

Hibernians March for Life



Hibernians from around the country, including the National and NYS Boards Marched for Life (Photo by Digest Editor John O'Connell)

by John Patrick Walsh, National Pro-Life Chairman
Thank You!

By every measure, the 2017 March for Life was the best march yet for the AOH. Our annual Pro-Life Breakfast experienced a 40 percent increase in attendance, the Hibernian Mass was well attended, and we had an entire bus of Hibernians from New York join us for the march. Standing beside brothers and sisters from New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, D.C., New Jersey, Ohio and Maryland was a profoundly humbling experience; it is my hope that our numbers continue to grow. The success we experienced is thanks to all who participated last weekend and I wanted to express my sincere appreciation of their efforts.

A special mention of gratitude to our AOH and LAOH National Boards for their support and attendance, as well as to Frs. Henry Reid (NYS Chaplain), Jack Hurley (DC Chaplain), and Gary Donegan (Ardoyne) for celebrating the mass.

The Power of One

The theme of this year's march was The Power of One, celebrating the large impact one man, Rep. Henry Hyde, a Republican from Illinois, had on pro-life legislation. The Hyde Amendment was the first major legislative victory by the pro-life movement to survive judicial review after the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. As understood today, the legislation prohibits the use of federal funds for abortions except in cases of rape, incest, or where the life of the mother would be endangered if the child were carried to term. While not the finish line we seek, the work of Mr. Hyde has saved countless children from an unnatural death sponsored by our tax dollars.

When Good Men Do Nothing

As I write this article the words of last week's Gospel continue to prick my conscience. The Sermon on the Mount represents the

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New Beginning after End of an Era

by Neil Cosgrove

The 9th of January witnessed the end of a seminal era in the history of Ireland with the resignation of the Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness. Over 10 years ago the world watched in amazement as Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin and the Rev. Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist Party, the iconic faces of the two parties that represented the opposing views of the destiny of Northern Ireland during "the Troubles," joined in coalition to work through the peaceful institutions of government for the betterment of the people of all communities in Northern Ireland. The men developed a sincere friendship, and the future of Northern Ireland appeared as bright as the smiles invariably on their faces when photographed together.

McGuinness' resignation highlighted the continued failure of the DUP to embrace the core Good Friday Agreement principles of equality, mutual respect and a holistic view of Ireland.

Unfortunately, this historic partnership was short-lived. Members of the DUP who could not grow beyond their prejudices and personal self-interest forced the Rev. Paisley out of the party he founded after little more than a year. Martin McGuinness has continued to walk the road of peace. He has at times taken actions that challenged Republicans to stretch beyond their comfort zones, and this has disconcerted some with legitimate viewpoints. However, one cannot build a bridge unless one is willing to extend beyond the comfort of their own shores.



Michelle O'Neill and Martin McGuinness

However, a bridge cannot be built solely from one side. The intransigence of current First Minister Arlene Foster and the DUP has reached a point where Martin McGuinness had to step down or be party to a continued mockery of all the Good Friday Agreement stood for. The Northern Ireland executive has been rocked by a series of scandals that have their roots in the majority DUP party and tracing themselves to the office of the First Minister. The most recent concerns the Renewable Heat Initiative (RHI), a program initiated by First Minister Arlene Foster in her prior role as Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, which has committed Northern Ireland to spending nearly £500m over the next 20 years to heat empty farm sheds; creating a windfall for some at the expense of the many. Mr. McGuinness offered that Ms. Foster step down without prejudice given her clear conflict of interest so a full and transparent investigation could take place. Ms. Foster refused, placing party politics before the people she was elected to serve and further weakening the credibility of the

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The National HIBERNIAN Digest

"Ireland, One and Indivisible. Though the heavens Fall"

HIS EMINENCE, PATRICK CARDINAL O'DONNELL OF IRELAND

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Life Membership awarded to Timothy O'Sullivan



Timothy O'Sullivan received his life member ribbon and jewel from Larry Prella, VP, NIAOH State Board.

Timothy O'Sullivan was born on January 21, 1938, to Mary O'Connell and Neily O'Sullivan, the third of nine children who grew up in poverty. On July 4, 1956, at the age of 18, Tim immigrated to the United States.

Soon after arriving in the U.S., Tim fell in love and married Katherine Murphy, from Brooklyn. They bought a home in Staten Island and raised their three children, Neil, Joan and Karen. It was a proud moment for Tim when he earned his United States Citizenship in 1965.

Tim joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians 53 years ago, in Staten Island, NY. Tim held the office of Recording Secretary. He was active in forming the first Staten Island St. Patrick's Day Parade, and help form The Staten Island Pipe Band.

Tim was honored to be an Aide to the Grand Marshal in the 1983 New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade. This was the year that a controversial Grand Marshal was elected: Michael Flannery, a strong supporter of the Irish Republican Army.

Tim was employed by Tucker Anthony & Co., a Wall Street brokerage firm, as a runner working his way up to Assistant Vice President, head of the Printing Department. In 2002 they moved to New Jersey and joined the Division 16 of Monmouth County, NJ.

The division has been blessed to have Tim as a member. With his recitation of Irish poems, the playing of traditional Irish Music, and his stories of growing up in Ireland he has kept Irish culture living and breathing in the hearts of our members. He is a published author of books on growing up in Ireland as well as a talented artist.

Nassau Division 8 installs new officers



The Mike Moran Division 8 in Nassau County, NY, installed its new officers on Jan. 4. From left, top row, County VP Peter Begley, Past County President and State Director Mike Byrne, new Division Marshal Sean Basdavanos, long-time Hibernian and past division president Andrew Stafford, now serving as Standing Committee Chairman, new Financial Secretary Michael Gentile, Treasurer Matthew Gentile, Sentinel William Panzenbeck; and County Recording Secretary Jim Henry; and front row, from left, new Division VP Eric Hill, re-elected Division President Robert Panzenbeck; and Recording Secretary John Hanley. (Photo by Digest Editor John O'Connell)



president's message

by Jim McKay III

By the time you read this article, we will be well into the "green season" of our year with all the preparations of 2017 St. Patrick's Day events. I hope all goes well with the celebrations across the country honoring our Patron Saint of Ireland.

Many Hibernians recently descended on Washington, D.C., for the Right to Life March. It was one of the biggest turnouts we've had for this very solemn commemoration in recent memory. The weather cooperated as much as it could for January; the sun was bright and warm across our faces. We are looking into the possibility next year of having some Irish pipe bands at the march to rally all the Hibernians present to march as one unit.

The upheaval up in the North of Ireland is ongoing unfortunately with no end in sight. Besides the BREXIT problems, these matters were exacerbated by the collapse of the government in Stormont. Our National PEC Chairman Neil Cosgrove has been covering the story daily and keeps us informed with in-depth articles on the subject through the Hibernian Digest as well as our monthly e-mail blast. These are difficult times politically in Ireland and all Brothers should try and stay abreast of the developments there.

On a brighter note, this is also the time for our Freedom for All Ireland Appeal, which is still in the collection mode. The cutoff date for the request of monetary donations from Ireland was January 27, and we had 15 donation requests for aid. We will be meeting shortly to make the determination if these requesting groups fit our criteria and what amounts they should be given. As is the national policy, donation amounts will be published annually by category in the Hibernian Digest.

Also, you should all be aware that the Project St. Patrick's Easter Appeal begins this month. This is one of the most important projects undertaken by the AOH/LAOH. It raises funds for seminary and religious scholarships throughout the country. These funds will be distributed through the many Dioceses and Archdioceses throughout this country.

This is the year for state conventions and we ask all State Presidents to turn in the dates that the state conventions have been planned so that we may publish them in the Digest. We would also like to thank all those Division Presidents who were present on the State President's conference call last month. It was a huge success; we had over 40 callers. The next President's conference call will be March 29, 2017.

There will be a National Board meeting telephonically in the month of February, where we will conduct the business of our Order. The National Board will meet in October in New Orleans for the National President's Dinner. The LAOH, through their President, Patricia O'Connell, has expressed a desire to coincide their National Board meeting with ours in New Orleans. We hope that will be approved, which would increase our numbers for a successful event; as we always seem to get a lot more done when we work together. This is the event where we present our very prestigious Sean MacBride Award. As per our constitution this is a joint event of the AOH/LAOH. Nominations were taken in November and have since been closed and the voting will begin shortly with the recipient being named the week of St. Patrick's Day.

I hope you all have a memorable and Holy St. Patrick's Day and look forward to seeing many of you at the various state conventions this upcoming year.

God Bless.



vice president's report

by Danny O'Connell

Happy St. Patrick's Day! I know everyone is knee deep into the Green Season focusing on your local events all around the country. Remember that all the Irish in America are more in touch with their Irish heritage during Green Season events and parades.

This makes this the best time to recruit new members. I am asking every one of you to make it your mission to get one new member during the next four weeks. Convince your friends, your family members and people you are working with on parade committees, etc., that it is important to celebrate our Irish heritage 365 days of the year. Let all Irish-Americans know there is no better way to celebrate our Irish heritage than to join the Ancient Order of Hibernian today! One new member from each of you is what I am asking for but more than one is even better.

LAOH Vice President Carol Sheyer and I have been working together on the Sean MacBride Memorial award. By now all the votes are in and the award winner has either been announced or will be shortly. We had four terrific candidates, which made me realize that there are many worthy candidates out there. The award is designed to memorialize the Human Rights contributions made by Nobel Peace laureate Dr. Sean MacBride, and to recognize the efforts of others who make similar contributions in the cause of peace, justice and the economic well being of the Irish people. The MacBride award will be presented at the National President's testimonial dinner held in New Orleans, La, on October 14, 2017.

The rituals committee, which includes at least one member from every degree team, will be working on updating the Blue Book. Rituals Chairman JJ Kelly and I hope this work is completed in time to present the results to the National Board during the fall 2017 meeting. JJ continues working to develop new degree teams around the country and we hope to have at least one new team on board this spring or summer. We hope all non-degreed members will look for an opportunity to make your degrees as soon as possible. Maybe your state convention this summer will be your opportunity to receive your degrees. All degreed members are encouraged to observe the degree ceremony whenever possible.

I have included a list of many of the state conventions in this issue of the Digest. We will be also sending the list out in President McKay's e-mail blasts as more conventions are added to it. There is no better way to learn more about the Hibernians and to help the AOH move forward in a positive manner than to attend and participate in your state convention. Many members also take the opportunity to visit neighboring state conventions. I strongly recommend that you try to attend your convention. If your state does not host a convention due to size be sure to attend your state board meetings and your division meetings on a regular basis. Your attendance at any and all AOH meetings and functions will help the AOH grow stronger.

Like most of you, I am looking forward to the many events surrounding St. Patrick's Day. In Youngstown, Ohio, we will be celebrating with a Mass and luncheon honoring our local mayor, AOH member John McNally, who is the Mahoning County Irishman of the Year. I hope to participate in as many parades and events as possible and meet as many Hibernians as I can along the way. Again, I wish you and yours a Happy St. Patrick's Day and wish you good luck in landing a new recruit for your division. God Bless.

Upcoming State Conventions - Please try to attend

State	Dates	Location	Hotel	Contact	Contact Email
Connecticut	June 9-11	Danbury, CT	TBD	Tom Hennessy	tommy63ny@yahoo.com
Illinois	September	Peoria, Ill.	TBD	TBD	TBD
Louisiana	July 28-29	Lafayette, LA	Ramada Lafayette	Mark C. Foley	markcfoley56@hotmail.com
Massachusetts	June 2-3	Hyannis, MA	Doubletree	Jack Lahey	limeric@comcast.net
Michigan	May 19-20	Livonia, MI	Embassy Suites	Tim Higgins	irishtim80@aol.com
Missouri	June 16-17	Weston, Missouri	St. George Hotel	Joe Flanagan	flanaginj@sbcglobal.net
Montana	Sept 29-30	Kalispell Montana	Hilton Garden Inn	Jim McKiernan	jimmck@usamontana.com
New Jersey	May 19-20	Middletown, NJ	Holiday Inn	Howie Geiler	Howard_h_geiler@ml.com
New York	July 12-15	Buffalo, NY	Adams Mark	Tom Lambert	tomlambert12@aol.com
North Carolina	Oct. 13-15	Raleigh, NC	Holiday Inn	Bill Keely	bkrusty22@yahoo.com
Ohio	May 19-20	West Middlesex, PA	Park Inn Radisson	Mark Klacik	aohmgk@gmail.com
Pennsylvania	July 19-22	Scranton, PA	Hilton Hotel	Joe Walsh	joerailroad@yahoo.com
Virginia	Sept. 22-24	Virginia Beach	Virginia Beach Resort Hotel	Brian Kiernan	bri1v1@comcast.net



national chaplain's report

By Archbishop Thomas John Rodi

It is a pleasure and a privilege to write this first greeting to the members of our Order. Our president, Judge Jim McKay, has invited me to serve as National Chaplain and it is an honor to do so. By way of explanation, my last name "Rodi" may not seem Irish, and it is not. However, in an attempt to mollify any misgivings, allow me to state that my paternal grandmother's maiden name was Merrick (County Mayo) and my mother's maiden name was Kevlin (County Sligo).

I look forward to greeting the members of our Order at our national meeting. I saw the members of the Board of our Order, led by Judge McKay, marching down Constitution Avenue in our nation's capital during the March for Life on January 27. I went up and said a quick hello to all in the middle of the street. It was a unique manner of meeting the members of the Board as we joined with thousands in the March. Next time I trust our meeting will be in a more sedate environment.

I attended the March with more than 500 young adults from the Archdiocese of Mobile. We began the day at the Verizon Center in Washington at Mass with more than 15,000 other young people from across the country. Then we attended the rally where, for the first time, a Vice President of the U.S. addressed the attendees. Then we joined in the March. In speaking with our young adults after the March, they shared their first impressions of the March. A common reaction among them was that before coming to Washington they were not aware of how many other young people shared their commitment to respect God's gift of life. They were energized and encouraged by seeing so many joined in this common cause. They were prepared to go home and continue their witness as young adults who speak out for the sanctity of all human life.

It was a blessing to be a part of the March and it made me proud that the Ancient Order of Hibernians was part of the thousands calling for our country to respect the life of every human person.



treasurer's report

by Sean Pender

Brothers, as you know, the IRS told the AOH that every division and board must have their own EIN number and file a proper tax return (990). This goes back at least to the Cincinnati convention in 2010. More recently we promoted this in the Digest on a regular basis and even sent a letter to every division in the country in 2015. Unfortunately, many divisions did not take the time to file their taxes and now find themselves with an IRS notification they have lost their tax status.



At the Irish Consul General's residence were, from left, LAOH Past National President and FFAI Chair Mary Leathem, AOH National Secretary Jere Cole, Ireland's NY General Consul Barbara Jones, Father Gary Donegan, National Director Liam McNabb and National Treasurer Sean Pender. Photo by Hibernian Digest Editor John O'Connell.

Remember

- The AOH is a 501C8
- Every division must have their own EIN number.
- Every division must file a 990 in order to fall under our Exemption from Federal Income taxes. The exemption is derived by using group number 0832 on your tax form.
- Most divisions can file a simple postcard.

If you received a letter from the IRS stating, you have lost your exemption:

- 1) read the letter on our AOH website visit <http://aoh.com/treasurer> which explains how to fix this. There is a \$400 penalty to get reinstated.
- 2) prepare everything necessary for your reinstatement
- 3) hold everything until you here back from the national board. We are working with the IRS to try and reduce or eliminate the financial penalty. Once that review is completed you will then be instructed to: A) follow through with the attached process. B) follow a new process established at that time.

