

President's Pint of View



Trying very hard to get this month's blather off to our honorable Secretary before he heads "south of the border, down Mexico way." Be sure to think of him suffering on the beach while you shovel your driveway on a below-zero Iowa morning, as I am certain he will be thinking of us. Right...

Hard to believe that we have begun a new year and 2014 is but a memory. Or perhaps a blur. No time to rest, however.

As of today, there are only 72 shopping days until St. Patrick's Day and plenty of preparations to be done. Interim Parade Co-chairmen T-Bone and Schuck would certainly appreciate getting some parade volunteers lined up early, so get in touch with them if interested. Guaranteed to be another memorable celebration. Or again, perhaps a blur.

Plenty to do before then, though. Thanks to our friends at the Celtic Music Association there are three excellent shows on tap for the 2015 season, kicking off with the April Verch Bigger Band on January 17. Great opportunity to see world class musicians, have a great time, and support the CMA. Life is good.

Athbhliain faoi mhaise dhaoibh!

President Bob O'Hern

Wearin' of the Grin

An elderly couple had just learned how to send text messages on their mobile phones. The wife was a romantic type and the husband was more of a no-nonsense guy.

One afternoon the wife went out to meet a friend for coffee. She decided to send her husband a romantic text message and she wrote: "If you are sleeping, send me your dreams. If you are laughing, send me your smile. If you are eating, send me a bite. If you are drinking, send me a sip. If you are crying, send me your tears. I love you."

The husband texted back to her:
"I'm on the toilet. Please advise."



The lawyer says to the wealthy art collector tycoon,
"I have some good news and I have some bad news."
The tycoon says, "It's an awful day; give me the good news first."
The lawyer says, "Your wife invested \$5,000 in two pictures today that she figures are worth a minimum of \$2 million."
The thrilled tycoon says, "Well done, very good news, indeed!
You've just made my day; now what's the bad news?"
The lawyer answers, "The pictures are of you and your secretary at a hotel last night."



Thoughts on Aging

Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes and come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller!



The Blarney

Upcoming:

Monthly Meeting
January 12

Menu:
Cavatelli & Salad
Bread & Butter

Next Meeting
Feb. 9
**FSOSP Hole at First Tee's
Skywalk Golf Classic**
Feb. 28



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JANUARY [EANÁIR] 2015

We don't need no stinkin' latibulizin'

New Year's Eve, where 'auld acquaintance be forgot!' Unless, of course, those tests come back positive," Jay Leno once said.

Well, regrets or not, 2014 is gone, the new year is upon us and there's no time to waste. To "latibulize" is "to retire into a den, burrow, or cavity; lie dormant in winter; to retreat and lie hidden"...but we'll have none of that!

We may burrow into the friendly confines of Cooney's or Sully's on occasion, but the Sons are sure to be whacking 2015 with a shillelagh spirit to be reckoned with.

COUNTDOWN TO ST. PAT'S

Yes, the news is true, there will be a parade this year!

Our Interim Parade Co-chairs Tim Schuck and T-Bone are looking for volunteers to help with that upcoming March 17 event and you can sign up at the January or February meetings.

Mike O'Connell has ordered new vests for all those who will work the parade in an official capacity. Still no word from legal on getting the proposed "lucky" tasers.

The board is dealing with all the background mucky-muck like contracts and city meetings, but some major decisions have to be made and you are welcome to participate.

If you have a nomination for a member deserving of **Irishman of the Year**, let's have it, lads. Also, a decision is pending on who should be our **Grand Marshal**, so wrinkle your brow and send someone in the list at left a suggestion.

Queen candidates will be interviewed on March 5 and you may know of a young lass who would qualify. Recent queens have been impeccable and you surely know that Queen Connie has raised the bar, but, nevertheless, look around and help us find a worthy successor. Qualifications are listed on the Sons' website.

LUCKY DRAW TICKETS

One of the primary missions of the Friendly Sons is to provide charity support to the deserving and over \$13,000 was distributed in 2014.

One and all, you deserve a hand for the efforts given to make that happen.

But we don't want to stop now and all rests on your willingness to help with our biggest fund source, the Luck Draw raffle ticket sales held for events throughout the year.

