strapped on top and carrying a 10-gallon can of gasoline (“You weren’t apt to find a lot of gas stations in northern Maine, especially at night,” notes Dave), and returning on Sunday night.

By then, Marcia had embarked on her signature vocation. Through a friend, she got involved in the MIT radio station (WTBS, later WMBR), long a haven for folk and country music. Having had experience producing a radio show on conservation, she thought about recruiting someone with Canadian Maritime ties to host a program on Canadian Maritimes music that she would produce. But then she reconsidered, and on Thurs., Feb. 3, 1972, “Downeast Ceilidh” debuted – with Ms. Palmater behind the microphone.

“Her idea was that the show might have more impact with someone not from Atlantic Canada presenting it,” explains Dave. “At the time, the music of the region was dismissed, even by those who lived there, as ‘home music’ or some quaint antiquity that was of no interest to anyone but natives. Having the show hosted by someone not from the Maritimes would help show that this music was beautiful, important, and



“Downeast Ceilidh” host Marcia Young Palmater and her husband Dave.

worth listening to – even if you weren’t a Maritimer.

“Just getting the music on the radio not only exposed it to a wider audience who had never heard it, but it also helped elevate it in the eyes of folks from Atlantic Canada,” adds Palmater, who recalls the time when a young man told Ms. Palmater that one of the musicians she’d featured was a family member: “Until I heard your show I never knew he was famous,” he said to her. “I just thought he was my weird uncle.”

Ms. Palmater would play recordings of old masters as well as new-generation musicians and contempo-

rary artists from the region. The show also included songs in Gaelic and Acadian French, and others in English that were traditional to the area or recent compositions.

The core feature of “Downeast Ceilidh” was Cape Breton/Nova Scotian fiddlers and fiddle styles, for which Ms. Palmater developed an in-depth knowledge. “Marcia could tell just by listening where a fiddler was from,” says Dave. “She would file her Cape Breton albums geographically – Mabou, Sydney, etc. – instead of alphabetically by the fiddler’s name.”

But Ms. Palmater evinced a folksy manner on the air – as she did off it – rather than that of a scholar, talking about the artists whose albums she played as if they were friends and acquaintances, which many were. She made a point of specifying where a musician or singer came from, notes Dave: Rita and Mary Rankin were not just from Cape Breton, for example, and not just from Mabou but from Mabou Coal Mines.

“To Marcia,” he says, “even a couple of miles made a difference.”

Instead of beginning the show with a spoken introduction, Ms. Palmater would typically welcome listeners by playing three or four musical selections, an interval that might last as much as 10 minutes or more; only then would she come on and announce the show’s title.

“Marcia felt the program was primarily for the Canadian American community,” says Dave. “If anyone else tuned in, that was fine. She just wanted to put the music out there from the get-go, have the listeners focus in on it.”

During its run on MIT radio, Ms. Palmater insisted that “Downeast Ceilidh” begin at 6 p.m., because she thought that would be the ideal time to reach Maritimers. It was sound reasoning. Once, at the Canadian American Club, says Dave, a surly-looking teenager came up to her and said he regularly listened to “Downeast Ceilidh.” When Ms. Palmater expressed surprise at this, he replied, “Yeah – if I want to eat dinner on Thursdays, I have to.”

To its dedicated corps of Canadian American listeners, says Dave, it wasn’t “Downeast Ceilidh” but simply “Marcia’s Show.” About every Maritimer’s home in Greater Boston he and Marcia visited seemed to have a note pinned to the refrigerator with a reminder of the day and time for “Marcia’s Show.” At one home was a note on the TV: “Don’t watch on Thursday evenings!”

When the show moved to WUMB – where her husband also worked – and to Sunday nights, Dave printed up refrigerator magnets with the station and schedule information. During the program, Marcia would offer to send them to listeners who provided a self-addressed stamped envelope.

“Between the ones we sent out and the ones we handed out, I must have printed up hundreds,” says Dave. “I wonder if there are any left, still stuck to a fridge door.”

Morrison says Ms. Palmater understood the reach her show had, and its potential for promoting the music. “Marcia would always call around the first of the month to ask who was coming down from Cape Breton, where they’d be playing, when the Canadian American Club would be having a concert or a dance, so that she could make sure to mention it and to play their music on the show.”