It was my pleasure to spend a week with Father Gary Donegan, formerly of Holy Cross Ardoyne, while he was in the U.S. to accept the prestigious Fr. John Murphy Award from the Albany AOH/LAOH. I want to thank all in Hamilton NJ, Washington DC, Albany, Peekskill and NYC for making his visit so memorable. I was honored to co-host with Ireland's General Consul Barbara Jones a reception in his honor at her residence. It was truly a memorable time spent with one of the greatest men that I have ever met. The AOH and LAOH can be very proud that in our own little way by supporting the annual Christmas Appeal we made the creation of the Houben Centre on the grounds of Holy Cross parish in Ardoyne a reality. A quote he attributed to a good friend who saw the state of abandoned, derelict parish hall in ruins before its transformation inspired me and the hundreds he spoke to while in the US: "Take on a project for God so impossible it could only succeed if God's hand was in it." May God always please Father Gary, please keep him and his work in your prayers.



national secretary

by Jere Cole

Per Capita Time

Financial secretaries, have you paid your 2016 national per capita? It was due to the national office by February 15, 2017. Divisions who have not paid will not be considered in good standing and may not participate in their state convention this summer.

Per capita is based on your membership as of December 31, 2016. It is the dues that you collected during the 2016 calendar year. Members exempt from paying per capita include priests, active military and national life members. It is critical that our membership total numbers match your membership total numbers, especially Lines 11 & 16 on the Form 11. If our numbers and your numbers are off, we will need to take a closer look at why that's the case, before any payment is processed. This agreement in numbers is why it is imperative we receive your updated roster BEFORE you calculate your per capita.

When sending your per capita payment, please remember to include your completed Form 11 so that we can credit your account properly. We have payment from some divisions that were mailed without a Form 11. These have been set aside until we receive the Form 11. Also, we need your EIN number to file with the IRS.

Lastly, this year we will be sending frequent email reminders to all state presidents to assure timely compliance in paying the per capita.

County and state per capita checks are handled separately and should not be mailed to the national office.

Form 9's (Certificate of Election) are due to the national office as well. Simply indicating your new officers on the revised roster is not sufficient; we need the completed Form 9.

More tips:

- The financial secretary assigns ID numbers, not the national office. For new members, always go to the bottom of your membership list and use the next open ID number. We will change the number if it does not agree with what we have in the national database and advise accordingly.
- Do not reuse past ID numbers for new members. For reinstatements, if you have the member's old ID number, we want to use it, unless it's unavailable, then you'd assign a new number by going to the bottom of your list.
- Send in Form 40's throughout the year with changes/additions. It will be less work for you and for us at the end of the year.

END OF AN ERA continued from page 1

peaceful institution of government.

Mr. McGuinness' resignation highlighted the continued failure of the DUP to embrace the core Good Friday Agreement principles of equality, mutual respect and a holistic view of Ireland. The continued churlish school-boy antics of prominent DUP ministers toward anyone who wishes to express an Irish identity show a clear 19th century mindset incompatible with a 21st century goal of peace. For DUP Communities Minister Paul Givan to fund £300,000 for flute bands for the Unionist community and £1.9m in a community halls programs that is farcically tilted to the Unionist community while attempting to eliminate a £50,000 program to aid students wishing to learn the Irish language is clear indication of his ignorance and contempt for the plurality in his title as well as the concepts of equality and parity of respect.

The great promise of the historic coalition between Martin McGuinness and the Rev. Paisley seem a far more distant memory than their chronological 10 years. The iconic Good Friday Agreement itself is in peril from the continued intransigency of the DUP, the collapse of the Northern Ireland executive and the anxiety of a Brexit. It is a time of great challenge requiring fresh legs to continue to walk the path of peace amidst this gathering storm. As has been publicized, Mr. McGuinness is also at this time fighting severe health challenges. It is time for him to hand over the baton that he received from Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmett and Pdraig Pearse to new leadership who can run what is hoped to be the anchor lap to the finish.

Mr. McGuinness has passed that baton to Michelle O'Neill as the new party leader of Sinn Féin. Ms. O'Neill simultaneously represents a new, post-conflict generation of leaders while coming from a family with an impeccable republican background. She has stated that, "The united Ireland we want and which we envisage has a place for everybody," a worthy sentiment and a reminder that the struggle for a United Ireland has never been a battle between warring religious tribes, as a lazy media often caricatures, but to establish a nation, in the words of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, "cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government."

As Hibernians, we remembered and commemorated in 2016 not only the vision and courage of the brave men and women of 1916, but also took just pride in the role that the Hibernians, as Ireland's "exiled children in America," played in those first steps to Ireland's freedom and self-determination. We have to remember that the progress to Irish Freedom has always been marked by American involvement, whether it be in expressing our outrage at the death of Terence MacSwiney or Bobby Sands. It was American leadership that made the historic Good Friday Agreement possible; it will take Irish American support to see its promise of a lasting peace realized. Our goal of a lasting peace is not simply the lack of violence, but the peace of equality and parity of respect as articulated in the Good Friday Agreement and a united Ireland by all legitimate means. It is imperative that the people of Northern Ireland know they have the support of Irish America, and specifically the Hibernians, and as Ms. O'Neill begins her walk down the



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by John Wilson

The news spread fast about Judge James Dailey Wahl, 67, who died Dec. 24, 2016, in St. Louis, Missouri, after he had a relapse in his battle with leukemia. Jim was a St. Louis City Municipal Judge for almost 20 years, a longtime Democrat, a proud Irishman, Past AOH National Director and a lifelong St. Louis Cardinals fan, but mostly he was a friend to all. During the Homily at the Mass of the Resurrection, Father Jim Byrnes, Missouri State AOH Chaplain, said he was asked the night before at Jim's wake, how long had he known Jim Wahl. Father replied, "Since 2003," but then he thought about it and said, "Not long enough." That is how we all felt about Judge James Daily Wahl.

He was humble and he was courageous, a devoted husband to his wife, Kathy; and he left behind three daughters, Kelly Wahl-Chew, Kerry and Kristin, and his son, Thomas; two brothers, Jack and Ed Wahl, and a sister, Angela Keiser, of Texas. Jim was given a great send off with thousands coming to pay their respects to Kathy and the family. Many AOH and LAOH from Missouri, Illinois and Kentucky drove to honor him at the Ritual of a Deceased Brother and kind words were conveyed to everyone from our National President Jim McKay.

Those who would like to make a memorial donation in Jim's name can do so at "Team Wahl" -Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Gateway Chapter-1972 Innerbelt Business Center-St. Louis, MO 63114.

January 7, 2017, America lost another brave man, NYPD Steven McDonald, who taught many the meaning of "Mercy and Forgiveness" who was shot in the line of duty in 1986 and paralyzed from the neck down. Confined to a wheelchair and breathing machine, we learned how he forgave his teenage assailant. You can read his story, as told in Johann Christoph Arnold's book, "Why Forgive?"

Although a bullet paralyzed Officer McDonald, it could never immobilize his commitment to serve others. He became an international ambassador for the NYPD and for his Catholic faith; he became a larger-than-life symbol of forgiveness. His global mission of goodwill and rebirth took him to the Middle East, Bosnia, and Northern Ireland - where he promoted reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics.

St. Patrick's Day will soon be upon us and the legends about St. Patrick abound; but truth is best served by our seeing two solid qualities in him: He was humble and he was courageous. The determination to accept suffering and success with equal indifference guided the life of God's instrument for winning most of Ireland for Christ.

What distinguishes Patrick is the durability of his efforts. When one considers the state of Ireland when he began his mission work, the vast extent of his labors, and how the seeds he planted continued to grow and flourish, one can only admire the kind of man Patrick must have been. The holiness of a person is known only by the fruits of his or her work. Let's pray that St. Patrick's seeds will continue to grow into "One Island, One Ireland 32 Counties."

This St. Patrick's Day will be extra special for my family as my son, John, is getting married to Virginia Miller of Olney, Illinois, on March 18. John and I drove to Atlantic City for the Convention last July and he was great company on this trip. My wife, Janice, and I look forward to spending that weekend with our family and friends who will be coming to St. Louis for the wedding. Have a blessed St Patrick's Day!



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Dennis Parks

Brothers, as we approach another Green Season, I wish all of you and your families a Happy St. Patrick's Day. I attended the Right to Life March in January with Hibernians from all over the United States. What an honor it was to march with brother Hibernians up Constitution Ave. toward the Capitol and the Supreme Court. If you ever want to see Hibernian Catholic Action in practice, please plan on attending this event next year.

While in Washington, I had a chance to meet with three of the State Presidents who are in my Director's area: Gene Bransfield of Virginia, Jay Linahan of Maryland and J.P. Walsh of Washington, D.C.

I would like to commend all three of these gentlemen for their hard work and leadership. Their commitment to recruiting and growing our Order is commendable. Thank you, gentlemen!



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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Bill Sullivan

It has been a busy few months with installations and other events taking place in the New England area. We now can look forward to Irish Heritage Month and the many Saint Patrick's Day festivities that will promote the AOH and our Irish Culture. It certainly is a great time to show our Irish and Hibernian pride!

Over the last few months we lost several Hibernian leaders who really made a difference. My sincere condolences to our brothers in Missouri and the Midwest on the passing of a great Hibernian and Irishman, Judge Jim Wahl, of St. Louis. Jim served as an AOH National Director from 2012-14, and also as the local Chairman of our 2014 National Convention in St. Louis. Jim will be missed not just by our brothers in Missouri, but by all of us who knew him. In Massachusetts, two well-known and respected Hibernian leaders recently left us. Tom Canney, an officer on both the Essex County Board and at his home Division 8 in Lawrence, passed on December 8; and Roger Rogers, a Past Division President and Life Member of Division 18 in Salem died on January 22. Our sincere condolences and heartfelt thanks to their families for sharing with us these talented and dedicated brothers. We are a stronger and a better organization today, both nationally and locally, because of them and others like them!

In April, Tom McGrath, who ran to raise funds for the Commodore Barry Gate at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis several years ago, is planning a run through New England to raise money for the children's shoes charity, Achilles Kids. Along the route from Mamoroneck, N.Y., through Fairfield, CT, and northward to Boston, he plans to make stops at Hibernian Halls and other Irish venues where he will show his documentary, "Every Five Minutes," and speak on his recent book, "The Black Sheep," as part of his fundraising effort. Watch for details.

You might remember that in my last article in the Digest, I challenged all of our members to consider as one of their New Year Resolutions the recruitment of at least one new member. Well 2017 is here and now is the perfect time to put this resolution into action with the host of activities that will take place over the next month. Who knows, someone you ask and accepts your offer, might one day be your Division, County, State or National President. So go ahead and accept the great Hibernian Challenge of 2017. You can really make a difference in our great Order!

During March, many State, County and Divisions facilitate a membership drive. It is important that when a Membership Campaign is undertaken that all types of technology be utilized - whether it is the Web, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube or some other form of media. We need to use whatever it takes, to get the word out about the AOH so that our membership will grow and thrive!

Save the Dates - The Massachusetts State Boards will hold their State Convention in Hyannis from June 2 to 4, and the Connecticut State Board's State Convention will take place in Danbury from June 9 to 11. The Rhode Island State Board Convention's date has not been set.

Please feel free to contact me at any time with any comments, concerns or questions. williamjsullivan@verizon.net Happy Saint Patrick's Day!



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Tom O'Donnell
Project St. Patrick Chairman

Every Hibernian and every jurisdiction of the Order need to be unwavering in support of vocations, helping those who are called to serve our Church. Just as the Irish protected and defended priests during the horrific penal days in Ireland, so too should Irish-Americans who are proud of their Irish heritage and claim membership in the AOH or LAOH. We must show our support spiritually and financially to seminarians and religious who are in need.

As we get ready to start our 2017 PSP Easter Appeal, I once again call upon our members to continue their support of Project St. Patrick. A mailing will be sent soon regarding this program. It will include a form requesting your local Diocese information. This will help us continue our ability to reach out to your area and be in touch with our supporting Diocese. This also is a great tool in helping us distribute more information about our Order. Everyone is asked to fill this form out and return, even if you have done so in the past. There is nothing better than an updated, current list. I ask that our State Presidents distribute this to their Counties and Divisions.

Vocation Grants are awarded annually through an application and selection process. These grants help cover personal expenses of the men and women who are studying. Again, for each donation of \$500 (or more), we ask that you submit a name of a beloved chaplain, layperson or member, living or deceased, and a PSP Vocation Grant will be named and issued in his or her honor or memory. Any donation - large or small - goes a long way in helping us with this project. Project St. Patrick prayer cards are also a tremendous way to donate toward the program, and your ongoing support is greatly appreciated. If you require more information or are in need of cards please contact me.

Deadline for April-May issue
All articles and photos are due no later than
APRIL 1, 2017



Irish way & study abroad

by Greg Sean Canning
Chairman

The two AOH scholarship programs offered through the Irish Way Study Abroad Committee are offered to children and grandchildren of AOH members who travel to Ireland to participate in Irish studies. The Irish Way Study Program is designed for American high school students. The Study Abroad Scholarship Program is designed for American college students.

Objective of the Irish Way Study Program: The Irish Way Program is a unique cultural and educational program for American high school students that began in 1976. During the summer, students participate in the Irish Way travel to Ireland for a three-week stay. The program, which is multifaceted, encompasses three components: Education, The Irish Experience and Irish Touring.

This program was founded on the belief that fostering an appreciation of other cultures is an important part of an individual's development, while providing an opportunity for young people to explore the rich heritage and tradition of Ireland while also experiencing the country's distinct culture face-to-face.

Eligibility: To be eligible for the \$500 AOH scholarship, you will need to submit the Irish Way Program Application. Program dates for 2017 are June 29th - July 23rd. Irish Way Contact: Taryn Harrison, Coordinator for the Irish Way Program. E- Mail: tharrison@irishlifeexperience.com Phone: (781) 850-3322 [Ext. 122].

Selection of Scholarship Recipients: As has been the case for the past 25 plus years, the selection of all scholarship recipients will be done by the Irish American Cultural Institute.

Objective of the Study Abroad Scholarship Program: This program encourages the children and grandchildren of AOH members to seriously consider pursuing courses of study in Ireland, whether it be for a semester or a full year of study at colleges in Ireland. In 1995, the National Board established two annual \$1,000 Study Abroad Scholarships in Ireland for the sons and daughters and grandchildren of our members. The recipients of these scholarships must attend an accredited college or university in the United States, and be accepted at an accredited college/university in Ireland, that is recognized by the institution that he/she attends. All scholarship applications are judged by an independent and impartial panel appointed by the chairman (Greg Seán Canning). The decision of this panel is final.

Application deadline is midnight, May 1, 2017



veterans affairs

by Jim Green
Chairman

With the election of the new President of the United States come sweeping changes at the heads of national departments, including the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs. As of this writing, President Trump has nominated Dr. David Shulkin, who currently serves as the Chief Executive of the Veterans Health Administration, for the position of Secretary of Veterans Affairs, pending Senate approval. Dr. Shulkin would be the first non-veteran to serve as the head of Veterans Affairs, but he comes with outstanding credentials as a physician and leader. Let's pray that he makes veterans' physical and mental health needs his absolute top priority.

This being tax season, I'd like to share with you some great information on veterans charities. As you know, there are many fraudulent charities out there that claim to help veterans, and others, so please be careful and do a little research before making donations. One very positive charity, though, which has received an A+ rating, is the Fisher House Foundation. They are located in many communities around the country, and deliver 96 percent of the donations received to provide a home away from home for a military family to be close to a loved one during hospitalization due to illness, disease or injury. A great option that you can look into is using smile.amazon.com to make

donations to organizations like that. This web-based Amazon.com option will donate "0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice." Fisher House is just one of many 501c3 charities available through this site. There is no additional cost added to a purchase - you use it just like Amazon.com. Check it out!

There are also many veterans organizations in your area that need your help, and we support many of them in Pittsburgh. Two are Vietnam Veterans, Inc. and Operation Troop Appreciation. Our Hibernian brothers are very active with these groups and I hope your Division will seek out opportunities to volunteer, too. It will be a rewarding experience for the veterans groups and for your Division brothers as well.

