

Well, another month has come and went. These days it seems the months are getting shorter as our schedules fill up with to-do's and warmer weather events to attend.

Speaking of which, we have our annual Irish Open disc golf event this month, an event that was the brainchild of Grady and O'Connell a few years back. The event was small back then and we didn't know how it would fare, but we gave it a shot and now it is a permanent part of our fundraising efforts.

We are always looking for new ideas for fundraising and community service, so if you see a need, or have an idea, no matter how off-the-wall you might think it is, share it. Who knows how far it can go, or how it might benefit the club. This includes our current events. If you see a way to improve them, let us know, or better yet, get involved with the event committee.

My goal is to increase our sponsorships and donations. How? I am not sure yet, but I know with your help we can do it. Let's see what this group can do! I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Stay classy, Sons.

President Tim Schuck

Wearin' of the Grin

"So how's everything going?" the doctor asks his patient, George. "Great," says George. "I've found religion. God knows I have poor eyesight so he's fixed it so that when I get up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom – poof! – the light goes on, and then – poof! – the light goes off when I'm done."

Later in the day, the doctor calls George's wife. "I'm in awe of George's relationship with God," he says. "Is it true that he gets up during the night and – poof! – the light goes on in the bathroom, and then – poof! – the light goes off?"

George's wife sighs. "No," she says. "It means he's peeing in the refrigerator again."



Beware of your teetotaler friends:

In a number of controlled trials, scientists have demonstrated that if we drink one litre of water each day, at the end of the year we would have absorbed more than one kilo of E. coli bacteria found in feces. In other words we are consuming one kilo of poop.

However, we do not run that risk when drinking beer, whiskey, or wine because alcohol has to go through a purification process of boiling, filtering and/or fermenting. So remember: water=poop, Beer, whiskey, etc.=health. Therefore, it's better to drink beer and talk stupid than to drink water and be full of shit.



The Blarney

Upcoming:

Monthly Meeting
May 8, 6:30 p.m.

Menu:
Steak & Baked Potato

Irish Disc Golf Open
May 13

Leprechaun Open
June 17

Next Meeting
June 12

24th O'Donnell & Friends Open
June 23



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MAY [BEALTAINE] 2017

Range of 'uisce beatha' distilled here for you

When St. Patrick's Day came this March the thoughts of beverage writers across the land turned to Irish whiskey, or "uisce beatha" (water of life). But for American spirits drinkers, Irish whiskey is clearly no longer a once-a-year fling. Enjoy this piece from the *New York Times* written by Eric Asimov about his recent tasting panel experience:

"Irish whiskey has been the fastest-growing spirit in the country, with sales soaring over the last 15 years. Consider that in 2002, just 434,000 cases were sold in the United States, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a trade group.

"By 2016, that number had reached more than 3.8 million cases, growing by almost 19 percent in that year alone, an astounding growth rate that was nearly three times that of the next highest category, American whiskey, at 6.8 percent, according to the council.

"I have to admit that the spirits panel may not have been paying close enough attention to this surge. It's been more than 10 years since we last tasted Irish whiskeys, and though many of the whiskeys available now are familiar names, the selection has expanded greatly.

"Thus it was that the spirits panel assembled recently to sample 20 whiskeys from Ireland. I was joined by two drinks writers, David Wondrich and Robert Simonson. Florence Fabricant was traveling and could not be with us.

"What makes whiskey Irish? Simply that it must be distilled on the island of Ireland, including Northern Ireland. Otherwise, it can be a lot of things.

"Some Irish whiskeys are a blend of grains, and some are entirely barley. Some are a blend of malted and unmalted grains, but more and more are single malts, made only from malted barley.

"Some are the products of a single pot still, the ancient, distinctively rounded vessel for distillation that produces the most flavorful whiskeys. Others are made in the more efficient column still, and some are blends of both. Some whiskeys are triple distilled, but not all.

"Despite the surge, Irish whiskey is far from the top-selling spirit. The 3.82 million cases sold in 2016 were well below the 21.75 million cases of American whiskey sold, to say nothing of the 17.14 million cases of Canadian or the 7.41 million cases of blended Scotch, according to the council. Surprisingly, last year, Irish whiskey outsold single-malt Scotch, which was at 2.14 million cases.

