



Irish American Society of County Will

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Society Honors Three

The Irish American Society of County Will has selected three people to receive the Citizen of the Year award at the Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner. Fr Jim Lennon, Dave Harris-John and Coley O'Connell were selected to receive this award for their outstanding service to the community. The Awards Dinner was held September 20 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Joliet. The award is presented to those individuals, nominated by the membership, who have either conspicuously served the community or furthered Irish-American Culture in Will County.

Fr. Jim Lennon

Father James M. Lennon has just celebrated 50 years as a priest and has served the people of this area in many ways. He was born in Boston and came to Joliet at a very young age. He attended St. Raymond's Grade School and Joliet Township High School. After seminary training he was ordained on June 7, 1958.

He served at Holy Trinity Parish in Westmont from 1958 to 1962 and at Assumption in Coal City from 1962 to 1965. In September of 1965 he joined the faculty of the Diocesan Seminary, St. Charles Borromeo, where he served until 1971.

Returning to parish work, Father Jim was the pastor at St.

James in Glen Ellyn from 1971-1978, SS Peter and Paul in Naperville from 1978-1990, St. Mary in Mokena from 1990-1995, and, until his

retirement in 2006, at St. Patrick in Joliet. He led a pilgrimage to Ireland in 1999 with many of his St. Patrick parishioners and friends. After retirement he then served the people at St. Paul in Peotone for a year after their pastor died. He currently resides in Joliet and assists at several parishes in Joliet and Crest Hill.

Father Jim is much in demand as a retreat master and travels during the year to speak to various religious orders. He has faithfully devoted himself to his chosen vocation and is a source of inspiration as well as consolation for many people.

He recently agreed to serve as the Chaplain for the Irish American Society of County Will. Father Jim is proud of his Irish heritage which he traces to his grandparents from County Galway.



David Harris-John

Although not his fault, David Harris-John was born in London. He moved back to Wales when he was six, growing up in Swansea. Coach started playing rugby at 11 years of age, playing for the Morriston Rugby Youth team, and the Dynevor Grammar School. While attending Leicester University, he played for the University Rugby team, and then earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology. His first job, field biologist for Rentokil, took him to Belfast and Dublin, playing for the Liverpool's Waterloo Rugby Club.

Work took him to the United States, and in New York, he played and captained the New York Rugby Club. Moving to Chicago, again for work, he played for the Chicago Condors in their early years, while moving up the corporate ladder at Smithereens. Over the years, the sport of rugby, extremely popular in his native country, has grown worldwide. Dave's early association with the Shamrocks happened quite by accident. He stopped off for a pint after work at Brophy's Pub. The rest is history. Having played it as a teen, Coach has picked up many valuable skills enabling him to become a master of his favorite sport. He served as their first coach, from 1997 through 2005, when he retired. The dedication to the Shamrocks, and his love of the sport has earned him the honor of being named a "Citizen of the Year" by the IASCW.

Professionally, Coach Dave has worked for the Smithereens Pest Management Company for twenty-two years, and is currently Vice President. In that capacity, he has served on the board of directors of the Illinois Pest Control Association, and served as its president in 2001.

(Continued on P2)



Coley O'Connell

Coley Michael O'Connell was born to Mike and Tina (Jochen) on July 4th, 1971 in Joliet. Coley's grandfather, Dale O'Connell Sr., was a P.E. teacher at Joliet East High School, and over twenty of his children and Grandchildren have followed his footsteps into the noble profession of teaching. Coley went to Elwood Grade School and Joliet Central High School and graduated from Illinois State University in 1997 with a degree in Special Education, playing rugby and coaching football and basketball. In his ten years on the faculty at Lincoln-Way High School, he has worn many hats, teaching at both the Central and East campuses in the Special Services department. After school, he has coached soccer and bowling and volunteered his time and talent to *Snowball, the Student Assistance Program and Student Intervention Team*.

To spread the word about rugby, he spearheaded the effort to create the Lincoln-Way Area Rugby Club with fellow ruggers Ryan Gabey and Tim Daly in 2002. Since then, the club has had over 300 students on its roster, including over 50 who have gone on to play in college and hold leadership positions within their own clubs. The Lincoln-Way Area Rugby Club girls' program has won five State Championships and the boys' program has finished within the top four teams in the state five times.

In addition to helping youth get involved with rugby, Coley has spent the last several years as a Career Specialist in the Jobs for Illinois Graduates program. This state and federally funded program seeks to give vocational and educational guidance to "At Risk" students. This past summer, Coley was recognized by the national program, Jobs for America's Graduates, as one of twenty Outstanding Career Specialists in the country.