Ms. Palmater made a point of getting to know the musicians of earlier generations, like Bill Lamey, who organized dances for Boston-area Maritimers during the 1950s and ’60s. “She’d love doing that,” says Morrison, “and she made it exciting for the people talked to – they were happy to have the opportunity to talk about the music and what it meant to the community. It was lovely to watch.”

At the same time, Ms. Palmater helped to widen the audience for Canadian Atlantic music. When she began “Downeast Ceilidh,” there had been few recordings of Cape Breton music issued in “a very long time,” says Dave; but not long after she began broadcasting, Rounder Records, which was associated with MIT radio, started a Cape Breton series. She also was attuned to the new generation of performers who were reviving the Maritimes tradition, or taking it in new directions.

“Without Marcia, a lot of stuff wouldn’t have happened,” Dave explains. “Natalie MacMaster, as a young teen, could play down here and people knew about her because they knew her family’s music. And, of course, her popularity went well beyond the Maritimer community.”

In recent years, as Ms. Palmater’s health declined, she stopped doing the show live and recorded it at home with her husband’s help. When that proved to be too difficult for her to undertake, Dave edited previous “Downeast Ceilidh” programs for re-airing, until he retired from WUMB in 2017. Many episodes are now available online at ceilidh.org and at folktracks.blog.

Even as the scope and influence of “Downeast Ceilidh” grew, Ms. Palmater treasured the personal connections the show had forged from the beginning. “Early on in the life of the program, she got a call from a homesick young Maritimer who was in tears,” recalls Dave. “He never thought he’d not just hear the music of home, but the name of the little place that he came from on the radio in Boston.”

Donations in Marcia Young Palmater’s memory can be made to The Canadian American Club, Marcia Young Palmater Building Fund, 202 Arlington St., Watertown, MA 02474 or online at canadianamericanclub.com/Membership-and-Donations.html.

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CD Reviews

By Sean Smith

Tommy Fitzharris and Dónal McCague, “The Bank of Turf” – Fitzharris is an All-Ireland flute (and concertina) champion from Co. Laois; McCague is a fiddler from Co. Monaghan whose credits include appearances on the album “Our Dear Dark Mountain with the Sky Over It,” which features music from the oft-overlooked Sliabh Beagh region. As a complement to this album’s title, taken from a jig of the same name, its cover and inner sleeve photos show the pair on location in a peat bog, even passing a piece of turf between them. And in fact, via the liner notes accompanying the titular track (paired with another jig, “The Moving Bog”), we learn that Fitzharris and McCague spent summers engaged in such work.

That may or may not intended as some allusion to the fertile ground of the Irish music tradition, but in fact there is an earthiness to “Bank of Turf” – a



suggestion of digging into the soil and uncovering the richness within. In any case, Fitzharris and McCague have produced a recording of intensity and beauty, abundant with excellent musician-ship and taste, and which gives some attention to geographical areas of Ire-land that, musically, tend

to be overshadowed.

All-instrumental albums may not be everyone’s fancy, but there are such delights here, like appreciat-ing the individual strengths of the two - the tonality and control Fitzharris displays on “The Jolly Tinker” and “The Knocknagree Reel,” for example, or the lift and spark in McCague’s fiddle on a pair of original jigs, “The Tram” and “Iorball Sionnaigh.” And then the alignment of their talents, such as on the set of jigs “Paddy in London/Jackie Small’s/The Reaper,” or a pair of hornpipes, “The Butterslip” – by Fitzhar-ris – and one from Donegal, “Frank Cassidy’s.” Yet another highlight is Brian McGrath’s crisp, canny piano accompaniment throughout.

Continuing with the agrarian metaphor, the album has a roots-and-branches element, too: traditional tunes alongside tradition-inspired compositions by Fitzharris and McCague, as well as other musicians of note like Charlie Lennon and Richie Dwyer. One particularly outstanding example is the track begin-ning with McCague’s hop jig, “There’s a Man Here on Crutches” (the title refers to a bit of chicanery his father used to obtain parking at GAA matches), then segues into a pair of reels, the first associated with a great Laois fiddler, Tom Ahearn, the second (“The Holly Spoon”) from Sliabh Beagh. Another medley of reels evokes Sliabh Luachra masters Padraig O’Keefe and Denis Murphy, with McCague playing soft chords on the first (“The Flower of the Flock”) before joining Fitzharris on the melody for a setting of “The Mason’s Apron” promulgated by Claire legend Micho Russell.