I ask God to help you and protect you in your efforts to "help a vet."
seamus.green317@gmail.com



rituals & degrees

by JJ Kelly
Chairman

We are constantly being reminded of the importance of our taking the Major Degrees of the Order. When we joined the AOH we were declared members "subject to the condition that you receive the Lessons..." in accordance with our laws. What, you may ask, is the reason for this? As you probably realize, most, if not all, fraternal organizations have some sort of ceremonial/ ritual/ degree program to instruct and advance their membership. And so do we. Among the purposes of our Major Degree Program is to awaken a pride in the ancient race of our forefathers, and to develop an interest in the history and destiny of that race. We currently have eight or nine active Major Degree Teams (MDT) in the Order. The number varies from time to time as some teams may be in the process of reorganizing. However, just looking at the names of the teams, one gets a sense of the history of the land of our forefathers, and the importance of certain heroes, groups, fortresses, major symbols, etc.

Over the next several issues, it is my intent to select a different team each issue, and comment on the history and importance of that team's namesake. It is my hope that this little taste of the importance of our past will encourage you to get your Major Degrees, or if you already have the Major Degrees but it has been some time ago, that you will go back as an observer, and re-learn those lessons all over again.

I will, of course, start with my own team, The Brian Boru MDT of the Commonwealth of Virginia. I only do this because I know the background so well. So, who was Brian Boru? The line between Irish Legend and Irish Myth has often been blurred, especially as the retelling of heroic deeds has been passed on through generations. Brian Boru was no legend, though his deeds were legendary. He was born Brian Mac Cennetig. His mother was the sister of the mother of Conor, the King of Connaught. By the year 1002, Brian united his rule over all of Ireland, thus ending the over 600-year reign of the UiNeills. He earned the name "Brian of the Tributes" (Brian Boru) by collecting tributes from the minor rulers of Ireland and used the monies to restore monasteries and libraries that had been destroyed by invasions by the Norsemen. He was a deeply Christian King. He died on Good Friday, April 23, 1014, at the Battle of Clontarf. Some say he refused to fight due to his Christian beliefs and would not spill blood on Good Friday. The Battle of Clontarf was between Brian as High King (Ard Righ) of Ireland and rebellious Leinster and Dublin Kings who used Viking fighters. He was a very old man by standards of the time, being at least 73 years old. He remains a figure of major importance today. The Brian Boru Harp is one of the major symbols of Ireland (and you will find it on your Guinness pint glass as well). Perhaps the best that should be said of Brian Boru, who ruled from Tara, is that he was the last great High King of Ireland.



Director's report

by Liam McNabb

Strengthening the Order for the next generation Engagement: Members becoming Brothers ...

Engaging Division officers and members is critical to keeping our Order strong today and tomorrow. The Spirit of Hibernianism is contagious and should be shared with as many Brothers as possible. We were all introduced to the Order in different ways, and every Brother's story, experience and motivation are all collectively important for our Divisions to succeed. Being a Hibernian is important to me because ...

Though we're all unique individuals, we're Brothers and the Order brings us together in many ways. How do you connect with your Division Brothers? Is it through working side by side while performing charitable work sponsored and organized by your Division? Is it by enjoying Irish music at a local festival? Is it through rallying Brothers to contact local elected officials to support a "United Ireland" resolution? Or was it through one of the many recent March for Life events?

As our Division leadership should have a theme and vision for operations, each member has a mission and should have an opportunity to fulfill his mission in his area. Does your Division present Irish History at every meeting? Are there FFAI and Immigration updates at meetings or when Brothers are gathered together? Is there an opportunity for a new Division project or initiative this year? I'm sure if Division officers surveyed and welcomed ideas from the membership, Brothers will pursue the chance to build and grow something new. Implementing a local blood drive, food collection for the pantry or working one day a month at the soup kitchen are terrific and effective examples of Brothers working together on a common goal. Though the priority of this type of work is to be true to our motto, a significant investment is made when members become Brother Hibernians. Projects, community service work and issue-oriented opportunities are ways to engage members as well as a reason for them to continue to participate.

Having a "social" after every meeting or as an event in and of itself is an opportunity for members to become Brothers. Wearing name tags at meetings and making a big "splash" to celebrate new members after their initiation are helpful ways to demonstrate how important everyone is to our Order. Do you go out of your way to welcome new members invite them back as Brothers? Feeling welcome and having an opportunity to be heard goes a long way and increases the likelihood of future AOH attendance and participation.

Find ways to help your members become Brothers. There may be many reasons to join the Order but making members feel like Brothers is one of the best reasons to stay.

Being a Hibernian is important to me because Share your story with another Brother and ask him to share his journey with you.



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National Recruiting Drive

Green Season is upon us and there is no better time to recruit your next member. The AOH is calling on each and every member around the country to recruit one new member for initiation by your April division meeting.

Everyone has someone they can personally recruit and mentor as a new Hibernian. Is it your father, your son, your uncle or your cousin? Is it someone you work with, someone in your parish or someone on your parade committee or any other event of the season? Remember, your parish priest is qualified for membership regardless of his heritage. Our job is to find one new member. Presidents with a member who recruits more than two new brothers during this season should notify AOH organizer Tim McSweeney for special recognition.

Every Irish Catholic in America deserves a chance to become a Hibernian. Today, we need you to recruit new brothers and mentor those who belong in the Order. Thank you.



Tomhas na Teanga by Jim Norton le Séamas Ó Neachtáin

An bhfuil rún agat don bhliain úr? *Do you have a resolution for the new year?* Léigh mé rud ciallmhar le déanú. *I read something sensible recently.* Ní bhíonn a fhios ag éinne cad a tharlóidh bliain ar aghaidh. *Nobody knows what will happen a year from now.* Is deacair go leor pleananna a dhéanamh le haghaidh míosa. *It's hard enough to make plans for a month.* B'fhearr dúinn rún a dhéanamh don lá, mar bheadh deis againn sin a chomhlíonadh. *We'd be better off making plans for the day, as we'd have a chance of doing that.* Nóiméid i ar nóiméid, fiú! *Minute by minute, even!*

"Ní mhaireann aon phlean cogaithe i ndiaidh teagmháil a dhéanamh leis an namhad," a dúirt an Gearmánach Helmuth von Moltke (nó rud an-chosúil leis). *"No plan survives making contact with the enemy," said... (or something like it).* Agus dúirt Eisenhower rud mar "Cheap mé riamh nach mbíonn aon mhaith i bpleananna agus mé ag ullmhú do chath – ach ní féidir a bheith gan phleananna!" *And Ike said something like "I have always thought that plans are useless when preparing for a battle – but plans are indispensable!"*

Is dócha gur amhlaidh an scéal in aon chluiche spóirt freisin. *I suppose it is the same for any sport match too.* I bhfaiteadh na súl, is féidir le gach rud a athrú. *In the blink of an eye, everything can change.* Bíonn plean ag foireann pheil Mheiriceánach, mar shampla, roimh gach beart. *A football team always has a plan, for example, before every play.* Agus bíonn plean ag an bhfoireann eile, leis. *And the other team has one, too.* Ní tharlaíonn go n-éiríonn le plean gach foireann. *It doesn't happen that both plans succeed.* Ach gan phlean, níorbh fhéidir leo bheith san iomaíocht. *But without a plan, they can't compete.*

Is minic go mbíonn plean againn agus plean eile ag an saol. *Often we have a plan and the world a another one.* Is tábhachtaí an cuspóir ná an plean – cé go mbíonn gá le plean. *The goal is more important than the plan – although there's need of a plan.* Má tá cuspóir soléir againn, is féidir linn ár gcuid pleananna a athchóiriú - fiú le haghaidh gach beart, gach nóiméad, gach lá, srl. *If we have a clear goal, we can adapt our plans – even for each play, each minute, each day, etc.* Sin mar a dhéanann ginireáil agus foirne spóirt. *That's what generals and sports teams do.*

Mar sin, má tá rún agat, bíodh sé ina chuspóir, agus bíodh pleananna áirithe agat chuige sin. *So if you've got a resolution, make it a goal, and have various plans to reach it.* Mura n-éiríonn le plean amháin, bain triail as plean eile. *If one plan doesn't work, try another one.* Ach fan leis an gcuspóir, agus tá gach seans go mbainfaidh tú amach é. *But stick to the goal, and you have a good chance of achieving it.* Bíodh misneach agat! *Take courage!*



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Pennsylvania

Seminarian Donation in Swedesburg

The AOH Notre Dame Division in Swedesburg, Montgomery County, Pa., made its annual donation to a seminarian from Saint Charles Seminary. This year's recipient is Max Gallagher, receiving \$500 toward his education. Max is in his second year at Saint Charles Seminary.



Reverend Timothy O'Sullivan, Pastor, Sacred Heart Church in Swedesburg; Seminarian Max Gallagher; AOH Notre Dame Division President Mark Ryan and AOH Charities Chairman Matt Kelly.

Deadline for April-May issue

All articles and photos are due no later than
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Director's Report

by Dan Dennehy
Immigration Chairman

Since the U.S. elections, Irish immigrants are concerned about how President Trump's administration and the new Congress will affect them. At times like this, the laws and rules that affect immigrants can change swiftly. The nervousness felt by our Irish immigrant community is eased by the knowledge that we will always communicate and work to resolve issues together.

People of Ireland living here, and those considering coming here, are not alone. AOH members, our Immigration Committee, the LAOH, Irish Immigration Centers and consulates across the U.S. are here for the immigrants, to advise, and not let con artists take advantage of the situation.

The AOH is the largest Irish-American Catholic organization. We have deep connectivity with our legislators, and faith and community leaders. As citizens, we vote and respect the laws of this nation. Irish immigrants, both legal and undocumented, work hard and pay taxes. Most politicians do not know that the Irish receive fewer than 200 out of 50,000 Immigration Lottery visas every year. Every person living in the U.S. can contact their local elected officials and ask them to end the 51 years of inequity toward the Irish.

I have met with immigrants, spoken to their families in Ireland, communicated with all our Irish Republican deportees and participated in strategy sessions related to Irish immigration with legislators, community leaders and fellow activists. I recently met legislators, including Rep. Peter King, Rep. Joe Crowley, Senators Chuck Schumer, Robert Menendez and Cory Booker and representatives of many ethnic groups. Menendez opened our meeting on how he has always focused on Irish immigration and justice issues with the AOH, particularly Malachy McAllister and his family, and pledged to do

whatever is required to stand up for the Irish and all immigrants.

Days before the inauguration, Siobhan, executive director of Emerald Isle Immigration Center, and I attended a meeting hosted by Irish Ambassador Anne Anderson. Irish Senator and Hibernian Charity member Billy Lawless, former U.S. Rep and NYS Hibernian Jim Walsh, former U.S. Rep. Bruce Morrison, Manus Cooney, ILIR founders Ciaran Staunton and Niall O'Dowd, CIIC board members and other leading Irish activists, lobbyists and direct service providers participated. Our group had experience from previous successful immigration bills and programs for the Irish. We took a good look at all the issues facing Irish immigrants and Irish immigration centers. The group committed to increasing communication and cooperation.

The next steps are to make sure that as many Irish individuals who are green card holders get naturalized as soon as possible. The Irish immigration centers can assist and are far cheaper than attorney costs. Whenever an immigration question or an issue arises in communities, airports or police departments related to immigration authorities, don't panic. Immediately contact the nearest Irish Consulate, the Emerald Isle Immigration Center (www.eiic.org) or any Irish immigration centers (www.ciic-USA.org). Get the facts, and we can work together.

Irish immigration reform is not a sprint; it's a marathon. We have been able to help thousands of people make rational decisions on coming to the U.S., staying here or returning to Ireland, visa, career, family, student and incarceration issues, adjustment of immigration status, become legal U.S. residents and dual citizenship.

This is accomplished working with Brother and Sister Hibernians, other ethnic groups, Irish immigration centers, and Irish consulates, the Irish embassy, our city, state and federal elected and agency officials, Irish immigration activists, lobbyists and attorneys who care as much as we do about this issue. The new Congress and U.S. Presidential administration, if introduced to the unfairness of over five decades, where the Irish are mostly locked out of the path to U.S. citizenship, can end this for good.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day. Contact me anytime.



freedom for all ireland

by Paul Gowdy
Chairman

Brexit News

Well, British Prime Minister Theresa May has been a busy beaver in recent weeks wooing world leaders. First with President Donald Trump and then with the Taoiseach Enda Kenny. Trade and Investment treaties were top of her shopping list with both male leaders. Then, with Enda Kenny, that pesky troublesome problem of the Border between Northern Ireland and the Republic, just had to raise up its head now that Brexit is taking baby steps. Theresa and Enda agreed that with Brexit, no major changes are envisaged from either camp. Enda stressed the need to keep an 'open' border so that trade between both countries would continue to operate as if Brexit never happened. Of course, May assured that trade along the length of the border would be "friction free and fluid" with no return to the "borders of the past." It will take a long time for May's Brexit plan to get up and running. Some pundits have forecasted that the project will take at least two years before their desired severance happens. I stress the need for our membership to keep up to date with the Brexit project as it grows. We need to be vigilant for Ireland's interest. The past tells us that Britain has a habit of renegeing on promises made to Ireland when it suits them.

Many friends in the Irish-American scene have asked, "What is this RHI Project that resulted in Martin McGuinness to resign and thus brought down the N.I. government?"

There is a clear explanation available from the BBC News Organization at <http://bbc.in/2krWhgk>. I hope it sheds some light on a complex situation.

News of the FFAI 2016-17 Annual Christmas Appeal Project

The deadline for organizations in Ireland to submit their Request for Donation Forms was January 27. I received a total of 13 requests for financial assistance. All the requests will be reviewed by the National FFAI Committee and those applicants that meet are criteria will be selected. The Appeal donations for this year will continue to be accepted up to April 15. That is an easy date to remember! So, for all Hibernian members and Boards that have not yet participated, there is still plenty of time to act. Generate a division fundraiser, make an individual pledge, pass around the \$10 Club forms or set a goal to make the \$1,000 pledge. I do not often single out a specific donation but there is one story that arrived January 30, 2017 that I would like to share. The Father Abram J. Ryan Division #1, Louisville, KY, in their letter to me explained ...

"We had a brother who last year was determined to raise \$1,000 for the FFAI Fund. His name was Greg Greene. He passed away late last year. It was very important to him to raise \$1,000 during 2016. He almost made it. His remaining brothers passed the hat around in his honor and met his goal. He had another goal to raise at least another \$1,000 for the 2017 year. His torch has been taken up by another brother, Neil Baine. Neil and the rest of the Louisville AOH brothers are determined to meet that goal. So here is our check. Please put it to good use." Timothy T. Bourke III, Treasurer of their division, attached a check for \$1,000 donated in the memory of Greg Greene for this year's Appeal. What a wonderful tribute to Greg Greene from his division brothers to carry on his goal.

So, brothers, it is not too late to donate if you have not done so already. Thanks to all those individuals and AOH Boards who have already come through. God Bless.



catholic action

by John D. Fitzmorrís III
Chairman

Cardinal Dolan gives invocation for President Trump

At the inauguration of Donald J. Trump, Timothy Cardinal Dolan of New York prayed for God's holy wisdom as the 45th president of the United States was sworn in on January 20. Cardinal Dolan prayed from the ninth chapter of the Book of Wisdom, calling upon the Holy Spirit to infuse our nation's leaders.

Donald Cardinal Wuerl of Washington, D.C., in a blog post on Inauguration Day, quoted from the "Prayer for Government," written by the first bishop in the U.S., Bishop John Carroll, for the first president, George Washington, in 1791, in his prayer for the inauguration. As the Hibernian Oath includes remaining loyal to the Constitution of this country, we all join with Cardinals Dolan and Wuerl in prayer for the new President and that his administration will be a successful one and good for the country.

Hibernians annually form a human shield to protect the clergy

My hometown of New Orleans is now gearing up for Mardi Gras, that magnificent celebration in preparation for the coming of Lent. Hundreds of thousands will descend upon the city to enjoy the parades and sample the local culture of a great American yet cosmopolitan city. As regular, though, as the famous hurricanes as Pat O'Brien's are a group of protesters who stand on Bourbon Street letting everyone there know that hellfire and damnation await all the revelers. For the most part, the revelers ignore them as they would ignore a dead rodent in the gutter.

