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17th Annual Ball

FEBRUARY 15, 2020





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WELCOME TO IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO'S 2020 ANNUAL BALL



While we have come a long way since our first Ball 17 years ago, I am more excited about the direction in which we are headed. As a founding member of the Network, I can confidently say that we are better positioned for growth today than at any other point in our history.

But before we look forward, first a look back:

Since last year's Ball, we hosted a wide range of exciting events. We enjoyed an IN Conversation featuring Senator Billy Lawless and the I am Ireland boat cruise with Paddy Homan. We celebrated Director Jim Sheridan at the Chicago Irish Film Festival and tasted whiskey at The Drake. In an effort to more effectively fulfill our mission, we broadened our geographic footprint with IN Socials on the far south and north sides of the city. To foster a more vibrant sense of community and Irish identity, we deepened our relationships with complementary industry and philanthropic groups across Chicagoland.

In addition to executing a full slate of programming, the Executive Committee got our new website and database up and running and refreshed our IN-branded emails. The Advisory Board revamped our value proposition and analyzed the relevancy of our long-term focus and impact.

It was a great year, and it's only getting better.

I am pleased to share that the Irish Government, through their Emigrant Support Program, has once again provided the Ireland Network with a generous grant to help Irish business people and professionals to connect with each other, seek out new opportunities and, ultimately, to advance themselves and their businesses.

Mise Le Meas,

Ferdia Doherty

President of the Ireland Network Chicago

Please visit our website for updates on our programming and membership: www.theirelandnetwork.com

With their support, and the hard work of our Executive Committee and Advisory Board, we have updated the Ireland Network's strategic plan, which will be unveiled at the Annual General Meeting in May. This plan, which includes a strategic communications element, will serve as a roadmap by which the Ireland Network can continue to grow and strengthen our membership and overall value. I am proud of this work that ultimately positions Ireland Network Chicago to become one of the strongest Irish networks in the country.

As part of this effort, we are launching our annual survey tomorrow. These results help us better understand the needs and interests of our membership and directly impacts our path forward. I thank you in advance for your participation. We hope for 100% participation so that all voices are heard.

It's been a whirlwind two years as President, and to be very honest I could not have done anything this year without the dedication and hard work of the executive committee. I am truly in your debt. They have donated hours of their time and talent to provide programming that engages and inspires members. I'd also like to thank the Advisory Board for overseeing the strategic vision and health of our organization. It has been a true pleasure to work with all of you.

I'd also like to congratulate our IN SPIRIT Award winner Dan O'Donnell, who has helped thousands of Irish summer students find work and housing in Chicago, and thank him for his many contributions to our community.

Finally, I would like to give heartfelt thanks to my wife, Nora, and my children, Bébhinn, Aonghus and Maude, for their unwavering support, especially over the last two years.

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ORDER OF THE EVENING

- 6:30 P.M. CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION
- 7:45 P.M. WELCOME – IN President, Ferdia Doherty
- 7:50 P.M. IRISH AND AMERICAN NATIONAL ANTHEMS
- 8:00 P.M. DINNER SERVED
- 9:30 P.M. IN SPIRIT AWARD
Presented to Dan O’Donnell
- 9:35 P.M. RAFFLE WINNERS ANNOUNCED
- 9:40 P.M. BAND AND DANCING
- 12:00 A.M. OPEN BAR IN THE GREEN ROOM
Courtesy of Pernod Ricard
- 12:45 A.M. AFTER PARTY
Farmhouse Chicago, 228 West Chicago Avenue



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TICKETS: **\$35**

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2020 Ireland Network Chicago Ball Raffle

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GRAND PRIZE 1: “IRELAND EXPERIENCE PACKAGE”

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- Dublin sightseeing tour including Guinness storehouse, Epic Immigration Museum, Croke Park stadium tour, Pearse Lyons Distillery tour, 2 passes for each
- 2 nights Dingle Skellig Hotel, Co Kerry

PRIZE 2: CHICAGO “STAYCATION” PRIZE

- 1 x night Drake Hotel suite with afternoon tea for 4
- 2 tickets to Celtic Woman, Rosemont show
- Dinner for 2 with wine pairing Farmhouse Restuarant
- Food Ireland Irish hamper

PRIZE 3: CHICAGO EXPERIENCE PRIZE

- 2 x Chicago Cubs tickets
- 2 x tickets to Celtic woman, Rosemont show
- \$100 gift certificate Galway Arms
- Irish whiskey hamper

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**Message from Consul General Brian O'Brien,
Consul General of Ireland to Chicago and the US Midwest**

A Chairde, Dear Friends,

Athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir. Happy New Year and New Decade to you all.