With “The Bank of Turf,” then, you have two musi-cians (three, really) firmly, solidly grounded in the tradition, their musical acumen and artistry in full bloom.

[The album is available for download at donaland-tommy.bandcamp.com/album/the-bank-of-turf]

Snowflake Trio, “Sun Dogs” – Nuala Kennedy, native to Dundalk and residing in Edinburgh, has made some charming, fascinating, and just-plain-terrific recordings over the past decade or so, demonstrating a

exceptional ability on flute and whistle, an endear-ing singing voice, and an enlivening, creative spirit in adapting traditional tunes and songs as well as putting forth her own. In 2009, she joined up with a pair of Norwegian musi-cians, hardanger fiddler/violinist Vegar Vårdal and accordionist Frode Haltli, who have a similar penchant for busting perceived boundaries, and at long last, they have put out an album. In this partnership, the Irish and Norwegian music traditions are less an end than a means, a starting point for collaborations that draw as much on original compositions and improvised passages.



With some exceptions, that is: The first track is Kennedy’s honeyed rendition of “What We Will Do,” a nifty intermingling of romance, determination, and fatalism said to originate in the Irish traveler tradi-tion; Haltli’s bassy chording uplifts Kennedy’s singing as well as her duets with Vårdal, which includes an interpolation of a waltz, “Fjellvåk.” The next track is where the trio’s more experimental character first truly asserts itself, on Kennedy’s air “The Green Lady” (inspired by a female ghost said to inhabit a Scottish castle): Kennedy carries the melody along, with Haltli and Vårdal providing a kind of ethereal ambience, until a brief sequence toward the end when Haltli begins a rapid push-and-draw on accordion as Kennedy and Vårdal extemporize.

Another track opens with the familiar E-minor slip jig “The Butterfly,” popularized to a great extent by iconoclastic fiddler Tommy Potts (not to mention The Bothy Band) – except that here it begins with the trio vamping until Kennedy, ever so slowly, begins to piece the melody together, and Vårdal and Haltli fall in behind her as the pace gathers. After they’ve settled into the groove for about a minute or so, the trio heads into “Gudmunddansen,” a hopsar or old-school version of a Norwegian couple-dance polka; Kennedy’s trills alongside Vårdal’s brisk bowing and Haltli’s agile variations are breathtaking.

Three songs are imaginative unions of literary and music traditions: “Ceol Sidhe (Fairy Music),” by Meath soldier-poet Francis Ledwidge, and the melody of a Norwegian emigrant song; 18th-century Louth poet Peadar Ó Dóirín’s “The Fair Hill of Killin” and the lament “Den bortkomne sauen (The Lost Sheep).” In “Gjendines Bådnåt (Gjendine’s Lullaby),” Kennedy combines her lyrics, inspired by a poem by Scottish poet Uisdean Laing, with a well-known Norwegian tune that the eminent composer Edvard Grieg collected from a young milk maid. With Vårdal’s hardanger accom-paniment underpinning Kennedy’s vocals (in English and Gaelic), the result is stark, bleak, yet beautiful.

But “Sun Dogs” is by no means unrelentingly som-ber. Kennedy’s “A Face for Scuba” – originally written for her collaboration with Canadian fiddler Oliver Schroer, who sadly died just before their recording was released – is pure whimsy and fun: darts and dives over and around a shifting time signature, now and then veering into a chaos of duff notes and cacophony but somehow returning to the main theme.

The album has a cerebral quality, especially when you read the liner notes (which you should), yet what emerges is the seemingly unlikely but profound connectiveness to be found between these parts of the world, through the experiences of its people: loss, grief, hope, adoration, and a bond with the land around them. It’s a revelation worth experiencing, over and over. [nualakennedy.com]

The BIR’s calendar of Irish/Celtic events

(Continued from page 10)

leading force in Quebec’s progressive francophone folk movement for the better part of two decades, the band has continually shown energy and inventiveness in incorporating contemporary material – some of it their own compositions – alongside the traditional, and with an awareness of global influences. The line-up of Nicolas Boulерice (hurdy gurdy), Oliver Demers (fiddle), Simon Beaudry (guitar, bouzouki) and Rejean Brunet (accordion, bass) has recently expanded to include Rejean’s brother, Andre, a leading fiddler in the Quebecois style. Le Vent du Nord released its latest album, “Territoires,” earlier this year.