The real problem occurs on Ash Wednesday, when the protesters regularly gather in front of the St. Louis Cathedral and harass the Archbishop and the clergy outside the cathedral as they greet the congregants. When the local AOH divisions learned of the despicable behavior by this group, under the auspices of www.officialstreetpreachers.com, they immediately went into action. Now, for the last 10 years, the AOH has stood as a silent, human shield, protecting the clergy against these troubled and mean-spirited individuals, as our bagpipers and drummers drown out the noise of their bullhorns. Any Hibernians coming to sample the flavor of Mardi Gras are welcome to join us as we model the example of those first Hibernians who stood in front of old St. Patrick's Church in New York 181 years ago.

Upcoming Feast Days

February 2 may have been Groundhog Day in the United States, with many watching that movie gem starring Bill Murray, but it was also the Feast of the Presentation. February 2 was also "Candlemas," because it involves the blessing of candles for the year. The next day is the Feast of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, which involves the blessing of throats, as St. Blaise is the patron of those suffering from ailments of the throat. Little is known about Saint Blaise prior to his mention in a court physician's medical journal. St. Blaise is believed to have begun as a healer and a "physician of souls" before retiring to a cave, where he remained in prayer. In 316, the governor of Cappadocia and of Lesser Armenia, Agricola, arrested then-bishop Blaise for being a Christian. On their way to the jail, a woman set her only son, who was choking to death on a fish bone, at his feet. Blaise cured the child, and though Agricola was amazed, he still condemned Blaise to torture before beheading him.

The next major feast after that is March 17, but you all know more than enough about that already.



national webmaster by Jeff Nisler

On Our Website, AOH.COM

Thanks to our National Historian Mike McCormack, we have TEN YEARS of monthly history posts available online (this is a great resource for your monthly division history readings).

Thanks to our National Editor John O'Connell, we now have the entire last year of the National Hibernian Digest [NHD] online in the Past Issues Archive. We will shortly be adding more back issues from prior years to the Archive.

I sorely miss Fr. Timothy Harris — his contribution of the Chaplain's Corner postings were literally a God send. I would very much like to see this effort revived, perhaps a few of our Chaplains could share the effort.

We have also have added a category for posting the regular news updates coming from the National Board. In addition to being posted on the website, these items are published on Facebook and Twitter, and are also being sent out to our National email list. (If you wish to be added to our list, visit: AOH.COM/email-optin).

We have recently added a new section called the NHD Supplement. In it you will find a collection of various stories, some will be continuations of items that were too large for the printed NHD, others will be posts that for reasons of timing would not be practical to appear in our printed Digest. In general, we still need to get more relevant content onto the site more frequently. My hope is that we can awaken a community of online Hibernians who will provide a content base for the larger audience.

The current usage of Facebook and Twitter by our members tells me they are ready for it. We will start by expanding the scope of the Supplement to include more of the stories that come from our grass roots. The Divisions, committees, Boards, etc. are invited to submit various stories and photos to post on the Supplement. We should look at our website as our home — when a visitor comes by we want them to feel welcome, and when they depart, we want them to leave satisfied and eager for their next visit. If you can contribute, please do. I would like to see this be a very active part of the website. I anticipate that the effort to service all the post requests will require more than just one guy chugging away. As they say, "Many hands make for light work." So, if anyone out there has knowledge of Word Press (or a desire to learn) we will need your help. We want to expand the website committee, enabling a number of deputy webmasters to edit and post items contributed by the divisions, boards, et al, for the Supplement. Please contact me, visit AOH.COM/contact/Jeff.Nisler Thanks.

Awards

Hibernians receive Irish Echo's Law & Order Awards

By Brother Denis P. McGowan, St. Columcille Division

Several Hibernians were the recipients of the Irish Echo's 2017 Law and Order Award, at a dinner held on January 27 at the Manhattan Club in Rosie O'Grady's, New York City, including Brother Jesse Hartnett of the Philadelphia Police Department; Brother Andrew Heffernan, Principal Assistant District Attorney of the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office; Brother Noel Heffernan, the Assistant Chief of Operations of the Department of Safety and Security at the United Nations Headquarters; Brother Denis P. McGowan, retired Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and currently the commanding officer of the Office of Internal Affairs and Discipline; Brother George O'Brien, Director of Labor Relations of the New Jersey State P.B.A. and a retired Clifton Police Department Detective; and Brother Patrick McCormack, Detective Lieutenant of the Yonkers Police Department.

One of our Brother Hibernians is a true hero. Brother Jesse Hartnett of Commodore John Barry Division No. 1 in Gloucester, NJ, survived a vicious and cowardly ambush shooting on January 7, 2015, while on duty. An Islamic terrorist attempted to murder Brother Hartnett while he was sitting in his patrol car. Brother Hartnett was shot and struck at least three times by his assailant. Despite wounds to his left arm, Brother Hartnett was able to shoot back and strike the assailant three times, stopping the attack. The assailant was subsequently arrested by responding officers.

During the dinner, our late Brother Steven McDonald of the John P. McGuinness - Richard Fitzsimmons Division No. 14 of Rockville Centre, NY, was remembered fondly with great affection and respect for his courage, dignity and grace. Brother McDonald was an NYPD Police Officer who was shot and paralyzed while on duty on patrol in Central Park, NY, in 1986, but forgave his assailant and became an apostle for peace and reconciliation throughout the world's most troubled lands.

NYPD Commissioner James O'Neill was the guest speaker for the awards dinner, which was well attended by the families and friends of the recipients as well as many leaders of the Irish-American law enforcement community. Also in attendance were distinguished recipients, including Staten Island District Attorney Michael McMahon, NJ State Police Lt. Colonel Patrick Callahan, Deputy Commander Edward McMahon of the U.S. Marshals Service New York/New Jersey Regional Fugitive Task Force, Chief Scott Schubert of the Pittsburgh Police Department, and Chief Joseph Walker of the Ringwood NJ Police Department.

The Irish Echo is the oldest and largest Irish American weekly newspaper, and for the past eight years has held this recognition awards dinner for distinguished members of the Irish-American law enforcement community. The first Law and Order Awards dinner, held in 2009, was chaired by then NYPD Commissioner Raymond Kelly. The second event under the auspices of the Irish Echo was held at the Irish Consulate in Manhattan. Dublin-born John Timoney, who had served at the highest command levels of New York, Philadelphia and Miami, was the chief honoree that year.



notre dame fund by Ned McGinley Chairman

The University of Notre Dame, both the Financial Aid and Cushwa Center for American Catholic Studies are fine custodians of our funds in the AOH/LAOH Hibernian Fund at the University.

As of the last fiscal year which ended June 30, 2016 these funds have:

Ancient Order of Hibernians Scholarship Fund: Financial Aid

Book Value (Our Contributions)	\$ 200,517.85
Market Value (With Interest)	\$1,191,183.08
Total projected earnings for 2015/2026	\$ 53,928.03

Scholarship Recipients:

James P. Burke	Junior	Great River, NY	Business/Political Science
Moira B. Horn	Junior	Lakewood, OH	Gender Studies
Allison N. Walker	Junior	Pittsburgh, PA	Electrical Engineering

We met with Allison and she was fantastic. She was involved in her dormitory life and taught religious classes at a Catholic Church in South Bend. She is an excellent student and one of the few young women in Electrical Engineering. She already has a position following her graduation.

Admissions to Notre Dame is "Need Blind" and Need Based". This means students are admitted to the University on the basis of their academic and personal information of achievement, not their financial circumstances. Notre Dame is one of less than 70 universities the nation that has committed to offering financial assistance that is designed to meet the full demonstrated financial need of each student.

If your son or daughter as well as your grandchildren wishes to apply to Notre Dame and is admitted to the University they will be provided with their "full demonstrated financial need", a large portion (not all if they need more) of which will be provided by the AOH/LAOH Hibernian Scholarship Fund.

This is an opportunity that our AOH/LAOH Members need to take full advantage of in the coming years.

As this report reveals the University of Notre Dame are wonderful custodians of our funds while they are providing scholarships from our funds over these many years.

Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism

Financial Report:	
Book Value	\$ 168,815.00
Market Value	\$1,189,521.00
Projected Income	\$ 45,768.00
Expenditures	\$ 29,795.68

These expenditures annually provide for:

Hibernian Research Awards: Provided to American Catholic Scholars:

Howard Lune, Hunter College, CUNY – "Unfriendly Societies: Know Nothings, the AOH, and the Fight for Authentic Cultural Identity"

Matteo Binasco, University of Notre Dame (Rome Global Gateway): "Roman Sources for Global Irish Catholicism" (presentation at a meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, March 28, 2015 at Notre Dame IN)

Hibernian Lecture and Recital

Seminar on Global Irish Catholicism

Keynote Lecture: Anne O'Brien, "Global Irish Studies Center, University of New South Wales". "The Irish Origins of Australian Catholicism".

As we can see Cushwa provides a tremendous education on Catholicism World Wide with the help of the AOH/LAOH.

Shane Ulrich of the Cushwa Center has informed us of the dates next year for the Hibernian Lecture and our visit to the campus of the University of Notre Dame.

The Hibernian Lecture date for the fall is confirmed for Friday, September 22, 2017. The speaker will be Prof. Ian McBride of Oxford University. More details to follow.

We have intentionally set this up as a NON Football weekend so that it is much more affordable for the AOH/LAOH Membership. We will also be given a special tour of the University set up by the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism.

If you have children or grandchildren, thinking of applying to Notre Dame in the future or just looking for information this may be their opportunity to take a look.

Please contact me, Ned McGinley, at nedaoh1@aol.com, if you wish more information or are planning to attend so that we may have a head count.

Thank You AOH President Judge Jim McKay and the National Board for allowing us this opportunity.

A.O.H.

National Secretary

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Historical Happenings

by Mike McCormack
Historian

This year is a year for Golden anniversaries in Suffolk County, New York. The Suffolk County Police Officer's Emerald Society is celebrating their 50th and will be posthumously honoring their late Chaplain, Father Jim Kissane as Irishman of the Year. Father Jim was also the Chaplain of AOH Division 2 in Babylon and went to his eternal reward on December 16, 2009 but is still remembered as if he walked among us yesterday. During his life Father Jim was a well loved and humorous companion to many and never acknowledged any reward. He turned down the honor of Irishman of the Year offered by the Emerald Society several times. I know that he wouldn't mind the honor now that he is in the company of the Lord who, no doubt, also honored him for a life well lived. On April 21 at their Golden Anniversary Ball, the honors will be presented to his family who will be in attendance. Many Hibernians will also be in attendance and offer congratulation to the Emerald Society, not only for their Golden Anniversary, but also for their protective service as police and their well-chosen selection of honoree.

AOH Division 8 and LAOH Division 8/9 will also celebrate 50 years of community services in 2017 with a dinner/dance and a memory journal. This dynamic division of our order not only bought a hall which they freely offer to scouts, American Legion and elderly, but sponsor lessons in Irish history, language and piping. They sponsor a Pipe Band and a motorcycle club called the Hibernian Riders all of whom contribute to the charitable activities in their county and state. Well done and we wish you 50 x 50 more.

I was invited to speak at an impressive program sponsored by Mercer County, NJ AOH Joe Cahill Division 10. It is an annual program to educate young Irish-Americans about their heritage. Since 2007 it has become their signature event. They call it Gael Scoil and it is a Saturday and Sunday affair. Their goal in creating Gael Scoil is to offer young people of all faiths and cultures an opportunity to learn about Ireland and its people. They have engaged a unique balance of teaching talent and a curriculum that offers students a taste of Ireland's rich history and its wonderful culture in an environment focused on fun. Most classes are 30-45 minutes long with a short break in between. Students are assigned to a group and each group is assigned a chaperone or guide who stays with them throughout the day until they are picked up. Subjects offered are:

- Culture – The oral tradition and its contribution to Irish history and Irish films on tradition and folklore.
- History – Topics include the peoples of pre-historic Ireland and their way of life, through the Celts and the coming of Christianity, the influence of the Vikings and Normans, and more recently the causes and effects of the Great Hunger (1845-50), and more.
- Sports – Hands on, and demonstration of, Irish Football and Hurling.
- Dance – Irish traditional dance, including Ceili or folk, as well as the better known

step-dancing are demonstrated by young dancers and champion performers and the basic steps are taught.

- Music – the bodhran, harp, fiddle, tin whistle and bagpipes. Students not only hear the music, but they learn about the instruments and their histories.
- Traditional Irish Food – Lessons on making Irish soda bread. Each student gets to make a loaf and bring it home.
- Language – Students learn the sounds of the Irish language and some vocabulary from a team of Irish speaking professional teachers.

They also have interesting and fun demonstrations of how wool is spun on an authentic spinning wheel, making St Bridget's Cross, Celtic knots a real peat fire and more fun and engaging lessons.

It is a significant honor to be invited to lecture to the students at Gael Scoil and I hope I was able to convince the students just how important the incredible heritage is that we all share. I thank the members of this impressive program for the invitation and I thank the students for accepting me. I'm glad they were not as mischievous as I was when I was a student among the Sisters of No Mercy (as we shamefully called those wonderful ladies)!

We tried something new with our Historical Happenings on the AOH.COM website this month. It was such a good story that it was continued on the NYAOH.COM website. I hope you like it.

Until next time, keep well, keep the faith and keep the tradition alive!



A Promise Fulfilled

By Mike McCormack, AOH National Historian

Frank Stagg, of Hollymount, County Mayo, came from a long line of Irish republicans. His father fought in both the War of Independence and the Civil War. In the 1970s, Frank emigrated to England, and worked as a London bus conductor. He joined Sinn Féin in 1972 and thereafter the IRA. In April 1973, he was arrested in Coventry and charged under ancient Conspiracy Laws, used to convict when there is insufficient evidence. With six others, he was convicted of conspiracy to commit arson and given a 10-year sentence.

Taken to Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, Frank claimed political prisoner status and refused prison clothes and work. He was punished with solitary confinement. In March 1974, he was moved to Parkhurst Prison, where he and fellow Mayo man, Michael Gaughan, joined a hunger strike demanding political prisoner status and repatriation to Ireland. All were force-fed, a method condemned by Amnesty International and the Court of Human Rights. Eventually, some strikers were repatriated to Northern Ireland — except for a few that included Stagg and Gaughan. Both men continued to suffer forced feeding.

According to the National Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee, six to eight guards would restrain the prisoner and drag him by the hair to the top of the bed, where they would stretch the prisoner's neck over the metal rail, force a block between his teeth and then pass a feeding tube, which extended down the throat, through a hole in the block. After 64 days of this torture, Michael died on June 3 at age 24. He weighed 84 pounds.

Following Michael's death, negotiations resulted in the hunger strike being called off. But the talks were a ruse just to halt the strike and prevent further bad publicity. Instead of complying with the negotiated demands, authorities moved Frank to solitary confinement in Wakefield Prison, where he remained under 23-hour lockdown. With no furniture, radio or newspapers, he was prevented from sleeping by a bright light in his cell day and night. On December 14, 1975, Frank Stagg began his fourth and final hunger strike, again demanding repatriation. He suffered for 62 days before succumbing on February 12, 1976, from forced feeding. His last request was to be buried next to his comrade, Michael Gaughan. Michael had been buried in the Republican plot in Ballina in a highly politicized funeral in which the IRA had taken a prominent role, embarrassing the Fine Gael/Labour Government who now faced the prospect of another high-profile funeral of an IRA man.