"No matter how robust whiskey sales may seem, they are dwarfed by those for vodka, America's most popular spirit: close to 70 million cases in 2016, more than all categories of whiskey combined.

"Judging by Irish whiskey's inroads in the United States, it may not be surprising that the whiskey business has changed enormously inside Ireland since our last tasting

Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick
The Mickie Center #241
1620 Pleasant
Des Moines, IA 50314



in 2006. Back then, only three distilleries were operating on the island, which accounted for all of the available brands. Now, more than a dozen distilleries are making whiskey, and at least 12 more are in the planning stages.

“As it is, most of these newer distilleries are so young that they haven’t issued any whiskey commercially yet. So a good deal of further growth is coming.

“David and Robert both agreed that the revival of the pot still, which in the mid-20th century had largely given way to the column still (used mostly for clear spirits like vodka), had played an important role in elevating Irish whiskey. Where once purists had to search long and hard for a traditional single pot still Irish whiskey, now examples abound, including at least three among our top 10.

“To complicate matters further, single malts are also pot still whiskeys. ‘Single pot still’ refers to whiskeys that are a blend of malted and unmalted grain, hence not single malts.

“Not to worry. The pleasure is in the drinking, not the recitation of facts. Our tasting showed many excellent, distinctive whiskeys, ranging from young and fresh to deep and complex, with most showing a sense of purity and freshness.

“David felt the best ones had a subtlety that is rare in Scotch whisky and almost nonexistent in American. In nearly all the bottles, he said, he found depth, elegance and clarity.

“Robert agreed that even with all the expansion, it’s all identifiable as Irish whiskey, fruity and lighter in body.

“The 20 bottles in our blind tasting ranged in price from \$23 to \$95 (we limit ourselves to bottles under \$100), and we apparently preferred the more expensive bottles, which tended to have more age. Even so, we found worthy entry-level whiskeys, like Kilbeggan for \$30 and Clontarf for \$23. They are young, but don’t ignore these good values even if they couldn’t crack our top 10.

“Our favorite was a new brand, Barr an Uisce (pronounced bahr-an-ISH-kah). The single malt 1803, aged 10 years, was wonderfully complex and smooth, with flavors of fruits, caramels, spices and oak. Like many new Irish whiskeys, it is currently made under contract with an existing distillery, West Cork, until its distillery is built.


“Next were a couple of old favorites, the Knappogue Castle single malt 12 years old, classic and complex with flavors of butterscotch and heather, and the 12-year-old single pot still Redbreast, a once rare but now widely available whiskey that was pure, smooth, fresh and delightful. At \$57, the Redbreast was our best value, although it’s still pretty expensive.

“The last in the top echelon was the Irishman Single Malt, minimally aged but lovely in its floral, mossy freshness.

“At No. 5 was a rich, round and complex 10-year single malt from Lord Lieutenant Kinahan’s. The No. 6 was the 12-year Yellow Spot, a single pot still whiskey that was our most expensive bottle at \$95 but showed layers of flavors. Its sibling, the No. 8 Green Spot, is a slightly younger single pot still whiskey, and the difference was apparent. Where the Yellow Spot showed flavors of fruits, nuts and caramel, the Green Spot was grassy and fresh.

“In between the two Spots was the distinctive Connemara peated single malt, the rare Irish whiskey in which the grain is dried over a peat fire as is traditional with so many single malt Scotches, giving it an almost Islay-like smokiness, although its gently floral undertones identify it as an Irish whiskey.

“Don’t disregard the last two on our list, the subtle Bushmills, a 10-year-old single malt, and the fresh and floral Donegal, just \$34 for this minimally aged whiskey.

“Only three distilleries were operating on Ireland in 2006, which accounted for all of the available brands. Now, more than a dozen distilleries are making whiskey. It is hard not to be excited about what comes next.” 