While building his professional career, Coley realized that he truly missed his collegiate rugby experience. (Continued on P3)

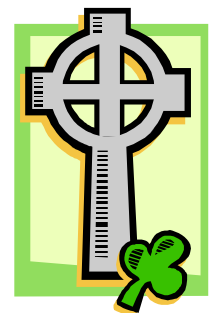


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Dates to Remember

- Sat Sept 20— Awards Dinner
- Mon Oct 20 - Board Meeting
- Sun Nov 2—Annual Meeting
- Mon Nov 20—Board Meeting
- March 6 & 7 2009 — Manhattan Irish Fest XV
- The monthly Board meetings are held at the Joliet Elks Lodge I-55 and Jefferson Sts—Joliet
- Consult CountyWillIrish.net for last minute details, changes and corrections





Society Picnic

The warm August sun shone on the Irish again for the Society's annual picnic, on the Twenty-fourth. Mic Brophy hosted the event at his home, a remodeled church near six corners. With ample parking and plenty of room, Irish Hospitality abounded and the food was plentiful. The White Sox winning helped add to the festivities, as did the Bean Bag Tournament and the great conversations.

A wide variety of members attended, from babies in arms, to many members of the Rugby club, to some silver haired senior members. Special thanks to Sean Mojzis for cooking the hamburgers and brats, and to Mic Brophy, again, for his wonderful hospitality.

Truly, a wonderful time was had by all. Although the date has not been set for 2009, anticipate marking your calendars so as not to miss this event!

Dues

November 1 marks the beginning of the Celtic New Year. It also marks the beginning of the IASCW's Dues year. A statement was mailed to all members in mid-September.

In case the reader forgets, Individual Dues are \$ 25.00 per year. A family membership is \$ 35.00. Interestingly, the Society has been charging these amounts since its founding in 1981. As a result, your membership dues buys more now than it did in the year of our founding.

The board has decided that we are carrying all too much "Dead Weight", and we will purge our mailing list of members whose dues have not been paid.

Pay your dues "on line" at www.CountyWillIrish.net/member.htm. There you will be directed to a secure site where you may enter your credit card information.

David Harris-John (from p1)

He co-founded the Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance in 2004, and currently serves as its treasurer. Since 2001, he has worked with the Chicago Public School System, educating their engineers in Safer methods of Pest Control. He has twice been a speaker at the nationally recognized Purdue Pest Control Conference and has assisted in the planning of their 71st conference in 2007.

Dave has coached the Manhattan Shamrocks for nine years, and has been Secretary of the Irish American Society of County Will 2003-2005. He was then elected to the board of Directors of the Society in 2007. His term runs until next year's elections.

He currently resides in Plainfield, with his wife Pat. He has two Children, Alun and Nia; two stepsons, Michael and David; and four grandchildren, Nicholas, Joey Matthew and Kayla. Besides work and rugby, he enjoys the grand children and occasionally doing a wee bit of travel.

Involvement

Have a little extra time?

Feel the need to give back a little?

Want to meet new friends?

Why not consider getting involved in the various activities that the Society offers its membership? Do not worry, you will not chair an event. Your membership is what you make it.

You could attend a board meeting and offer some fresh ideas for activities. You could volunteer to help with one of our events. If you have a particular talent, offer it to the Society.

There is a wide variety of things you could do. For example, you could volunteer to sit on the Scholarship committee. It meets once a year in January, and selects our representative to the Irish Way program in Ireland. You could offer to help at Manhattan Irish Fest. This tremendous event is now in its fifteenth year, and is planning an Irish Cultural Tent, with vendors, exhibits and activities.

Looking for a simpler commitment, you could volunteer to help decorate the K of C hall prior to the Awards Dinner. It takes a couple of hours. Why not help?

The board of directors meets on the Third Monday of the month at the Elks hall at I-55 and Jefferson St. in Joliet, at 7:00pm.

Irish Night with Jammer



Silver Cross Field was green on July 17. A great crowd of Irish waited in anticipation for our own Brendan Loughery to open the game with both the Irish National Anthem and the Star Spangled Banner. Even Jammer augmented his wardrobe to be Irish for a day.

