

Our Mission

Cultural awareness and pride are prime objectives of our Society. This goal is realized through our Annual Awards Dinner and our Scholarship program.

At our awards dinner in March, the Society recognizes individuals whose Irish heritage has conspicuously been evident. Since the award's inception, the Society has recognized a bishop, a U.S. Congressman, two state senators, three mayors, firemen, police officers, teachers, nurses and other dedicated individuals.

The Society is most proud of its scholarship program. Each year, at least one high school student from the county is awarded a scholarship to study in Ireland with the Irish Way Program. This six week program, administered by the Irish American cultural Institute, includes studying at two Universities, with other students from the United States, and a week staying in the home of an Irish host family. To date, the Society has sent over 30 teenagers on this program.

Historically, the Irish American Society of County Will has been the largest continuous supporter of this program.

The Society also awards an open-ended adult scholarship for study in Ireland. This is awarded as qualified applicants appear.



Shannon McGrath, Chairman Dan Malloy and Brendan McHugh during Scholarship Awards Presentation

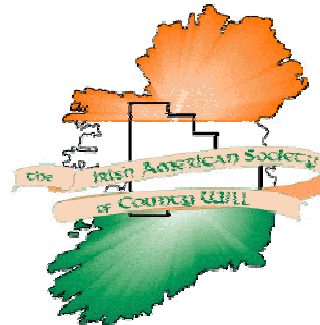


Our Shamrock Rugby Club plays in any weather

Membership

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Countywillirish.net

Irish American Society of County Will



Membership

countywillirish.net

Accomplishments

We Irish are proud of our heritage! It has been said that the Irish have fought against injustice longer than any other people. The Irish-American Society of County Will offers people of Irish ancestry and friends the opportunity to share laughter, fellowship, scholarship and a wee bit of blarney.

We have done much since our founding:

- ♣ "The Irish Hour" radio show
- ♣ Irish history Seminars
- ♣ Joliet Irish Festival
- ♣ Irish language classes
- ♣ Irish Music Concerts (Makem & Clancy, Paddy Noonan, Siamsa , Blarney ...)
- ♣ Encouraged Irish Step Dancing Schools
- ♣ Aided in obtaining passage of the Immigration Bill in Congress to aid the Irish.
- ♣ Supported the US Postal Service issue of an Irish Immigration Commemorative Stamp in 1999.
- ♣ Shamrock Rugby football team
- ♣ Sponsorship of the "Irish Way" scholarship program. In fact, the IAS-CW is the largest single contributor to this scholarship program through the Irish American Cultural Institute.
- ♣ Website for members and visitors alike, hosting thousands of visitors a month!
- ♣ Manhattan Irish Fest sponsor 1995-2004
- ♣ In 2005, we had the opportunity to become the Organizers of Manhattan Irish Fest see:
ManhattanIrishFest.com.



Traditions

The Irish American Society of County Will was founded February 10, 1982 in Joliet. In the years since its founding, we have done much to enhance Irish fellowship and service in the community. The purpose of the society is to promote Irish culture in America and to preserve Irish-American heritage. The Society is also dedicated to continuing education, friendship and understanding among the membership and the community.

Membership in the Society began with 13 original founders and has since expanded to nearly two hundred families and individual members.

Robert Emmet Brophy Jr, the first president of the Society and one of its founding members worked to attract men and women who would further the aims of the Society. Among the early members was Fr Kevin O'Neill Shanley, O.Carm., noted author and lecturer; Charles Connor, former mayor of Joliet; Sheila Corrigan, RN and Attorney-at-law and Bill Ferguson, noted raconteur and educator.

The Society has been given 501©(3) status as a not for profit organization by the IRS.

Benefits

As a member of the Irish American Society of County Will, you are entitled to all of the benefits and duties of membership. From our New Year's eve celebration (Samhain), held in November, to the annual picnic, we try to provide a variety of activities for everyone Irish.

- ♣ Bi-monthly newsletter
- ♣ Dues year begins November 1 (Irish New Year)
- ♣ Special discounts at Society Activities
- ♣ Monthly board meetings, where ideas, plans and activities of the Society are discussed. Open to all members.
- ♣ November Celtic New Year's activity and annual meeting.
- ♣ January — 43/52 of the way to St Patrick's Day
- ♣ March:
 - ♣ Festival of Faith Mass
 - ♣ Naperville St Patrick's Day Parade
 - ♣ Manhattan Irish Fest
 - ♣ Scholarship Fund Dinner fundraiser and Awards Banquet
- ♣ Summer—Family Picnic
- ♣ August—Milwaukee Irish Fest
- ♣ September — Shillelagh Open Golf Outing