<i>Panel Results (East Coast prices)</i>	
1. BARR AN UISCE IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE MALT 1803	10 YEARS 92 Proof, \$85
2. KNAPPOGUE CASTLE IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE MALT	12 YEARS 80 Proof, \$58
3. REDBREAST IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE POT STILL	12 YEARS 80 Proof, \$57
4. THE IRISHMAN IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE MALT	80 Proof, \$53
5. LORD LT. KINAHAN’S IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE MALT	10 YEARS 92 Proof, \$59
6. YELLOW SPOT IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE POT STILL	12 YEARS 92 Proof, \$95
7. CONNEMARA IRISH WHISKEY PEATED SINGLE MALT	80 Proof, \$45
8. GREEN SPOT IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE POT STILL	80 Proof, \$60
9. BUSHMILLS IRISH WHISKEY SINGLE MALT	10 YEARS 80 Proof, \$53
10. DONEGAL IRISH WHISKEY	80 Proof, \$34

Board News

First some good news: the **NCAA Tournament** is honoring Des Moines with a return visit in 2019. And some bad news: the NCAA Tournament is honoring Des Moines with a return visit in 2019.

Our parade that year will be on a Saturday, since we don’t target any St. Pat’s that falls on a Sunday, as it does then. But our noon-ish disruption may be no problem.

It’s possible more parade scheduling conflicts with the city may lie ahead. Who knows? Film at eleven.

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The **7th Annual Irish Open Disc Golf** outing is **Sat., May 13** at Grandview Park’s disc course.

Registration begins at 10 a.m. and a \$25 entry fee includes a high-quality souvenir disc. Top prizes are \$200, \$50 and \$25.

For more info, or, better yet, to volunteer to help, contact **Mike O’Connell** (277-0018) or **Jerry Grady** (554-3006).

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The search to “repeal and replace” **Bill McCarthy’s** always excellent, but seemingly endless, monthly chef duties is still on.

Come on, guys. Get a friend or two and consider volunteering to handle one month’s dinner, won’tcha?

Mike Murphy, Bree Young and some friends will handle this month’s steak feast. On a related note...

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...polite requests for help in cleaning up the room and washing some dishes after the meal have had little effect.

The board kindly urges you to show a little club spirit and volunteer to jump on this once in a while. Otherwise, the probable sad result will be ditching our wonderful meals...no cleanee, no eatee.

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Four **new walnut plaque boards** have been ordered from Mallard/Russell Trophies.

Two will be used to add names of past presidents and Irishmen of the Year and two will contain the names of former queens.

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Just “tossing” this out there: The board is considering a charity **Bean-Bag Tourney** to hold about the time of the Halfway to St. Pat’s bike ride. We could have 20-30 competing teams. Got any ideas for us?

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Donations approved:
\$50 to the memory of Frank Carroll’s mother;
\$1500 to the Art of Compassion foundation (*see right*).


BLARNEY BITS

Art of Compassion is a foundation raising funds to support the fifty-plus programs offered to Iowa’s most vulnerable individuals and families, the patients and clients of **HCI Hospice Care Services, Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa** and **Amanda the Panda Family Grief Center**.


Compassion - “concern for the sufferings and misfortunes of others” - is the core mission of these long-time Iowa services.

Their services impact the lives of 130,000 Iowans through programs in four priority areas: innovating aging, emotional well-being, family empowerment and community and family advocacy.

A signature, celebratory event for this charitable body will be held on **Thurs., Oct. 12 at the Capital Square Atrium** in downtown DM. That evening a program, dinner, silent and live auction, and sponsorship recognition will be held.

That evening the FSOSP will be proudly acknowledged as a Premier Sponsor. 

Attention long-time patrons at **Sully’s Pub** in WDM: The move to new digs is officially on for **July 1**. But not far, just a couple hundred feet east to 1st St., just south of the Grand Ave. intersection.

And mark your calendars for the **official Grand Re-opening on July 22**, coupled with the pub’s **40th Anniversary Party**. Get your ya-yas out! 

Upcoming events

MAY 6

KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY
SULLY’S PUB, 2 P.M.-MIDNIGHT

MAY 13

IRISH OPEN DISC GOLF TOURNEY
GRANDVIEW PARK, DM
\$25 / REGISTRATION @ 10 A.M.

MAY 17

STU RYAN O’BRIEN SING-ALONG
SULLY’S PUB, 7-9 P.M.

JUNE 7

TRIVIA NIGHT
SULLY’S PUB, 7-10 P.M.

JUNE 17

ANNUAL LEPRECHAUN OPEN GOLF OUTING
COPPER CREEK GOLF IN PLEASANT HILL
\$65 / SHOTGUN START @ 1 P.M.