2007-2008

Officers

President:
Sheila Corrigan
First Vice President:
Shaun Mojzis
Second Vice President
Coley O'Connell
Secretary
Vikki Loughrey
Treasurer
Michael Malloy

Board of Directors

Timothy M. Brophy, Chairman

2008 Tom Blackburn
Al Klausmeier

2009 Dan Maher
David Harris-John

2010 Jim Lawler
Bill Boyle

New Member Director
Jim Curran

Historian:
Col. Wm. Ferguson

Rugby Club Representative:
Ryan Stoddard

Membership:
Michael J. McHugh

Honors and Degrees
James W. Lawler

Elections

According to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Irish American Society of County Will, the election committee has proposed the following names for election at the annual meeting. The President, Sheila Corrigan will stand as President for another year:

First Vice President:
Shaun Mojzis

Second Vice President
Coley O'Connell

Secretary
Vikki Loughrey

Treasurer
Michael Malloy

Also, according to the Constitution and By-laws of the IASCW, two members in good standing will be elected to serve a two-year term on the board of directors. The following individuals have allowed their names to be placed in nomination, by the election committee, who will serve until the annual meeting in 2010:

Jack Schaller
Joanne Caveney

In addition, a director, elected from those new members who joined at or subsequent to the 2007 Annual Meeting shall also be elected.

Paul McGee

Annual Meeting

The Constitution of the IAS stipulates that the Society holds an annual meeting on the first Sunday of November, to coincide with the Celtic New Year. This year's meeting will be held at Charleston's in New Lenox beginning with Mass will be offered by Chaplain Fr Jim Lennon at 1:30, on November 2.

Charleston's is located at 2101 Calistoga Drive in New Lenox. Calistoga Drive off or Laraway Road, East of Cedar Road, across from the Metra Station in the Berkott's shopping center. Items on the Agenda include the election of officers and board, and a presentation by this year's Scholarship winner, Meghan McGuire. Please call or eMail Sheila Corrigan if you can attend. She can be reached at SheilaCorrigan@sbcglobal.net or 815.727.0990.

Coley O'Connell (from p.1)

In the fall of 1997, he helped found the Manhattan Shamrocks Rugby Club. They shortly formed a relationship with the IASCW to promote rugby and Irish heritage in the Joliet area. Through the years, Coley has served as president, match secretary and field chair for the Shamrocks. In addition to providing a service to his rugby community, Coley soon began involving himself with the Society. Coley has held the positions of board member, secretary, vice president, president and currently, second vice president.

Coley also was elected to the Manhattan Park Board in 2001. In 2002 he helped oversee Manhattan Irish Fest, and in 2005, saw an opportunity for the IASCW to run it. He served as the society's first chairman of the event. Since then, Coley, with many others continue to be involved in the fest, which has given over \$40,000 to the community. He looks forward to the 15th anniversary of Manhattan Irish Fest in March of 2009.

Coley currently resides in Elwood with Sarah, his wife of nine years and his four year old daughter Olivia Clare. He feels that it has been a blessing and a privilege to have had such supportive family and friends. Although many see Coley as a leader, he sees himself as someone who serves. It is his hope that will continue to serve his community for many, many years to come.

Scholarship Award

Called by many names over the years, our scholarship awards dinner was started in 1984, honoring Judge Charles Connor for his contributions as Mayor of Joliet and election to the Judicial Circuit.

Since its inception, the revenues generated by the dinner was earmarked to fund our scholarship program to the Irish Way, a program offered by the Irish American Cultural Institute, now located in Morristown, New Jersey.

In 1990, the board thought that it would be appropriate to honor a Public Servant for significant contributions to the Irish-American Issue. Hon. George Sangmeister was awarded this first honor, for his work on immigration reform.

For a complete list of awardees, check the Society's archives at: <http://www.countywillirish.net/archive.htm>. For more information on the Irish Way Program, see: <http://www.iaci-usa.org/irishway.html>. The Society will be contacting the High Schools in the county in January, seeking candidates for our Scholarship. The Student must be enrolled in high school for the 2008-9 year.

New Editors !

It is with a somewhat heavy heart that I formally announce that this will, hopefully, be the last issue of the IASCW newsletter that I edit. The time constraints of being Membership Secretary, Webmaster and Newsletter editor have been taxing, at times, to say the least.

This will not, however, be the last newsletter you receive. Erin Wright and Nicole Stephens will be taking over the mantle of editorship with the next issue. They are planning a different sort of publication, and anticipate publishing it more often ! I want to thank everyone for their encouragement and support.. **Go n-eiri an t-adh leat**, Good Luck to Nicki and Erin — Mike McHugh

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