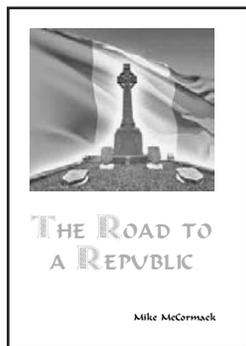
As Frank's widow and friends waited at Dublin airport, the plane carrying his coffin home was diverted to Shannon. The body was taken by Gardaí helicopter to a small cemetery outside Ballina and buried under massive state security on Feb. 21. The IRA showed up and 1,600 police and soldiers couldn't stop them from firing a volley over the grave in Stagg's honor as 6,000 to 7,000 people threw rocks at the police and soldiers for denying the hero's last wish. In New York City, 3,000 people marched and more than 1,000 attended a special mass in Boston for Stagg. The grave was immediately covered over in concrete and a 24-hour guard was placed at the plot to prevent the family from exhuming the coffin and fulfilling Frank's last wish.

A Requiem Mass was allowed to the family, but they boycotted it in protest at not being allowed to have the funeral that Frank wanted. The following Sunday, the Republican Movement held its own ceremony at the republican plot, despite a massive police presence. A volley was fired following an oration by the late Joe Cahill who pledged that Stagg's body would one day lie beside his comrade in accordance with his last wishes.

Six months later, the government found it impossible to justify the expense of a 24-hour guard on a small local cemetery in Mayo and removed the guard. On the night of November 6, 1976, a small group came to dig a grave in the plot next to the Stagg grave, presumably preparing it for a burial. The plot had actually been purchased by the IRA, and when the grave was deep enough, they tunneled horizontally, beneath the concrete covering Frank Stagg's coffin, and quietly removed it. Frank Stagg was re-buried, as he had wished, next to Michael Gaughan in the Republican plot, where a Catholic priest led a litany of prayers and his comrades fired a volley of shots over his grave. In his honor, Seamus Robinson of Belfast composed the song "Brave Frank Stagg." He also wrote "Take Me Home To Mayo" for Michael Gaughan, and Joe Cahill kept his promise.

GIVE A GIFT OF PRIDE FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN THE STORY OF THOSE WHO ENDURED:

- Martial Law under Vengeful British Military Forces
- The Torture of Post 1916 imprisonment in Frongoch
- A Violent War against Undisciplined Black and Tans
- Destructive Assaults by Vindictive Auxiliary Troops
- A Brutal Civil War that divided Friends and Families
- The Birth and Demise of the Irish Communist Party
- The Creation of the Fascist Blueshirt Movement
- More Divisive Political Intrigue than a Presidential Campaign and The Final Achievement of an Independent Republic of Ireland and it all takes place in Mike McCormack's



THE ROAD TO A REPUBLIC

The 144-page anticipated sequel to THE ROAD TO REBELLION

This is the little-known story that had to be written. It sings the long-overdue praise of ordinary men and women who supported the legacy left them by the heroes of 1916 and who suffered terribly for doing so. It is to them that this book is dedicated with much admiration for their courage, tenacity and devotion to the dream of independence which they finally won.

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California

Celebrating in Ventura

AOH Ventura County, Easter Rising, Div. 1, celebrated its "1st Anniversary" with the officers and Chaplain Fr. Leon Hutton on Dec. 5. The celebration luncheon also included members' wives. The event took place at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Ventura.



Division President William Ferguson



Ventura County Division 1

Illinois



'Foz' Ryan donation

Members of St. Clair County Division 1 presented a check for \$1,000 to Steve Whitlatch of Area 12, Special Olympics. The donation is made in honor of past Division and Illinois State President Richard "Foz" Ryan and the 5K Turkey Trot Run he started for the local Knights of Columbus.



Past National President George Clough and current National Director John Wilson presided at the installation of the new officers of Division 1, St. Clair County, Illinois, at their January meeting. Pictured along with George, far left, and John, fourth from left, are Mike Tiernan, President; Patrick Hume, Vice President; Mike Lenz, Financial Secretary; Robert Dixon, Treasurer; John Bechtoldt, Recording Secretary, Illinois State President Robert Simpson, Standing Committee Chairman; Bill Musser, Marshal, and Chris Frillman, Sentinel. — Submitted by Mike Tiernan, Div. 1 President.

New Jersey

The New Jersey State Board held a meeting at St. Philips Church in Clifton on January 28. The seated officers, from left, are Treasurer Richard O'Brien, President Sean Hughes and

Vice President Larry Prella Sr., with attending AOH National, State, County and Local Division members standing in the background.



IN MEMORIAM

Brother Steven McDonald

By Denis P. McGowan

Div. 4,
Staten Island



Hibernians mourned the passing of our beloved Brother Steven McDonald on January 10, 2017. Brother McDonald was described as a spiritual giant of faith and of

forgiveness, a devout and pious Roman Catholic gentleman, and his devotion of Our Lord's message of reconciliation and peace has made him a shining star in a world with too much hatred and conflict. He was a beloved father and husband, son and brother, uncle and grandson to his family.

Brother McDonald was born in 1957, in Rockville Centre, NY. The son of NYPD Sergeant David McDonald and David's wife, Anita, Steven was one of eight children. He was proud of his Irish-American heritage and was a devout Catholic. He served four years in the U.S Navy as a Corpsman. Following his father's and maternal grandfather's footsteps, he joined the NYPD in 1984. He met Ms. Patricia Ann "Patti Ann" Norris, a lovely Irish-American lady, who he fell in love with. They married and would bring into the world young Conor, named by Steven and Patti Ann after reading about the character of Conor Larkin, a hero in Leon Uris's historical epic novel, "Trinity." Young Conor McDonald would later join the NYPD in 2010 and is proud to have his father's shield, No. 104, when he was promoted to Detective Sergeant.

Brother McDonald was shot and paralyzed in 1986 in Central Park while on duty. The shooting would leave him wheelchair-bound and would need an apparatus to help him breathe. Despite the tragedy, his Catholic faith grew even deeper, and his devotion a model for us to follow. Brother McDonald forgave the young man who shot him, saying "I forgive him and hope he can find peace and purpose in life."

Brother McDonald continued to serve as a Detective First Grade with the NYPD for 30 more years. He traveled to Northern Ireland in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2008, preaching a gospel of peace, reconciliation and forgiveness, meeting Protestant and loyalist as well as Catholic, nationalist and republican leaders. He also traveled to Bosnia and Israel as a messenger of peace. As a result of his heroic efforts in the name of peace and forgiveness, Brother McDonald met His Holiness St. John Paul II, Nelson Mandela and George W. Bush. He was a longtime friend of the beloved Franciscan, Father Mychal Judge, who would die a martyr to our faith while ministering at Ground Zero on September 11, 2001.

He was a member of the AOH John P. McGuinness - Richard Fitzsimmons Division No. 14 in Rockville Centre-Lynbrook, NY. He was chosen to be the Grand Marshal of the second annual St. Patrick's Day Parade held on March 4, 1990, by the AOH Mike Moran Division No. 8 and LAOH St. Dymphna Division No. 8 in Glen Cove, NY.

Brother McDonald was named in the

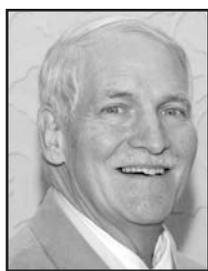
Irish America Hall of Fame in 2014, and participated in the O'Donovan Rossa commemoration with Gerry Adams at Calvary Cemetery, Queens, NY in September 2015. Brother McDonald was also a member of the NYPD Emerald Society.

Brother McDonald was fondly remembered and with great respect by his fellow Hibernians. Brother Patrick J. Lynch, President of the Police Benevolent Association and a member of AOH Division No. 13, remarked "Steven McDonald was the most courageous and forgiving man I have ever known. Despite the tremendous pain in his life, both physical and emotional, his concern for his fellow police officers and the people of New York City never wavered. Since that fateful day in 1986, Steven dedicated his life to fighting hate and encouraging forgiveness through his action." Brother Lynch added that "He was a true American hero."

Rev. Msgr. Peter G. Finn of the Richmond County AOH, pastor of Blessed Sacrament and Regional Dean of Staten Island, met Brother McDonald with His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor at Bellevue Hospital after the shooting, and remained in touch with his Brother McDonald and Patti Ann for many years. He frequently visited them and recalled how Brother McDonald visited the students of Blessed Sacrament School twice.

At a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated by His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan on January 13, some 12,000 of his brother and sister law enforcement officers attended, to the skirl of the Pipes and Drums of the NYPD Emerald Society. The NYPD rendered full honors to Brother McDonald by conducting the Inspector's Funeral service, complete. In attendance were NYPD Commissioner James P. O'Neill as well as former Commissioners William Bratton and Raymond Kelly, and Mayor Bill de Blasio and former Mayor William Dinkins. Rev. Msgr. Seamus O'Boyle of the Diocese of Westminster, London, a cousin of Patti Ann, gave the homily at the Mass. Brother McDonald was laid to rest at Holy Rood Cemetery, Westbury, NY. *Photo by Rossana Weitekamp*

James Dailey Wahl



James Dailey Wahl, 67, died on the morning of Dec. 24, 2016, at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. He was an outstanding Missouri citizen who distinguished himself as a leader in his community and served as a National Director for the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

The Honorable James Dailey "Jim" Wahl, was an esteemed resident of St. Louis, Missouri, and proud Irishman. He served as Chairman for the 2014 AOH/LAOH Convention in St. Louis, Missouri.

Judge Wahl was appointed as a St. Louis Municipal Court Judge by Mayor Clarence Harmon in 1999. He was a longtime member of the Father Tim Dempsey Division of the AOH in St. Louis.

He compiled an enviable list of service to the Order as a member of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee and Grand Marshal, and played an integral role in the establishment of the Golf Tournament and the annual awards program for the city and county police officer, firefighter and union worker of the year.

A proud 1967 graduate of Christian Brothers College High School and a 1975 graduate of the St. Louis University School of Law, he was exceedingly proud of his affiliation with the Missouri Association of Trial Lawyers.; and a strong supporter of local labor and a very proud Democrat were he served as Democratic Committeeman for the St. Louis 16th Ward, Past President of the 3rd Missouri Senatorial District and 3rd Congressional District.

He was abundantly blessed with the love and admiration of a wonderful family his devoted wife, Kathy; and his four children, Kelly, Kerry, Kristen and Tommy; dear brother of Angela (Jack) Keiser, Jack (Marianne), and Ed (Joan) Wahl.

Ray McCann, former AOH county president, dies at 79

By Bridget Downes



Raymond G. McCann, a former New York City firefighter and president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians Nassau County Board, died on Dec. 11 following complications from a surgical procedure.

He was 79.

McCann was born in Belle Harbor, Queens, and lived most of his early days in the Rockaways, where he attended St. Francis de Sales and Far Rockaway High School. He married his wife, Elaine, and raised his two daughters there.

McCann worked as a truck driver for Pepsi Cola and later became a firefighter, where he spent most of his career at Ladder 40 in Harlem. Throughout his life, McCann was honored with many awards, including the James Gordon Bennett Medal, the Dr. Harry M. Archer Medal and the Ward LaFrance Fire Industry Award for Heroism. He was also a member of the Honor Legion and the Emerald Society of the FDNY.

After he retired, McCann became an independent contractor and built tables and bars for pubs and restaurants. He also spent much of his time volunteering with the AOH St. Brendan the Navigator Division 17 in Long Beach. He was active in raising money for good causes and organizing the annual St. Brendan the Navigator Irish Heritage Day Parade and Festival in Long Beach.

McCann also served as the chairman of the Nassau County Feis, an Irish festival. He was the grand marshal of the parade as well as an aide to the grand marshal in the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade.

During the summer, McCann enjoyed fishing trips on his boat or in Key West, Fla. In the winter, he liked to ski.

"He was a humble man, a great father and a Hibernian stalwart," said Bill Peyton, current president of the AOH Division 17.

"Ray was a decorated veteran of the FDNY winning the two highest medals of valor in the department. I think if he were here today he would just kind of wave that off and not draw attention to himself. His accomplishments were not known to many of his friends. He just wasn't the type of guy to sit around and tell war stories. He will be remembered for his service, and kindness, but mostly for his humility."

A funeral mass was held at the Island Park Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church.

McCann is survived by his daughters, Susan O'Neill and Dianne Bolsch, and their husbands, Billy and Larry, respectively. He is also survived by his sister, Mary Ellen Green and her husband, Ron, and his beloved grandchildren Christopher, Peter, Eric, Kelly and Heather.

This article is reprinted with permission from the Herald Community Newspapers.

John D. (Jack) McKean



Jack McKean was a Founding Member and Chief of Escort of the Tara Court Major Degree Team and a Founding Member and Director of the Hibernian Players.

Jack passed away on September 27, 2016, with his loving family at his side at the Hospice Inn in Huntington, New York.

He was a retired Lieutenant in the FDNY, Rescue 3 Company. He was a 4th Degree member and Past Grand Knight of Columbus, Sunrise Council #6607. He was a proud member of the American Legion in Bohemia, New York. He was a 20-year member of his parish church choir and also sang for the high holy days in the B'nai Israel Reform Temple in Oakdale, NY. He was president of the Homeowners Association of Sunrise Village for 8 years.

Jack joined the AOH in Brooklyn, in 1960. He was the founding member and director of the Hibernian Players, a theater group devoted to performing Irish plays exclusively. He was an editor of the St. Patrick's Newsletter and a member of the Saffron Kilts Pipe Band Color Guard of Division 2 Babylon.

Jack was a charter member of the Hibernian Festival Singers for 35 years. He was a founding member and Chief of Escort for 30 years in the Tara Court Major Degree Team. He was a proud life member of Our Lady of Knock, Division 7, East Islip, and an avid golfer with his "Friday Morning Hibernian Brothers."

Jack was married to his wife, Maureen, for 55 years. She is the immediate past president of the LAOH - Division 2, Babylon. His daughter, Kathleen, predeceased him in 2012. He is also survived by his daughter, Maureen Bateman, and son, John D. McKean.

A beautiful and powerful voice has been silenced but it still resonates in heaven. May his soul rest in peace.

Because someone we love is in heaven there's a little heaven in our home.

Colorado



Hibernians help in Denver

Denver rang in the new year Dublin time at the Fr. Joseph P. Carrigan Division's Irish New Year Party! The Michael Collins Division, the Ladies' Ancient Order of Hibernians Denver Division and scores of our friends came together for a good time. Not even a last-minute venue change could stop us! Proceeds went to help the Samaritan House homeless shelter, Purple Heart Homes and Annunciation Catholic School of Denver.

Florida



AOH donates food

The Lake County Division, in the Villages, is proud of its participation in the annual food drive conducted by the Sumpter County Sheriff's Office. The program reaches out to those in need within our county. This past year, our Division donated several hundred pounds of non-perishable foods. The picture here was taken during one such donation. From left: John Gaffney, Ed Sullivan, Joe Farrell (Division President), Pat Kennedy (Past Division President) along with other members of our Division and members of the SCSO.

National Recruiting Drive

Green Season is upon us and there is no better time to recruit your next member. The AOH is calling on each and every member around the country to recruit one new member for initiation by your April division meeting.

Everyone has someone they can personally recruit and mentor as a new Hibernian. Is it your father, your son, your uncle or your cousin? Is it someone you work with, someone in your parish or someone on your parade committee or any other event of the season? Remember, your parish priest is qualified for membership regardless of his heritage. Our job is to find one new member. Presidents with a member who recruits more than two new brothers during this season should notify AOH organizer Tim McSweeney for special recognition.

Illinois

By John F. O'Donnell

Chicago activities

The Division 32 Charity Committee presented Archdiocese of Chicago seminarian and AOH Brother Colm Mitchell a stipend check at our January 14th Executive Committee Meeting at the Six Penny Bit, owned by Brother Tom Birt.

Recent donations by the Charity Committee have included funds to a woman battling breast cancer, a high school youth group going to Kentucky in the summer, a missionary going to SE Asia and the athletic department of a Catholic girls' high school.

On January 29th a Texas Hold 'Em card tourney was held at Six Penny Bit to benefit the Freedom For All Ireland Fund.

Division 32 has announced their annual St. Patrick's Day downtown Chicago parade marching and corn beef party afterwards, chaired by Brother Gerry Holley, will be held Saturday March 11, at De Paul Prep High School cafeteria. For additional information on this event as well as all Division 32 activities, check our AOHAOH Facebook or our AOOH.ORG Website.