Tickets are available via the City Winery website at citywinery.com/boston.

•Scottish vocalist, guitarist, and fiddler **Dougie MacLean**, composer of iconic songs like “Caledonia,” “Broken Wings,” “Feel So Near” and “Ready for the Storm,” will be at the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport on April 11 at 8 p.m. MacLean’s songs have been covered by performers like Ronan Keat-ing, Mary Black, and American country singer Kathy Mattea, and his music has been featured in film (“The Last of the Mohicans”) and television (BBC’s “A Mug’s Game”). For the past decade, he has organized a 10-day acoustic music festival in Perthshire to celebrate the region’s history and culture. In 2011, he was honored with an OBE.

Grammy Award-winning fiddler **Eileen Ivers**, who has been instrumental in forging connections between Irish and Celtic music with that of other cultures and genres, comes to Shalin Liu on April 13 at 8 p.m. Born of Irish parents in New York City, Ivers grew up immersed in the Irish tradition – she would win nine All-Ireland fiddle championships – but also found inspiration in the music she heard on and around the city streets, including African, Latin, jazz, and rock. So it was that she not only co-founded

the ahead-of-its-time all-women Irish music group Cherish the Ladies, but also wound up as a featured musician in the original “Riverdance,” leading the intercultural band Immigrant Soul, and collaborat-ing with luminaries such as Sting, Hall & Oates and Patti Smith, as well as the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Tickets, details at rockportmusic.org.

•The Burren Backroom series will host singer-songwriter **Jim Malcolm**, another prominent figure in the Scottish folk/traditional scene for the last couple of decades, on April 3 at 7:30 p.m. Malcolm was for seven years a member of Old Blind Dogs, one of Scotland’s most cosmopolitan folk/trad bands, where he showcased his expressive voice and nimble guitar and harmonica-playing. Over the past dozen years or so, he has built a successful solo career on his own material as well as his highly regarded inter-pretations of songs by Robert Burns, among other Scots literary giants.

April 7 will see a return appearance by Massachu-setts ensemble **Fellswater**, known for its meticu-lously arranged sets of Scottish, Irish, Breton, and other Celtic-related music for instruments such as fiddle, Scottish small pipes and border pipes, flute, whistle, guitar, bouzouki, and percussion. The band (Elizabeth Ketudat, Sarah MacConduibh, Jim Mac-Conduibh, Kyle Forsthoﬀ, and Andrew McIntosh) also has a vocal component in husband-wife duo Chris and Diane Meyers. Fellswater’s most recent album is “Skipping Stones.”

Also visiting the Backroom again will be **House of Hamill**, the duo of Brian Buchanan and Rose Baldino, on April 17 at 7 p.m. Buchanan (fiddle, guitar, mandolin, vocals) is known for his long association with Canadian folk-rockers Enter the Haggis, while Baldino (fiddle, vocals) was a member of the now-on-hiatus-or-defunct Celtic folk band Burning Bridget

(Continued on page 14)

Is Disability Income Insurance Worth It?

Presented by Brian W. O’Sullivan, CFP, ChFC, CLU

You insure your most valuable assets like your home, your car and your life. Most people would agree that they’re worth protection; however, disability income (DI) insurance is something people tend to be less certain about. They’re not sure if they really need it, or if it’s worth the cost. There’s no cut-and-dried answer, but there are some strong arguments to be made in favor of DI.

What Are the Chances You’ll Need It?

When you think about the kind of disability that could keep you from working, usually the first thing that comes to mind is a car accident or other catastrophic injury – in other words, something that *could* happen, but most likely won’t.



In reality, the most common cause of disability is illness, not accidents or injuries¹. Arthritis, back pain, neurological problems and cardiovascular illnesses are all more common than injuries when it comes to disability claims². And, disabilities are more common than you might think. In fact, one in four 20-year-olds will become disabled before they reach retirement age³.