So this is the big "ask"... at the next meeting, pick up a book or two to sell to friends and family. Many of you have access to friendly organizations and offices that will buy several, if you approach them. The Irish bars in town are always ready to support our efforts and can sell many to patrons. Inebriation is certainly a plus!

One hundred books of ten tickets each need to be spread among willing members and it all works if everyone just offers a little help, so step up, won't you? 🍀

Don't get any hi-falutin' grand ideas about yerself, Murph

Want to learn a little bit about yourselves? Here are the ten most-Irish surnames:



1. Murphy – The Sea Battlers

Wins the prize for most common and widespread name in Ireland, especially in County Cork. This surname, which means “sea battler,” translates to Gaelic as MacMurchadh (son of Murchadh) and O’Murchadh (descendent of Murchadh), a derivation of the first name of Murchadh or Murragh. O’Murchadh families lived in Wexford, Roscommon and Cork, with the MacMurchadhs of the Sligo and Tyrone area responsible for most of the Murphys in Ulster. The name was first anglicized to MacMurphy, then to Murphy in the early 19th century.

2. Kelly – The Bright-Headed Ones

The Kellys are all over Ireland; the name originates from around 10 unrelated ancient clans or septs. These include O’Kelly septs from Meath, Derry, Antrim, Laois, Sligo, Wicklow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Galway and Roscommon. O’Kelly comes from the Gaelic O Ceallaigh, meaning “descended from Ceallach,” an Irish chieftan. “Ceallach” means war or contention. An ancient first name no longer used that way in Ireland, it’s a popular first name for U.S. women.

3. O’Sullivan – The Hawkeyed Ones

The O’Sullivans or Sullivans are one of the most populous of the Munster families. In Irish, O’Sullivan is O’Suilleabhin, and there is no doubt that origin of the name comes from the word súl (eye), though whether it is to be taken as “one-eyed” or “hawkeyed” is in dispute among scholars. Originally lords of the territory around Cahir, County Tipperary, in the 12th century, they migrated to what is now west Cork and south Kerry, and are still very prominent.

4. Walsh – The Welshmen

The name Walsh is one of the most common of the Norman associated names found in Ireland. It seems to have been the name used by the many different groups of Welsh people who arrived in Ireland with the Normans during the 12th century. The name comes from Welsh, which simply means Welshman, and its early Norman form was “Le Waleys,” but this became gradually anglicized to Walsh.

5. O’Brien – The Noblemen

Also spelled O’Bryan or O’Brian, the name translates to Ó Briain in Gaelic, which means “of Brian.” The name indicates descentance from Brian Boru, the celebrated High King of Ireland. This gives O’Briens leave to call themselves “high” and “noble.” Most O’Briens can be found in counties Clare, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford.

6. Byrne – The Ravens

Common in counties Wicklow and Dublin, Byrne, originally O’Byrne, comes from the Gaelic O’Broin meaning “descended from Bran,” an 11th century King of Leinster. O’Byrnes were chieftains of what is now County Kildare until the Norman invasion when they were driven from their lands and fled into the mountains of County Wicklow.

7. Ryan – The Little Kings

The meaning of the Irish name Ryan comes from the old Gaelic word “righ” and the old Irish diminutive of “an,” which together form the meaning of “little king.” It comes from the Irish name O’ Riain - a contraction of the older Irish form O’Mulriain. The Ryan family motto is ‘Malo More Quam Foedari’, which, when translated, means “I would Rather Die than be Disgraced.”

8. O’Connor – Patrons of Warriors

The name arose in five areas of Ireland: Connacht, Kerry, Derry, Offaly and Clare and split into six distinct septs. The most prominent is that of the Connacht O’Connors who gave us the last two High-Kings of Ireland: Turlough O’Connor (1088-1156) and Roderick O’Connor (1116-1198). They trace their heritage and name from the Irish “Ua Conchobhair,” meaning from Conchobhar, a king of Connacht.

9. O’Neill – From Niall of the Nine Hostages

Can be traced back to 360 A.D. to the legendary warrior king of Ireland, Niall of the Nine Hostages, who is said to have been responsible for bringing St. Patrick to Ireland. Niall is also said to have been incredibly fertile – he has 3 million descendants worldwide. “O’Neill” is derived from two separate Gaelic words, “Ua Niall,” which means grandson of Niall, and “Neill” meaning “champion.” Ireland’s O’Neills were known by the nickname “Creagh,” which comes from the Gaelic word “craobh” meaning branch, because they were known to camouflage themselves to resemble the forest when fighting the Norsemen.