All out of town Brothers are welcome to the annual big bash March 11th, of course.



John Moriarty, left and President Kevin O'Malley, right, presented a stipend check to seminarian and AOH Brother Colm Mitchell

Indiana

Dan McGinley, President of Indiana State AOH, presented gifts from AOH of \$1,500 each to Holy Cross School, St. Philip Neri School and St. Philip Neri Church on January 27. The presentation was made at The Golden Ace Inn, the oldest Irish tavern in Indiana and

owned by the McGinley family, long time members of AOH and supporters of these two historically Irish Indianapolis parishes. — Jim Lynch, Secretary, Kevin Barry Division



From left, State AOH Sec. Bill Farrell; Treasurer Jerry Kennedy; President Dan McGinley; Father Chris Walderton, the Pastor St. Philip Neri; Ruth Hittel, Principal HC School; Jennifer Thomas, Assistant Prin. HC; Maria Lomeli, Administrative Assistant SPN; and Pat Miles, VP State AOH.

Connecticut

by Phil Gallagher

James P. Bree of New Haven died of tuberculosis on June 2, 1906. He was only 42-years-old and left a wife and three children. Bree packed a lot into his short life. He was a graduate of Yale Law School and served in the Connecticut legislature where he sponsored a bill that allowed school children to ride for half fare on Connecticut's railroads. He also served as state auditor.

Besides his government career James Bree was also active in the Knights of Columbus and served two terms as President of the Connecticut Total Abstinence Society.

It is Bree's career as a Hibernian where he may have achieved the greatest recognition. He was elected Connecticut AOH State President in 1898 when there were about 76 Divisions in the State. Before he completed his tenure as State president, he was elected to the post of AOH National Secretary and served in that capacity from 1900 to 1904. Because of his legal background and calm demeanor he was often called upon by National President James Dolan of Syracuse, N.Y., to mediate disputes in the ranks of the AOH as well as the fledging LAOH.

Apparently most of Bree's AOH papers remained with his family and eventually came into the possession of the late Irish Historian John Boyle, of New Haven, who gave them to me some years ago in my capacity as State Historian/Archivist. To preserve these papers, I have been working with Sacred Heart University, which has begun displaying them on their Irish Community Collections site:

digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_hiber

There is a wealth of information to be found in the Bree papers concerning both the AOH and LAOH in the United States and Canada as they existed in the early 1900's.

On January 27, I journeyed to Washington, D. C., for the March for life with my son, Brian, a member of the John A. Gildea Division in Danbury, Connecticut. We attended the Hibernian Mass at St. Mary Mother of God Church and the Hibernian breakfast at the Irish Channel Restaurant across from the Church, where several Hibernians from around the country, including National President Judge Jim McKay and members of the National Board were present. We then attended the rally at the Washington Monument and heard the historic speech delivered by Vice President Michael Pence, who quoted these famous words from the Preamble of the Declaration of Independence: "that all ... are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

It seemed the overwhelming majority of the many thousands in attendance at the March for Life were under 30 years of age.

Hibernian men and women from Connecticut and elsewhere have been attending the March for Life since 1974. That year Danbury sent the late Dan Ryan and Joe McCarthy as well as Gene McKenna to represent their Division. Dan Ryan would later serve as State President and National Director. Joe McCarthy was a self-made, successful man from County Cork who would lead the group into the offices of Connecticut's 5th District Congressional Representative to lobby for the rights of unborn children. Joe would always keep his hat on as a reminder to the politicians that they were his "public servants." Gene, who was Danbury Hibernian of the year in 1983, is still an active Hibernian in the General Thomas Francis Meagher Division in Fredericksburg Virginia. He sent me a picture of that first March for Life that occurred so many years ago.

It was an honor to follow in their footsteps.



Danbury, Connecticut members of the LAOH and AOH are all smiles after packing 50 food baskets for the needy families of Danbury. Photo by Tom McAuliffe.



The John P. Holland Division of New London President Rick Connell, right, presented the Hibernian of the Year Award to Paul Moriarity, for his work in organizing the first two annual Green masses at the historic St. Patrick's Cathedral in Norwich, Connecticut.



Gene McKenna and the late Dan Ryan at the first March for Life in 1974. Photo by the late Joe McCarthy.

Kentucky

The Hibernians prepare to ring in the Irish New Year's.

The Father Abram J. Ryan Division kept with tradition by ringing in the New Year Irish Style. Each year the Hibernians and friends gather at Flanagan's Ale House to ring in the New Year. There was plenty of Irish music, drink and food specials. The crowd gets bigger and bigger each year. Many people were turned away at the door this year due to a lack of seating.

You might be asking yourself what is the big draw. I will tell you the Hibernians don't ring in the New Year at midnight local time but at midnight Ireland time, which is 7 p.m. local time. As we get closer to the Irish midnight we do a countdown and make a

toast to the New Year.

This is a great way to raise money for our annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. I thought only everyone was Irish on St. Patrick's Day, seems that everyone is also Irish on New Year Eve. Everyone knows the Irish do everything bigger and better and this event has taken on a life of its own, the crowd getting bigger and bigger every year. So if you ever find yourself in Louisville on New Year Eve, stop by.

Please remember our dear brother, Greg Greene, who returned to our Heavenly Father on December 8, 2016.

Make your plans now to attend the 2018 National Convention to be held in Louisville.

Ohio

Cuyahoga Division 2 Hibernian named Grand Marshal

Roger S. Weist, Boland-Berry Division, was named 2017 Parade Grand Marshal by the United Irish Societies for the 175th anniversary of Cleveland's St. Patrick's Day Parade. He was honored at a breakfast hosted by the Ladies AOH Our Lady of the Rosary Division after a Mass at St. Patrick's Church in West Park. Also honored at the Mass and Breakfast were the following from the Our Lady of the Rosary Division: Irish Mother of the Year - Angela Murphy; Inside Co-Chair - John Patrick Lackey; and Outside Co-Chair - Margaret Lynch and the LAOH Hibernian of the Year Maire Leffel.

Roger has been an active and highly visible member of Cleveland's Irish community for over 38 years. What began as a love of Irish music, song and story developed into an activism for the promotion of the ideals of Hibernianism and the promotion of peace, justice and unification of the isle of Ireland.

A life member of the Boland/Berry Division 2, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, he has served in most offices, including Division President as well as a term as State Board President. Recently Roger has been selected President of newly formed AOH Cuyahoga County Board, and serves as Director of Freedom for All Ireland/ Political Education for the AOH Ohio State Board. He is also a Music Director/ Program Host at WRUR-FM Radio 91.1, on "Beyond the Pale," Cleveland each Sunday.

When asked what prompted his involvement in Irish affairs, Roger replied, "My Mother instilled and nurtured a love of all things Irish in us as kids. It was joining the Hibernians, where the desire to work in pursuit of freedom, peace and justice for all the



Ron Hagan, Ohio State Board President, and Roger Weist.

people of Ireland began in earnest. A journey that allowed me to meet people and visit places I never dreamed. I only hope I've had a positive impact."

Texas

McCabe Division honors Hibernian of the Year

The Monsignor Richard McCabe (Travis County 1) awarded Brother Christian Hunker the Kevin O'Connell Award as the division Hibernian of the Year. The award is named after the brother who inspirationally connects the history of Central Texas divisions.

A charter member of the division, Brother Hunker shows leadership in every aspect of the brotherhood. An active member in division recruitment, Christian welcomes all members as the Chairman of the Standing Committee. He is also the main contact with the Celtic Cultural Center of Texas and organized the division's involvement in two major events in the Austin Area (Celtic Fest and Celtic Christmas). Christian actively promotes the AOH values both within the division and as a community representative, and is one of our most visible brothers throughout Central Texas.



At the award presentation, from left, Kevin Buechler (President), Hon. Adrian Farrell (Consul General of Ireland), Christian Hunker (2016 Hibernian of the Year), and Mike Joyce (President Emeritus).

National Recruiting Drive

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Minnesota

Shamrock Division hosts Christmas Party

The Shamrock Division hosted its annual Christmas Party at the Lakeside Supper Club on December 21. Sixty members and spouses attended.

After an initial gathering and social time, President Tim Halloran welcomed new and current members to the event. A toast was offered in honor of our member, John Luskey, who passed on this last year. President Halloran recapped some of last year's events and highlights. He announced the events for the upcoming year. The Hibernian Scholarship fund has given out 38 scholarships since 2008, totaling over \$17,000. The scholarships are

awarded to local deserving young Irish scholars going off to college. This last year the Shamrock Division once again expanded our Founders Day celebration with a dinner and evening of Irish music. This event was well received and enjoyed by our division. We will be planning to repeat the event again this year. Halloran announced that eight new members joined our division this last year, bringing our membership to 83. The rest of the evening included dinner and social time. www.hibernians-shamrock.com

— Tim Halloran, Shamrock Division 1, Minnesota



New Shamrock Division members attended with their wives. They were, from left, Ashley and Ashton Pankonin, Marty and Lisa Fahey and Matt and Diane Skelley.

Florida



At the donation event, from left, John Gaffney (Division Recording Secretary); two members of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office; and Joe Farrell (Division President).

Villages' Division makes donation

The Lake County Division of the AOH (located in the Villages, Florida) made a Christmas donation of four bikes with helmets to the Sumter County Sheriff Office. The bikes were then given to boys and girls whose families would have been unable to afford such a purchase. Our Division also supports Law Enforcement & First Responders with the planning of ceremonies for the Peace Officers Memorial on May 15 and the 9/11 Memorial in September.

New York



Paul Thomas, left, Vice President, and Tim Kennedy, President of the Syracuse Media Group, received a check for \$13,200 from Dave Lynch, Honorary Chairman, and Rich Walsh, Chairman of the Syracuse AOH Old Newsboys Team, to purchase Christmas toys & food for needy families in Syracuse.

Syracuse Hibernians raise \$13,200.00 for Needy Kids & Families at Christmas

Over 50 volunteers from the Syracuse Commodore John Barry Division's "AOH Old Newsboys" team hawked special editions of the Syracuse Post Standard on December 9th and 10th raising \$13,200 for the Syracuse Christmas Toy Fund. The Hope for the Holiday's "Old Newsboys" newspaper sale is an 84-year-old Syracuse tradition sponsored by the Syracuse Media Group & Post-Standard that originated in the Depression to buy coal to help heat the homes of the poor. All of the proceeds raised now go to the Syracuse Christmas Bureau (a joint venture of the United Way & Salvation Army) to buy toys, books and food for needy families at Christmas. This year's Christmas Bureau saw 2,555 food baskets given to needy families, and toys and books provided to 6,211 kids at the downtown Syracuse On Center on December 19th to make their Christmas a bit brighter.

This year's Syracuse AOH team, led by former Division President and Honorary Chairman Dave Lynch and Chairman Rich Walsh set a record for the 14th year in a row as the top money raiser of the 20 teams participating. Over the same 14-year period the Syracuse Division has raised a total of \$183,000 for the Christmas Bureau. 2016 was the Syracuse AOH's 47th year participating in the Syracuse communities Old Newsboys Newspaper Sale Fundraiser.

— William M. Gooley, Syracuse Commodore John Barry Division

Pennsylvania



Chuck Thamarus, from left, front row, Deacon Dan Evans, Hugh Dugan and Noel Behan; Back row: Sean McFadden, Jerry McFadden, Ed Coll, Don Riley and Bob McMenomen.

Changing of the Guard

After four years of serving as president the AOH, Alec Campbell Division 1 in Jim Thorpe (2003-04 & 2015-16), President Chuck Thamarus has decided to step down as president from the executive board. Chuck's leadership will be sorely missed. Our division is delighted he will remain active in the years to come.

Active in the division for over 13 years, Chuck has been an integral part of every activity our division has performed. A key achievement of Chuck's was the creation of the "Hibernian of the Year Award" given to an outstanding member of the division. He's also been responsible for lining up all participants in the St. Patrick's Day Parade (now in its 20th year) and hanging the flags of the United States and Ireland across Broadway for the parade. Chuck has also been involved in the distribution of food baskets and gift cards to the needy of Carbon County at Thanksgiving and Christmas every year. Chuck walks the walk when it comes to our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

He is a lifelong resident of Carbon County and currently resides in Nesquehoning, PA, with his wife, Doris. Chuck has a son, Josh, and daughter, Mollie. Please join us in wishing Chuck all the best in the years to come.

O'Malley Division 4 elects new board



AOH recently elected new officers for 2017-18. The Division is named in memory of the late boxing trainer Paul "Hook" O'Malley, who cared deeply for the youth in his community. First row, from left, James Barrett, Historian; Keith Oleski, Marshal; James Connor, Treasurer; Joe Quinnan, Sentinel; and Patrick O'Malley, President. Second row, from left, Bob Gilbride, Member; Mark McDade, Member; John Maher, Secretary; Joseph Walsh, Vice President; Joe Holland, Financial Secretary; and Attorney Terry Gallagher, Member.



Massachusetts



Division 8 Lawrence, MA, Officers Installed: On January 22, Division 8 Installation of Officers was held in Sacred Hearts Church, Bradford, MA. Pictured from left, front row: Frank O'Connor Sr., Bill Sullivan, Frank O'Connor Jr. and Dick Wall, Essex County Board President; Back Row: Tim Doherty; Mike McCarthy, Mike Miller, Division 8 Lawrence Bob Gauthier and Mass State Board President Paul Hogan.

Plans are now in full swing for the AOH/LAOH State Convention that will be held on Cape Cod in Hyannis, the weekend of June 2-4. On June 2 a wreath laying ceremony is planned at the JFK Memorial in Hyannis. As many know, JFK was not only the first Irish Catholic President, but also a member of the AOH. President Kennedy joined Division 14 in Watertown, MA in 1947 and kept his membership active right up until his death in November 1963. This year marks the 100th birthday of JFK. Jack Lahey and Mary Whidden are co-chairing the State Convention Committee.

The Third Annual AOH Massachusetts Golf Classic will be hosted by Division 18 in Salem on May 8. Charlie Sinclair is heading the committee in charge of this tournament.

Other events of note:

Division 1 Holyoke: Division 1 will hold their Annual Daniel S. Curran Irish Night, on February 25 with entertainment by the Noel Henry Show Band. The Division Annual Communion Breakfast will be held on March 12.

Division 8, Lawrence: Division 8 will host over 15 plus events during March. Some of the events include: an exhibit on the Leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising, an author lecture series, an Irish Film Festival, a Banquet and Dance and Saint Patrick's Day Luncheon.

Division 14 Watertown: President McCusker and his board of Officers were installed on January 20 by Middlesex County President Leo Falter. Division 14's Annual Memorial Golf Tournament is scheduled for July 21.

Division 18 Salem: Division 18 will hold an open house on March 17 with a traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner and entertainment by several local Irish groups.

And that is the way we see it in the Great Commonwealth of Massachusetts. God Bless!

Montana

Anaconda Division holds joint installation

On Saturday, January 28, Anaconda AOH Division 1 celebrated their incoming officers with a joint installation banquet. On hand to perform the ceremonies were Montana State LAOH President Sis Tocher and AOH President Bob Mehrens.



Anaconda Hibernians welcomed some new faces as in coming officers.



Anaconda AOH officers for 2017, from left, Nick Lakel, Standing Committee; Pete Lorello, V.P.; Jim Corrigan, Financial Secretary; President Ray Ryan; Acting Marshal Joe Ungaretti; Mark May, Recording Secretary; Gary Ouldhouse, Marshal; and Ed Burch, Treasurer; with Bob Mehrens, Montana State President; Con Malee, Sentinel.

Virginia

At the recent Virginia State Board meeting, Virginia AOH State President Gene Bransfield kicked off Fraternal Year 2017. The meeting was hosted by the Col. Thomas J. Cunningham, Jr. Division 1. More than 60 brothers representing the Virginia State Board and 14 Virginia divisions were either in the room or present via teleconferencing. One meeting highlight was presentation of the 2016 Virginia Hibernian of the Year Award to Brother Bob Anderson of the Col. Cunningham Division. Bob was recovering from surgery and could not attend, but his son, Trevor, accepted the award on his behalf.