We are incredibly privileged in the Consulate to serve in a post with such a large and vibrant Irish diaspora. Some 8 million people across the Midwest claim Irish heritage, meaning this Consulate has one of the largest diaspora communities across our Diplomatic Network anchored in this great city.

Chicago is a global city at the centre of the US and enjoys a strong and longstanding relationship with Ireland, our global island. Chicago is also one of the most Irish cities on the globe. The strength and importance of Ireland's relationship with Chicago was evident last St Patrick's Day, as we had the great honour of hosting an Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar for the celebrations. For Diplomats such as myself and my colleague Vice Consul Sarah Keating, it doesn't get much bigger than hosting our head of Government for our national day!

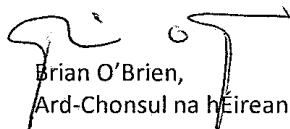
Dear Friends, this is my fourth and final year as Consul General. As I reflect on my time here, my great lesson has been that as Diplomats, we do not have a monopoly on diplomacy or representing Ireland. We in the Consulate might have titles; host Taoisigh and visiting Ministers; meet with Governors, Mayors and political, community and business leaders. However, the work of organisations like the Ireland Network, reminds us that the strength of the relationship between Ireland and the US is – above all else - built on the strong people to people links. Ireland Network members are wonderful Ambassadors for Ireland.

I salute the work that you do to bring people together whether they are Irish, Irish American, have an affinity with Ireland, or are just curious about Ireland. I am delighted that the Irish Government, through the Emigrant Support Programme, continues to partner with the Ireland Network Chicago to help you in your endeavours.

To Ferdia Doherty, to the Executive committee, the Advisory board, thank you for all the incredible work that you do behind the scenes to make events, such as tonight happen, and indeed all the IN events such as Socials, IN Conversations, IN boat trips etc throughout the year. Organising such events requires an incredible amount of work behind the scenes and I salute all of those who give their time, energy and creativity so generously. It is heart-warming to see the strength and vibrancy of Ireland Network. Go raibh mile maith agaibh.

On a personal level, I want to thank you for your friendship and support to the Consulate and all in Team Ireland. Our job is to build and maintain bridges between our global island and this global city. IN Chicago makes that job a lot easier. I wish you every future success.

Le gach dea-guí,



Brian O'Brien,
Ard-Chonsul na hÉireann/ Consul General of Ireland





A Look Back at Ireland Network Chicago Events in 2019

IN Chicago is grateful for the support of the Irish Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs for their generous grant which makes many of our events possible!

From our IN Socials and IN Conversations to our special events, we strive to provide our members with a lively series of activities throughout the year.

Stay up to date on upcoming events by looking out for IN emails and following IN on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.



IN SOCIALS

- JAN** Emerald Loop
- FEB** The Red Lion Pub (with Irish Film Festival)
- APR** Fadó
- MAY** Annual Member's Meeting and Social – Drake Hotel
- JUN** Beverly Social at Cork & Kerry Pub
- JUL** McCormick & Schmick's
- OCT** Ambassador Public House
- OCT** Evanston Social at Farmhouse Evanston
- NOV** LG's Bar
- DEC** Emerald Loop (Holiday Social)

IN CONVERSATIONS

- FEB** Update from Leinster House with Senator Billy Lawless
- NOV** A Scientist's Guide to Our Amazing Existence with Professor Luke O'Neill

SPECIAL EVENTS

- FEB** Ireland Network Chicago Ball - Drake Hotel
- MAR** IN Tune event with singer David Keenen
- SEP** I Am Ireland Boat Cruise

IN-SUPPORTED EVENTS

- FEB** Irish American Partnership Breakfast
- FEB** Chicago Irish Film Festival
- MAR** Irish Fellowship Club Dinner
- MAY** The Women of Concern Luncheon
- OCT** Navigating Brexit, Presented by British American Business Council
- OCT** Chicago Irish Film Festival Presents I, Dolours
- OCT** iBAM! Gala Awards Dinner
- OCT** IN USA Annual National Conference – Washington, D.C.
- OCT** 28th Ambassador the United Nations, Samantha Power, at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs
- OCT** Great Pink Run
- OCT** The Economist Editor-In-Chief, Zanny Minton Beddoes, On The Impacts Of Brexit, At Chicago Council On Global Affairs
- NOV** The Ireland Funds 35th Annual Chicago Dinner
- NOV** The Transatlantic Relationship – Ireland's Evolving Role with Ambassador Daniel Mulhall
- NOV** Union League Club Luncheon Featuring Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Ambassador Daniel Mulhall and Irish Tenor Anthony Kearns
- DEC** ICS Quiz Night
- DEC** Irish Fellowship Luncheon



Ireland Network In Spirit Award 2020

Each year, Ireland Network Chicago honors an individual who has made a significant and sustained contribution to the Irish community in Chicago with the IN Spirit Award. Ireland Network aims to convey our profound gratitude and appreciation and to bring attention to the incredible work done by fellow members of our community.