What is DI?

DI is insurance for a portion of your income. And your income is your most valuable asset. It’s what pays for your essential expenses like housing, food, utilities, clothing, transportation, as well as your not-so-essential ones. Your income may also help support members of your family.

If you had to stop working due to a disability, the income you’re earning now simply wouldn’t be there anymore. You’d have to find another way to cover your living expenses and to support the people who depend on you. That’s where DI comes into play.

What about Other Options?

Of course, there are a few other sources of income you might be able to draw on if you become disabled. Many people have what’s called group long-term disability insurance through their employer.

If you leave for another job, you may not be able to take your disability coverage with you and your new employer may or may not provide the same benefit. Additionally, if your employer pays for the policy, the benefits you would receive if you became disabled would be taxable.

Most important, the kind of disability insurance you get from work typically only covers about 60 percent of your income, not including any bonuses or commissions you may normally receive. The other 40 percent is up to you. While disability insurance won’t cover 100% of your income, an individual DI policy can help provide additional protection.

Protecting Your Most Valuable Asset

With any luck, you’ll never have to deal with a disability that keeps you from being able to work. But it’s a good idea to have a plan in place, so that if you ever did become disabled you could still cover your expenses and provide for the people who count on you.

¹ Council for Disability Awareness 2014 Long-Term Disability Claims Review; Disability Claims by Diagnosis.

² Council for Disability Awareness 2014 Long-Term Disability Claims Review.

³ US Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet, 2018.

Brian W. O’Sullivan is a registered representative of and offers securities, investment advisory and financial planning services through MML Investors Services, LLC, Member SIPC (www.sipc.org). Supervisory Address: 101 Federal Street, Suite 800, Boston, MA 02110. He may be reached at 617-479-0075 x331 or b-sullivan@financialguide.com.

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The BIR's calendar of Irish/Celtic events

(Continued from page 13) influences cultivated over the years. Kicking off the Backroom's May schedule will be guitarist-vocalist **Donal Clancy**, on May 1 at 7:30 p.m. A founding member of the band Danú, he has played with The Chieftains and

fiddler Eileen Ivers [see above], collaborated with numerous other musicians and singers, and released three solo albums, including one devoted to solo guitar. In recent years, he has devoted time to honoring the repertoire and tradition of the Clancy family, notably his father, the late Liam Clancy; Donal has occasionally joined forces with Rory Makem, the son of Liam's longtime partner, Tommy Makem, to perform the songs their fathers made famous.

Opening will be the duo of **Chris Overholser and Sunniva Brynnel**. Overholser (fiddle, mandolin) and Brynnel (accordion, vocals), former members of the group Night Tree, explore the connections between Celtic and Scandinavian music while also presenting their highly original works. For links to tickets and other details about the Backroom series, go to burren.com/EventsCalendar.html. •The 19 Carter Music Series in Berlin will feature Massachusetts fid-

dlar-vocalist-songwriter **Emerald Rae** on April 13 at 7:30 p.m. Rae has been active in traditional music, particularly that of Scotland and Cape Breton, since her childhood, playing in many collaborations—including as part of the "alt-trad" band Annalivia – as well as a soloist. In recent years, she has turned her attention to American folk music and songwriting. Her newest release focuses on her vocal-fiddle synergy for traditional, contemporary and original songs. See 19carter.org for

more details. •If you have a hankering for a U2-type evening, the Irish Cultural Centre of New England in Canton presents **The Joshua Tree** on April 13 at 8 p.m. The Boston-based band has developed a national reputation in evoking the magic and majesty of U2, and prides itself on reproducing the legendary Irish rockers' distinct sound – covering the very early years up to the present – while maintaining artistic integrity. For information, go to irishculture.org.

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A bit about sheep and cows, at Co. Leitrim’s Lough Rynn Castle

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Isth there a truer (or cuter) sign of spring in Ireland than the fluffy young lambs that run, jump, and frolic in the emerald green fields? It’s a sure sign of the new year and rebirth of the world after an often long, dark, and dreary winter.

A poll I saw recently asked what travelers to Ireland liked best about their visit. I was somewhat surprised to see how many answered “the sheep,” but I’m with them on that answer, so I get it.