Following the meeting the Brian Boru Degree Team conferred our Order's Major Degrees on 23 brothers representing divisions from across Virginia and Maryland.

The Father Edwin Kelley Division 2 held its first family Christmas Party as a combination of culture and tradition. Approximately 100 brothers, family members and guests attended. There was something for everyone: a wonderful dinner, a visit by Santa, and the Boyle School of Irish Dance entertained with more than an hour of fast-paced Irish dancing. Division Brother Jerry Laffey presented an engaging history of bagpipes and surprised all as he skillfully played a few Christmas tunes. Christmas carols were also on

the list of activities for the evening. During the party, Division President Richard Ring presented donations to representatives of the Divisions charities and recognized the Hibernian of the Year, John Masarick, and Family of the Year, John and Christina Hayes.

On December 11, 2016, The General Thomas F. Meagher Division 2 brothers participated, with the National Parks Service, in commemorating the 154th anniversary of the Civil War Battle of Fredericksburg. Wreaths were presented at the Irish Brigade memorial located where the Brigade crossed the Rappahannock River and at the Sergeant Kirkland Memorial on Marye's Heights above the city. The commander of the Irish Brigade, Thomas Francis Meagher, is the Division's namesake. The Brigade was virtually an all-Irish force of five infantry regiments, the 63rd, 68th and 69th New York, the 28th Massachusetts and the 116th Pennsylvania. As the Brigade, led by the 69th Regiment, assaulted Marye's Heights, Confederate General Robert E Lee originated the unit moniker - and it endures to present day: he called them the "Fighting 69th." The battlefield courage of the Irish Brigade helped establish an Irish-American identity and ultimately helped the Irish become accepted as U.S. citizens.



Trevor, with State President Bransfield (left) Col. Cunningham Division President, Jay McCarthy



Boyle School of Irish Dance



Recording Secretary Jack Grey, President Shawn Lenahan, and Past Virginia State President Hugh O'Brien at Marye's Heights.

New Jersey

The Mychal Judge Division 1, Hudson County, New Jersey, 14th Annual Christmas Dance December 10 was a magnificent success. Congratulations and hats off to Brother James Donovan, dance chairman, and the Dinner Dance Committee for another amazing event at the Casino in the Park as we dined and danced the night away. Thank you for your tremendous effort.



The 14th Fr. Mychal Judge Division 1 Annual Christmas Dance and Fund Raiser was a big success. The honorees were, from left, Brother James Feeney: Hibernian of the Year 2017; Ms. Jennifer Lambert: Humanitarian of the Year 2017; and Deacon Robert Baker: Father Mychal Judge Award 2017.



AOH members who attended the Fr. Mychal Judge Division 1 Hudson County, Annual Christmas Dance and Fund Raiser on December 10.

Division 16 recruits on the field

Last year's membership drive of the Oliver Plunket Division 16 of Freehold included the formation and support of a lacrosse team to compete in the War at the Shore Lacrosse Tournament in Brick, NJ.

Lacrosse teams from all across the east coast gathered for a weekend to play the oldest sport in America, lacrosse. Division 16 organized a team named the Shamrocks consisting of men between 16-28 years old, and of the 22 players wearing their green uniforms with a large shamrock, 16 young men joined the AOH. The weekend was fun for the players and division members as they listened to Irish music, and their tents could be easily located as their flags and banners flew predominately in the warm summer breeze.

Division 16 is proud to sponsor and organize a team to participate this year at the War at the Shore scheduled for July 29 and 30, with many of our players returning from last year.

The New Jersey State Board is very pleased to announce the 2017 recipients of our three most prestigious awards. They will be awarded at the Biennial Joint State Convention on May 20th at the installation dinner in Middletown, NJ.

The McFaul-Mullan Award-Clergy and/or Lay persons advancing the Motto of the AOH:

The Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan, the Bishop of Camden.

The Vol. Patrick Torphy Award-Advancing the AOH by their field of endeavor: Jere Cole, National AOH Secretary.

Corporal Michael P. Curtin Award-Changing a person's life for the better:

John Hughes, President, Archbishop John Hughes Division 16, Passaic County, NJ.

New Mailing Address

1120 Bloomfield Avenue, Suite 204-B

P.O. Box 539 (07007)

West Caldwell, New Jersey 07006

973-575-0050

JCOLE4838@GMAIL.COM

Polar Bear Plunge for Catholic Schools

The Patrick Torphy Division from Monmouth County hosted the 11th annual Polar Plunge in Long Branch on Sunday, January 8, to support Catholic schools. Brother Jim Shaw has chaired the event since its inception. The event has given thousands of area Catholic school students, faculty and alumni the opportunity to help their schools by collecting sponsorships and following Jim into the frigid January waters of the Atlantic. To date, participants in the AOH Polar Plunge have raised over a \$1 million for their schools.

— Brother Richard O'Brien, from Vol. Patrick Torphy AOH Monmouth County, NJ Division II.



Vol. Patrick Torphy Monmouth County, NJ Division II members hosted the 11th Annual Polar Plunge in Long Branch on January 8.



Brother James Shaw: The Plunge was held on Elvis Presley's birthday, which was this year's theme.

New York



Members of the William J. Ryan Division 4, Lockport, NY are seen delivering some of the cases of peanut butter and jelly they donated to fight hunger in Western New York. From left, Mike Hale, Brendan McCormick, Steve Long, Rick Long, Tom Tracy and Barry Griffith, Division President.

New York

New Junior Division formed

The Joseph Duell, Jr., Division 1 (Orange County) Monroe, New York held an organizational meeting, of the "First Lt. Louis Allen - Junior Division 1 of Orange County" on January 21, 2017. Eighteen boys signed the application to form the Junior Division. Submitted by — Tom McDonald, President, Orange County NY Board

The division was named in memory of 1st Lt. Louis Allen, New York Army National



Some of the newly installed members of the Junior Division: Declan DeBold, Anthony Melo, Liam Ronayne, Timothy Curtin, Harry Degan, William Coffey, Shane Cronin, Conor Flynn, Luke Cronin and Edward Degan. Also present are members of Joseph Duell Jr. Division 1, (seated L/R), Tom Keahon, President Tommy Flynn, Robert Allen, Rob Ronayne and County Pres Tom McDonald. Standing in back; Chris DeBold, Tim Curtin and John Coffey. Vice President Neil O'Riordan (not pictured) will advise and guide the new members.

Guard, who was killed on June 7, 2005, at Forward Operating Base Danger in Tikrit, Iraq. 1st Lieutenant Allen was a member of the United States 42nd Infantry Division when he was mortally wounded by a Claymore mine and died.

In attendance was Vivian and Robert Allen the parents of Lt. Louis Allen. The father of Lt. Louis Allen had the honor of initiating the new members.



Robert Allen, father of Lt. Louis Allen initiating new members.



1st Lt. Louis Allen



Brooklyn is ready! Kings County kicking off the 2017 Saint Patrick's Day Parade season, with Installation of Honorees at Saint Patrick's Auditorium, in Bay Ridge, February 4. The Irish-American Saint Patrick's Day Parade in Park Slope will be Sunday, March 19. The parade is now Chaired by Past National Ladies AOH President Mary Hogan. This year the Honorees are Mary DiServio of LAOH Div 6, Marc Reilly of Div 12 and James O'Leary of Div 35 and the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies. Grand Marshal is James J. Houlihan, owner of Farrell's Bar and Grill. This photo includes Kings County Board President Steve Kiernan, LAOH Kings County President Rose Coulson, and Past National LAOH President Mary Hogan, the Honorees and their Hibernian Brothers and Sisters. Wishing all a fun and safe parade season.

Major Degrees conferred in Schenectady

The John F. Kennedy Division 1 Schenectady Major Degree Team conferred the Major Degrees of the Order on Sunday, January 29, in the Fr. Henry Tansey, Division 5 Hall in Albany. In attendance were more than 75 Brother Hibernians participating as degree team members, candidates and observers. Twenty-seven candidates from surrounding counties

were inducted. Brother Michael P. Glenn, AOH Life Member and Chairman of the Schenectady MDT, who thanked the candidates for completing the lessons of the Order and welcomed them into the inner circle of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. According to Brother Glenn, the Schenectady MDT was founded in 1920 and presently has 30 members. The Hibernian ision 1 in 1880 and has thrived ever since.



At the Degree ceremony were, from left, seated, and, standing left, is Jim Scott, President of Schenectady's John F. Kennedy AOH Division 1 and member of the Major Degree Team. Standing next to Brother Scott is Tim McSweeney, National AOH Organizer and NY State President who acted as Master of Ceremony. Also pictured are the 27 Brother Hibernians who received their Major Degree. Congratulations!

Ladies hibernian news

Michigan

In October the Sr. Annette Marie Byrne Division in Grand Rapids held a Dinner and Irish music concert raising over \$9000. The money raised at this fun and entertaining evening benefited the Catholic Charities West Michigan's Baby Pantry and Help Pregnancy Crisis Center. Following a fabulous dinner the overflowing room was entertained by the very popular Irish group "Blackthorn". In addition to dinner & music our ladies created beautiful gift baskets that were auctioned off to the highest bidder. Division President Dianne Mankel states they are proud to be able to support these two great Pro-Life organizations whose goals are to empower pregnant and young mothers in a Christ-like manner.



The band Blackthorn

President's Message...

by Patricia O'Connell



During this first quarter of the 2017 Year, we celebrate the feast days of our patron saints, St. Brigid and St. Patrick. I am hopeful that each LAOH member takes a few minutes to think about the contributions each of our patron saints provided to the communities in which they lived. May we, as Irish Catholic women, live our motto and contribute to the communities in which we live.

On behalf of the National Board, I want to thank the many officers who worked so diligently to complete the required 2016 Annual Reports. Your attention to following the directions and details in completing these reports at the Division, County Board, and State Board Levels is recognized. I am hopeful that working with these electronic files is becoming an easier task for all the record keepers at the Division, County Board, and State Board Levels.

Once more, I ask all Presidents and Treasurers at each level within the organization to follow and to respond to the information given to you or the requests made to you by National Treasurer Marilyn Madigan as our LAOH work with the IRS continues. Give National Treasurer Madigan a phone call or send her an email as you have questions.

As State Boards are in the planning process for holding their 2017 State Conventions, I am asking State Presidents to forward your State Convention calendar information providing dates, times, and place to National Secretary Karen Keane so that a State Convention Calendar may be developed. I would like to post the calendar of State Conventions in the next edition of The Hibernian Digest as well as post the information on the LAOH Website in early April.

I encourage all LAOH members to not only pay your Division dues, but to also actively invite persons who meet our eligibility criteria to consider membership in our organization. May St. Brigid and St. Patrick continue to bless our LAOH members as we engage with each other to strengthen and sustain our organization.

Irish Historian

by Dee Wallace

The Right to Life March – 2017

WOW is an understatement and what a day it was! There was an incredible sighting and attendance for the tens of thousands from all walks of life who came together from far and near to descend on the National Mall to rally against abortion today. The Youth from St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church Aiken, SC was very much in attendance. "We are the pro-life generation," the crowd chanted. The National Mall across the street from the White House Friday, the marchers deafened one another with their joyful and loud shouts. And yes, tens of thousands did gather just across the street from President Donald Trump's new home, smiling and laughing and breaking into spontaneous cheers and some thanking him for having the Vice President of the as the main speaker. This was joy beyond words for all of the young students from around the country. As many of you that were there or was watching from your home on your television sets, the crowd never cheered louder than when Vice President Mike Pence spoke at the morning's rally, becoming the first member of a presidential administration ever to address the event in person and this was an important part of the march. He was very powerful in his speech and here is an expert from what he said.

"President Trump actually asked me to be here with you today," Pence said. "He asked me to thank you for your support — to thank you for your stand for life and for your compassion for the women and children of America. Compassion is overcoming convenience and hope is defeating despair. In a word: Life is winning in America because of all of you." Every year the March makes evident just how phenomenally young and vibrant the pro-life movement is, echoed by students who travel from hundreds of colleges, universities, and high schools all across the country, as one reporter stated, "they are often sleeping on buses overnight or driving for two days straight to be here." This year was no different and I truly believe this was one of the best and most vibrant pro-life movements that I have seen in a very long time.

We are so grateful for the ladies from the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians and the National Board members, along with the Men's Ancient Order of Hibernians that attended this wonderful right to life march and for taking a "stand for life". Our hats are off to all of you. Blessings!

Minnesota

Minnesota LAOH Division 9 gathered for their annual Christmas party on December 3, 2016. Members again showed their generosity in making donations to our "adopted school" Ascension Catholic Grade School, and Catholic Eldercare. Ascension is a Minneapolis inner-city school with a long history of serving Irish families, and now serves a more diverse population. Catholic Eldercare is associated with St. Anthony of Padua Chapel, which as a parish, had been home to many of the founding members of our division.

Ladies AOH National Board

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Mary Ellen Chajkowski	Legal Counsel to President in Organization Matters	

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS

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Mary Ryan		Marlboro, MA
Dorothy Weldon		Monongahela, PA
Mary T. Leatham		Troy, NY
Mary B. Dolan		North Brookfield, MA
Peggy Cooney		Pittsburgh, PA
Mary Paglione		St. Lucie West, FL
Kathie Linton		Uniontown, Ohio

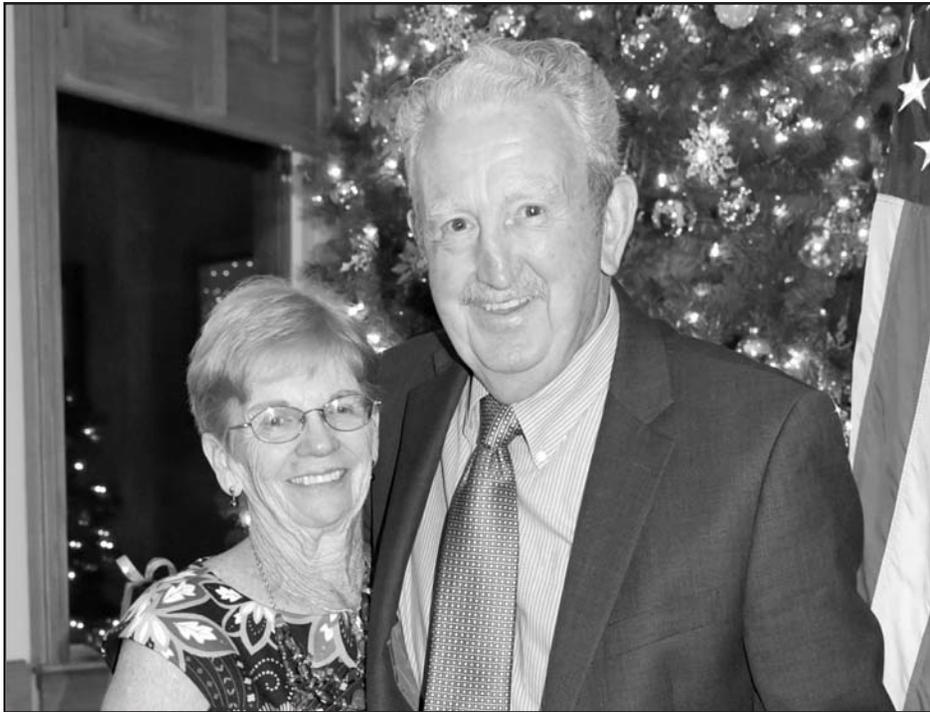
Virginia

In mid-November, we Virginians were blessed with a warm sunny day. And what better way to enjoy the beautiful weather than a walk in Prince William Forest Park? Irish Road Bowling in Prince William Forest Park!