10. O’Reilly – Descendants of Raghairlach

This family name is derived from the Gaelic “O’Raghairlach,” meaning descendants of Raghairlach. The O’Reillys were the most powerful sept of the old Gaelic kingdom of Breffny (Cavan and the surrounding counties), and the family is still prominent in the area. Reilly, often spelled Riley, has become a trendy given name in the U.S., for both baby boys and girls. 🍀

Board News

All are encouraged to start the year out right: “Resolved, I will renew my FSOSP membership in a timely manner.” And this resolution is not nearly as hopeless as your new commitment to the fitness center.

Dues are still only \$40 and the meeting next week would be a grand time to take care of that with cash or a check. See Tim Schuck at the front table (*where you can also sign up to volunteer at the parade and get Lucky Draw raffle books to sell!*)

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The Sons have again sponsored a hole next month at the **Skywalk Golf Classic in Capital Square**. This will be the 30th anniversary for the event.

Our donation helps to fund the First Tee of Greater DM, whose mission is to provide educational programs promoting character development.

We will market ourselves at this Feb. 28 miniature golf outing in the skywalk system. The O’Donnell family will provide an Irish-themed mini-golf hole once again and will, no doubt, be looking for volunteers to help. Listen up and sign up at the January meeting.

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The **Christmas dinner** was a rousing success with almost 90 in attendance and next year is already contracted.

Son Bob Conley donates the use of the Holiday Inn Downtown to us, in exchange for the take at the bar, which was just short of \$1,000. Well-played, Bob.

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All **current board members** (*see front page box*) have agreed to “re-up” in service to the FSOSP. Nominations and election of officers will soon take place, effective in March.

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We have also “re-upped” with the Marriott to again host our **post-parade reception on St. Pat’s Day**. Catering manager Maureen Geis will ensure much the same arrangements as last year.

The hotel will provide us with 10 rooms at a cost of \$111, available to members. Call the hotel to book yours, if desired.

Also, a breakfast will once again be held in the “Windows on 7th” room from 8-9 a.m. that morning. Per tradition, our Grand Marshal, Queen and Irishman of the Year will be on hand and feted there.

The required meeting for all parade applicants will again be part of the plan. Three possible times will be offered, probably at the Marriott, where rules and expectations for behavior will be stressed. Dates will be announced in the next Blarney.

BLARNEY BITS

Mentor Iowa’s “Adopt-a-Family” program was again on our agenda last month. Jim and Terrie O’Donnell played Santa to five deserving children: Tony (12), Brianna (8), Caelin (5), Camryn (4) and Kenzleigh (on the way).

Jim claims he was only the chauffeur for his “shopping pro” wife, but the two cannily spent \$475 (which we’re sure got twice the value) for needed clothing and toys for the family.

Kudos to the O’Donnells and their “gung-ho-ho-ho” efforts! 🍀

Holy Family Catholic School received a \$1,000 donation from the FSOSP a month ago and Principal Martin Flaherty sends his thanks.

“Thank you again for your kindness and support. I hope it was a blessed Advent for all,” he said. 🍀



**Bill McCarthy,
Fr. Jim Kiernan
&
Students**

Sully’s dealin’ from the top

A Texas Hold’em Poker Tourney will be held on Jan. 24 in the afternoon. You only need pay an entry fee of \$10 at the bar.

Get there early, though, for a Hawkeyes I-Club Game Watch for the match against Purdue at 11 a.m. Food, contests and prizes will be offered. 🍀

Upcoming events

JAN. 17

*CMA PRESENTS THE APRIL VERCH BIGGER BAND
@ HOLY TRINITY HALL - 8 P.M.*

JAN. 21

STU RYAN O’BRIEN SINGALONG @ SULLY’S, 7 P.M.

JAN. 24

SULLY’S HAWKEYE I-CLUB GAME WATCH, 11 A.M.

FEB. 28

SKYWALK GOLF CLASSIC @ CAPITAL SQUARE