The most common sheep in Ireland are the black-face mountain sheep and the lowland sheep, which are often Suffolks, according to Irish farmer’s journals. Figures collected in 2017 show that there were more sheep in Ireland than people, which is not really surprising. At that time, the total human population was just under 4.8 million compared with some 5.2 million sheep.

Here’s some interesting trivia, for those who love fun facts: As of 2017, there were almost a million more cows in Ireland than there were people who spoke Irish, the native language. There were 2.5 million dairy and suckler cows and only 1.8 million people speaking Irish.

LOUGH RYNN CASTLE

Among Ireland’s many attributes are the castle hotels dotted across the country. Most travelers know about Ashford Castle in Co. Mayo and Dromoland Castle Hotel in Co. Clare, but how many are familiar with Lough Rynn in Mohill, Co. Leitrim?

We stayed at Lough Rynn last autumn for a wedding and were impressed by the beautiful, manicured grounds, the efficiency and friendliness of the staff and the spotlessly clean rooms and bathrooms (and there was great water pressure in the shower.) Food prepared by head chef Clare O’Leary and her staff was beautifully presented and delicious. O’Leary has been head chef at Lough Rynn for nine years.

Ruth Conlon, sales and marketing manager, says, “Co. Leitrim is an undiscovered location where you can experience true Ireland.” And, with some

300 acres, there is plenty to experience right there on the grounds of the hotel.

Lough Rynn and the surrounding area has a storied past beginning 3,500 years ago with the Druids who used the high ground southeast of the hotel as a burial ground. The site is known as Druids’ Hill and is marked by the dolmen they built.

Succeeding centuries brought various clans and families who clashed, built homes, and acquired some 10,000 acres around Lough Rynn. The last family, the Clements, sold Lough Rynn in 1969 with much less land. The property lay vacant and in disrepair until 1990 when a visitor attraction center opened there. In 2005, Alan and Albert Hanly (The Hanly Group) bought the hotel and a new chapter began. They also own Kilonan Castle Hotel and Spa in Co. Roscommon.

Lough Rynn, according to Conlon, offers not only an experience in real Ireland, but also an opportunity to enjoy peace and tranquility in the grandeur of a castle hotel. Guests are individually escorted to their rooms and tea is available in the four drawing rooms.

The hotel, Conlon added, “is very popular for weddings and oozes romance.” About 130 weddings are held at Lough Rynn every year, she said. The treatment bridal couples receive there makes them feel so special that many have said to the staff, “We feel like we’re the only people who ever got married here.”

Future plans for the property include 50 additional bedrooms and a spa/leisure center. “We have a high end product here that



Is there anything cuter than Irish lambs in the spring?
Judy Enright photos

is so much more affordable than some other castle hotels,” Conlon said.

She added that the Lough Rynn team is passionate about its work and creates a friendly atmosphere that is not at all stuffy despite the elegance of the surroundings. Travelers to Leitrim who would like to stay at Lough Rynn, she suggests, might want to book mid-week when there is better room selection than on weekends.

Visit loughrynn.ie for more information and

special deals.

SAVING THE EARTH

The Achill Island (Co. Mayo) Half Marathon and 10K – July 6 this year – annually attract as many as 1,200 participants. The runners need hydration during the day, and in the past, some 12,500 bottles of water have been offered along the route.

In an effort to reduce the negative impact of such large events on the environment, Achill Tourism.com and the Achill Half Marathon committee teamed up with a local

secondary school to come up with an alternate solution – reusable cups.

With the help of Refill, ie, reusable cups will be collected after the event, steam cleaned and reused at other places around the country. Organizers hope other groups will follow suit and ultimately remove millions of bottles annually from such events.

IRISH GIN TASTING

Gin has certainly become the drink of the day in Ireland, a land more noted over the centuries for whiskey, beer, and stout. Distilleries are popping up across the country and gin drinkers can sample an interesting assortment of gin here and there.

Ashford Castle in Cong, Co. Mayo, recently announced that the hotel had formed a collaboration with The Shed Distillery to offer guests Ashford Castle’s Gin Tray Tasting Experience. Guests can compare some of the world’s finest gins from the Netherlands, Switzerland, Scotland, and the UK with Ireland’s distinctive Drumshambo Gunpowder Irish Gin, which came on the market in 2015.