What is Irish Road Bowling, you ask? Apparently, back in the day, the lads were hauling a wee canon across the countryside and to make the journey more fun, they hurled the wee cannonballs down the road. Today, the three-inch diameter bowls weigh 28 ounces and are rolled down the road by each team. Team members take turns throwing; when not throwing, teammates are down range assessing potholes and large rocks, providing an aim point and chasing the bowl.

The Lt. Col. John A Dowd USMC LAOH and AOH hosted Hibernians in the county to test their skills. It didn't take long to hear the laughter, the call of "bowling", and the occasional caution, "car!" About forty brave souls came out, some in their very best kilts. It has become so popular that some are searching for their own IRB gear. We are planning our next outing this spring. Come and join us!

South Carolina



South Carolina Hibernian of the Year Dinner: Pictured are Mary Gallagher, LAOH St. Ciara Division, Bluffton, South Carolina and Tom Higgins, AOH Patrick Lynch Division, Bluffton South Carolina.

Missouri

Ladies of the JFK Div #3 St. Louis chapter gathered together on Friday, January 6 for their Women's Little Christmas celebration. They had dinner and a fun gift exchange with a game. The ladies also celebrated the Feast of St. Brigid with a Mass at St. James the Greater and dinner afterwards on February 4th.

The date for the Missouri State Convention has been set for June 16-17 in Weston, MO.

The ladies of the St. Patrick's Division in St. Charles will be hosting a Trivia Night on Saturday, February 25th.



The LAOH JFK-Division 3 in St. Louis met on January 6, 2017 to celebrate Women's Little Christmas. They shared dinner and a fun gift exchange.



Massachusetts

Preparations are underway for our State Convention, which will be held in June, 2017. A wreath laying ceremony at the President John F. Kennedy memorial is just one of the festivities planned for the weekend. 2017 is the 100th anniversary of President Kennedy's birth. More details will be at a later date.

Once again the LAOH in Massachusetts has been busy with their charitable endeavors. Division 10, Lynn is co-hosting, along with their AOH counterparts, the Hibernian 5K road race the Sunday after St. Patrick's Day. Proceeds from the race are distributed to various charities throughout the city and to our designated national charities. The Division also sponsored a successful paint night. We may have some budding artists among our membership. Members also attended the kickoff cere-

mony to Irish Heritage Month at City Hall.

LAOH Lowell Division 1 held it's February meeting at St. Joseph the Worker Shrine, Lee Street, Lowell, MA. As part of their meeting, an Irish Bread Bake Off Contest was held at the meeting. Also, Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the division.

Congratulations are also extended to the newly elected officers of Division 8, Lawrence, Division 14, Watertown and Division 36, Worcester. Division 2, Holyoke is currently fundraising with the grand prize being their handmade, Irish themed quilt.



Pictured, front row: Lisa Breen, LAOH State President Anne-Marie Nyhan Doherty, Nora Carroll-Bevilacqua, Carol Calderone, Marie Pacheco and Helen Mathison. Second Row: Sue Fink, Ellen Melvin, Cathleen Callahan, LAOH State Secretary Margaret O'Connor and Kathleen Melvin

Missions & Charities

by Mary Ann Lubinsky

The Missions & Charities Office handles Columban Fathers donations, Mass Stipends for all Columban Mass Cards and Enrollments, Columban Sisters donations, and Appeals for Aid donations. Donations for any of these:

- **must be made payable to LAOH, Inc. If not, checks will be voided and must be reissued.** If you want, place Columban Fathers, Columban Sisters, Mass Cards, or Appeals for aid in the check memo only, nowhere else. Do not send cash, do not staple, use scotch tape or alter checks in any way. Most banks today use an automated check reader which does not accept anything that looks altered. The check is reviewed by a bank employee and they make the call as to whether they will accept it or not. If in doubt, it's better to redo the check. Also, checks with staple holes tend to get caught in the readers.

- **must be mailed to the current M&C Officer with the completed Donation Report Form.** Never use an old form. Mailing donations to a previous officer or anyone else, other than the current officer, will result in unnecessary delays. Check the website to ensure that you are using the current form before mailing. Please provide an email address and/or telephone number of the person sending the donation in the event there is a question or a problem. I have no way of getting in touch with individual members and must depend on your State Officer.

- need your return address on the mailing envelope. There have been several instances of lost mail. I am very surprised at the number of donation envelopes I receive without a return address. If the postage is forgotten or falls off, the mail goes to the dead letter files. **Make a copy of both the form and check for yourself, your Treasurer, and anyone else as dictated by your state before mailing.** It is your responsibility to ensure that your Treasurer has the correct information for writing and mailing the check.

- are **never** to be mailed to the Columban Fathers or Columban Sisters. Direct donations are not counted for the LAOH and will not appear on my quarterly reports. **Only the pink, white or green forms are to be mailed to the Columban Fathers to the address on those forms, nothing else.**

- **Effective December 31, 2016, the minimum amount for Mass Cards is \$10.** Any \$5 stipends postmarked after December 23rd will be held until an additional \$5 is forwarded. This information was emailed to the State Officers on September 15, 2016. Donation Acknowledgement Forms are not sent to the National Officer. When you give a Mass Card or Enrollment as a gift, the card given to the person or family is the acknowledgement of the gift. The Donation Acknowledgement Form is given to the person or family when there is no Mass Card or Enrollment to give. It simply acknowledges that your gift to the person is a monetary donation in their name when it is not a Mass card/enrollment. A courtesy copy can be sent to me, but it is not the same as and does not replace the Donation Report Form.

- The National M&C Officer sends out quarterly reports to all State M&C Officers (with a copy to the State Presidents). These are to be forwarded to all County and Divisions to be shared with their members who must check the reports for accuracy. If you are not receiving quarterly reports, please contact your State Officer to ensure she has your email address. If a donation is missing from the report, it could mean that the donation was not received in enough of time to be counted before the end of the quarter. If there still appears to be a missing donation, please immediately inform the National M&C Officer.

Hopefully, this information has been helpful in understanding the Office of Missions and Charities. One more thing, when it comes time for you to give up the office, (for that matter, any office) and move on, don't just pass everything to the new incoming officer, please spend time with her. Go over the forms—where to find them, how to complete them, where to send them. Remember, there was a time when you were also new.

Last but not least, there is no Year-End Report for Missions & Charities! Always keep in mind our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

Webmaster/Asst. Hibernian Digest Editor

by Sandi Riley Swift

This is a reminder that dates have changed to submit articles for the Digest. Articles and photos are to be submitted by the 1st of every EVEN month, December, February, April, June, August, October, December.

Please submit text in a Word format, Times New Roman 12 pt font. Photos are to be sent separate with a description. Please limit Division news submissions to 375 words or less. This will help us get more articles published.

All photos submitted must be CAMERA ready. Use a camera to take pictures, not cell phones, and to set the cameras on "FINE" and "LARGE." If your camera does not have such settings, your division, county or state president should appoint someone who has an adjustable camera to do the publicity. Pictures will be rejected for the Digest if they are not at least 1MB, or larger.

If you email articles please note "Digest" in the subject line, otherwise, by default, they will be added to the Website or Facebook Page only.

If you are on Facebook please "like" our page to see updates and what other division are sharing. We would like you to "subscribe" to our website to receive notification of updates or news. Our website is www.ladiesaoh.com

As we approach State Conventions, please let me know of new State Presidents so I can update the contact information on the website.

Update on the Nuns of the Battlefield Monument

March 8th is International Women's Day. This is the day we should honor all our members. At the beginning of each year, our members are busy with St. Brigid's Day activities, year end reports and planning for St. Patrick's Day. What a remarkable group of women that we call our Sisters.

Throughout our history, we have honored strong women. At the 1914 Convention, President Ellen Ryan Jolly proposed to the delegates that our Order should sponsor a Monument to honor the Sisters who served as Nurses during the American Civil War. Our Order approved this proposal. Over a ten year period, Ellen Ryan Jolly chaired the Nuns of the Battlefield Committee to fund and obtain a location for the monument. The monument was dedicated on September 20, 1924. The story of this remarkable achievement of our Order needs to be shared.

The monument is in need of some care such as cleaning. The LAOH of DC contacted the Park Service in regards to the monument. In December, the Park Service cleaned and renewed the bronze with a protective wax treatment. Next repairs will be done to the stones in the plaza and repaint the steps. The Park Service is researching options for the rehabilitation of the bench.

A special thank you to Maria Humphries, and Gail Dapolito for their dedication to this project. The LAOH of DC host a Mass annually to honor the Nuns of the Battlefield. The Mass will be held on Sunday, May 7 at 11:30am at St. Matthew's Cathedral 1725 Rhode Island Ave., Washington DC. If you are in the area, please attend this important event.

For some wonderful pictures please see our Facebook page Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians.



New York



Divisions 1 and 3 St. Brigid-St. Maura from Orange County, NY. Celebrating the Feast of St. Brigid at Sacred Heart Church in Monroe, NY.

Montana

It has been a special time for the AOH in Montana. Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, Anne Anderson, and Consul General Philip Grant made an official visit. The University of Montana Irish Studies Program hosted the American Conference of Irish Studies and the Ambassador's visit coincided with the conference. Those who have been to Montana know that a visit is not complete without visiting Montana's Irish stronghold of Butte and Anaconda. The Ambassador also visited the capital, Helena, and the great statue of Thomas Francis Meagher.

The AOH and the LAOH in Butte, Anaconda and Helena gave the Ambassador and Consul General a great MONTANA welcome.

Meagher Division Charter Dinner in Helena By Division President Patrick E. Flaherty

Recently, the Thomas Francis Meagher Division in Helena, MT, held its Annual Charter Dinner. This year we were especially honored by the presence of the Ambassador from Ireland, Anne Anderson, and the Consul General of Ireland, Philip Grant. The attendance of these two luminaries really made our night a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Monsignor Kevin O'Neill, Mayor Jim Smith of Helena and Commissioner Mike Murray of Lewis and Clark County attended.

During this celebration of the history of our Division, we also presented the Archbishop Alexander J. Brunett Medal for Social Justice. The Brunett Medal is awarded to an individual who throughout his or her life has made extraordinary efforts to expand awareness of Social Justice issues and to improve the lives of others by changing our views of Social Justice in our society to the benefit of our fellow people. This year's awardee was Sister Mary Jo McDonald, of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, from Butte, Montana.

Sister Mary Jo was nominated by Ellen Tocher, President of the Montana LAOH. The nomination reads, in part, "She taught in many cities (Chicago, Kansas City and others), ending up in Butte and in 1983 began pastoral ministry at St. Ann's Parish. Eventually she assumed administrative duties there and spent prodigious amounts of time and service to the poor of the city. She worked on the Food Bank in its development, assisted on Our Lady of the Rockies Board, the Board of St. James Hospital and several committees of her religious community. In a passionate concern for Butte's deteriorating water system, she was a leader in the effort to secure funds from the Washington Corporation to improve the infrastructure. She also campaigned for environmental protection for the Butte area creeks and natural resources."

Ambassador Anderson and Consul General Grant participated in the ceremony awarding the medal to Sister Mary Jo. After the presentation, Anderson spoke not only about Sister's accomplishments, but about Ireland, Thomas Francis Meagher and Jeanette Rankin, the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. One of the interesting things about Ms. Rankin is that her election to the House occurred prior to women receiving the Right to Vote. The Ambassador spoke about her admiration for Ms. Rankin, Sister Mary Jo and how women and the Irish have had a leading place in the history of Montana and how we continue to make our presence felt throughout all of our communities.

The award and dinner was a success and was followed the next day by a meeting with members of the Montana State Government, including Lt. Governor Mike Cooney, Mayor Jim Smith of Helena and other leaders in business and government.



At the Helena AOH Charter Dinner, from left, Irish Consul General Philip Grant, Helena AOH Division President Patrick Flaherty, LAOH State President Sis Tocher, AOH State President Bob Mehrens, Ambassador Anderson, Past National Director Mike O'Connor.



Butte AOH President Joe Lee introduced Ambassador Anderson at the Butte Archives.

New York

A Christmas Installation in the Bronx

The AOH Bronx County Boards of Division 5-Woodlawn and Division 7 held their installation of officers and Christmas party on December 14 at the American Legion-Charles Bajart on McLean Avenue in Yonkers, NY. *Photos by Nuala Purcell.*



AOH Bronx County President Bob Nolan installed the newly elected officers of Division 5 and 7.



Father Brian McCarthy (chaplain) and Hugh McMorrow (Division 5) who celebrated his 80th birthday on the night.



Tommy Beirne (president, AOH-NY County), John Manning (treasurer, National AOH), Father Brian McCarthy (chaplain), Tim O'Donoghue (president, AOH Bronx Division 7), Bob Nolan (president, AOH Bronx County Board), Martin Galvin (president, AOH Woodlawn Division 5), and Dan Dennehy (National Director).

HIBERNIANS MARCH
continued from page 1

core tenants of the ministry of Christ and sets the standard for all Christians. We have all fallen short of this message. Thankfully we have a forgiving Lord who gently reminds us that it is never too late to change both ourselves and the world.

Hibernians across the nation have a chance to change the tenor and direction of the pro-life movement. We can be so much more than anti-abortion, but often feel outnumbered and ostracized for trying to push the conversation beyond that one issue. At moments like this we should aspire to be more like Henry Hyde, moving the goalposts a little closer to our eventual goal. With the President and Congress proclaiming support for a pro-life agenda, there are several policies that, if enacted, would help expectant and adoptive parents choose life. The policies below are not Republican or Democrat, male or female; they can be supported by pro-life and pro-choice individuals. All Hibernians should push their elected representatives to support them, making the decision to choose life easier for all. In the coming months I hope to highlight each of these issues on the Digest website with an in-depth look at their life-affirming effects.

Paid Parental-Medical Leave – Currently most medical leave across the U.S. (except CA/NJ/RI) is determined by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows unpaid leave for qualifying employees. Employees of businesses with fewer than 50 employees, hires with less than a year of service and part-time employees are not covered. Of the 21 highest-income countries, only the U.S. does not provide paid medical leave. Enactment of a national policy would help expectant and adoptive parents choose life, while allowing families to care for sick loved ones at the end of life.

Paid Sick Leave – Also known as paid time off (PTO), this policy would provide employees paid leave to care for personal and family illness. Similar to parental leave, PTO is not currently mandated on a federal level, causing many low income families to choose between employment and the welfare of children or the elderly.

Childcare & Educational Tax Credits – Keyword being credits, which, unlike a deduction, count dollar-for-dollar against your tax liability. Increased credits for childcare and education allow parents to have children without the worry that they'll have to choose between family obligations and professional pursuits. This is especially important to single parent and two-income households, where daily adult supervision of children is untenable.

The Tale of Two Wolves

It is well past time we stop labelling or trying to co-opt good policies, and in so doing create opposition. What does it matter if medical leave is labelled a “feminist” issue by some, if it helps expectant parents choose life? Just because one party or the other champion an issue, should that mean others oppose a potentially beneficial policy?

Let me leave you with the “Tale of Two Wolves” to help highlight the decision we must make each day as Catholic Americans. A grandfather is talking with his grandson and says there are two wolves inside of us, always at war with each other. One of them is a good wolf, which represents qualities like kindness, bravery and love. The other is a bad wolf, which represents flaws like greed, hatred and fear. The grandson stops and thinks about this internal dilemma for a moment, then looks up at his grandfather and asks, “Grandfather, which one wins?” The grandfather quietly replies, “The one you feed.”

Let us remember to feed the good wolf every day of our lives.

Photos by Digest Editor John O’Connell



A Mass for Life began the day for Hibernians who came from around the country to join the march.



Hibernians for Life.



Hibernians gathered the night before the March for Life to hear a talk by Fr. Gary Donegan, far left, front, of Ardoyne.



New York County President Thomas Beirne, left, State Chaplain Fr. Henry Reid, and State Organizer Keith Reynolds were among the New York State Hibernians who attended the mass, the breakfast and the March for Life.



The Mass was well attended by AOH and LAOH members.



Members of the National Board attended the Breakfast at the Irish Channel after mass.