The Gin Tray Tasting Experience must be booked in advance and costs 65 euro per person with an added 15 percent service charge. For more information, visit ashfordcastle.com.

REGENERATION

The Connaught Telegraph recently carried an interesting story about Ireland’s rural regeneration and development fund, which aims to revitalize rural areas by supporting self-sustaining projects in towns and villages with fewer than

10,000 residents.

Included in the funding was 2.3-million euro for seven projects in Co. Mayo including:

- Town regeneration in Ballinrobe with 825,000 euro earmarked for development of Market House, the town library and grounds, and an upgrade of Bowers Walk.

- More than 800,000-euro for capital works by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in Ballycroy National Park and elsewhere in the county and support for the development of a Dark Sky Planetarium project in the National Park.

- Almost 1 million euro to assist in development of a Global Geopark for the Joyce Country and Western Lakes area of Co. Galway and Co. Mayo.

- More than 850,000 euro to support the Western Development Commission’s establishment of rural digital hubs in Swinford, Tubbercurry, Tulsk, and Stranlar.

- Development of a cycle network from Leenane to Sligo county boundary will be funded with 75,000 euro.

- A Lost Treasures Trail, linking Westport and Cong in Co. Mayo, will receive 56,000 euro to highlight heritage assets along the route.

Minister for Rural and Community Development Michael Ring is quoted as saying, “A total of 86 million euro nationally has been allocated to towns, villages, and outlying rural areas throughout Ireland under Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

“I believe that it is vital that we make our towns and villages vibrant places for families to live. It is also particularly appropriate, with Brexit approaching, that we continue to strengthen the rural economy and support sustainable development. The projects that this fund supports are targeting areas where they can have the greatest economic and social impact,” Ring said.

TRAVELS

Enjoy Ireland whenever and wherever you go. Try different areas and seek out attractions that are not on the usual tourist trail and you won’t be disappointed. There’s much to see and do in this vibrant country!



Lovely Leitrim’s Lough Rynn Castle Estate and Gardens.

Irish Hearts for Orphans invites all to a dance for children in need

(Continued from page 1)

Pat had attended events such as the Irish Hearts for Orphans Benefit Dance hosted by NPH, a local non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of nearly 3,100 orphaned, abandoned, and disadvantaged boys and girls in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru. Through health care, education and home environment NPH helps children to thrive and grow.

NPH also provides educational scholarships to youth who complete their

studies and want to pursue a trade or university education. Working with NPH staff, Pat was able to connect with a student who was in need of support, Kenia Grisela of Honduras, and donated the funds to cover her university tuition.

Just like Courtney, Kenia is studying chemistry and pharmacy in the hopes of pursuing a career in medicine. She is currently enrolled at Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Honduras (National Autonomous University of Honduras). Pat’s hope is that this scholarship will put Kenia

in a position where she can help the people in her country.

At this year’s Irish Hearts event, we hope to secure additional university scholarships and child sponsorships. We hope that you will follow Pat’s example and help us continue to shine light into the darkest corners of the world.

We want to thank everyone who has participated over the past 10 years. Our hearts are moved beyond words and filled with hope!

Visit nphusa.org/irish-hearts for more information on Irish Hearts, to learn about how you can



Kenia Grisela
Honduran awardee

support this event, or to register to attend.

Saint Finbarr group sets charity event for center for disabled near Cork City

Boston’s Co. Cork club, the Knights and Ladies of Saint Finbarr, will host a spring event to benefit Ennabla Ireland-Cork, an Irish center for children with disabilities now being developed outside Cork City.

Featuring the Noel Henry Irish Show Band, the event is set for Sat., May 11, from 7 p.m. to 11p.m. at the Irish Social Club in West Roxbury.

Tickets are \$15 pp. For more information call Richard at 781-326-0388 or Mary at 978-664-4652.

O’Grady readings set for Milton Library on April 4

The Éire Society of Boston will present Thomas O’Grady, English professor and Dean of Irish Studies at UMass Boston, in a program of selected readings and an analysis of Patrick Kavanagh’s “On Raglan Road” on Thurs., April 4, at 6 p.m. in the Keyes Room in the Milton Public Library.



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