It is our great privilege to name **Dan O'Donnell** as this year's recipient of the IN Spirit Award. Dan's compassion and willingness to always help others is well known in our community. Through the incredible assistance he has provided to over 16,000 Irish students who have come to the United States on J-1 summer visas, Dan has developed and nurtured many positive connections and ties between Chicago and Ireland.

In 1996, Dan noticed a group of Irish students sitting on the curb for hours outside his Lincoln Park hardware store. Dan—of course—introduced himself. On learning that these students needed accommodation and summer employment, he immediately got to work. By the end of June 1996, he was arranging accommodation and employment, including at his store, for over 40 J-1 students. That number has since grown massively. Last year, Dan and his family had over 1,280 J-1 students come through their doors. Since 1996, Dan and his family have helped over 16,000 young Irish students make their dreams of an American summer a reality.

In addition to finding them accommodation and employment, Dan has truly strengthened the bonds between these many young Irish people and our great city by showing them around and entertaining them with boating on Lake Michigan, meals at local restaurants, and Cubs games. For these students, the summer in Chicago is, thanks to Dan, “the best summer ever.” Dan's commitment to helping students goes even further—on many occasions, he has provided emergency accommodation and assisted in crisis situations. Dan's great work has been featured in a television program produced by RTÉ.

Dan's kindness, compassion, and dedication to helping others has truly enriched the lives of many. We are privileged to count him as a fellow member of our community and to present him with the IN Spirit Award.



Join Ireland Network Chicago!

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Free drinks and appetizers at our famous monthly IN Social gatherings at Irish establishments around the city
- Fun and interesting networking events with visiting speakers and business leaders at our IN Conversations
- Access the continuously expanding IN USA membership directory – over 20 chapters across the United States
- Direct connection to the vibrant Irish business community in Chicago and other Irish-related groups with which we partner
- Meet people interested in Ireland and its culture, music, and society

A membership subscription is only \$80 annually and online registration is quick and easy.

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A Cháirde,

I am sorry that I cannot be with you in person tonight but I wanted to wish you all a wonderful evening at the annual Ireland Network Chicago Ball. The Chicago chapter of the INUSA is a wonderful example for other networks to emulate. You have one of the most active and successful networks in the USA and you should be very proud as you celebrate tonight.

You bring together Irish professionals to network and continue to promote Ireland in all that you do from the centre of the American heartland. I have been privileged to take part in your speaker series and know first hand that you strive to educate your community and keep the INC connected to the most relevant issues facing Chicago.

In an ever changing world you build the foundation for Ireland's strong relationship with the USA as you foster business relationships on the ground. The Irish government appreciates your support and acknowledges your contribution at home.

It is, however, bitter sweet as I write to you. As you all know, the Irish government has called for elections on February 8th and unfortunately my tenure as a Taoiseach's nominee for the Seanad will come to an end with this current government. I have been honoured to represent the global Irish as senator and I am filled with great gratitude to you for the support that you have given me in my role.

I was the first Irish emigrant appointed to the Seanad to represent the Irish living overseas and I have tried my best to bring your voice to the corridors of power in Leinster House. I have worked to ensure that the issues Irish emigrants face upon returning home are mitigated, including access to driver's licenses, insurance and education.

I have continued to work closely with the Taoiseach and his team to ensure that the issue of the Irish undocumented living in the USA is kept front and centre on the agenda and I have worked hard to create the conditions that will allow a future flow of US visas for Irish citizens wishing to work in the USA.

The issue of immigration remains a hot button topic in the USA but we as a people understand only too well the consequences of anti-immigrant xenophobia. It is why we view the current immigration debate with a sense of deja-vu and see beyond the political punchlines to the real families affected by a broken immigration system. The faces may have changed but the stories have not.

At home we have weathered the storm of the recent financial crisis and are now the European headquarters for some of America's biggest companies, including Facebook, Google and Microsoft to name but a few. We have the lowest unemployment in 14 years, with US multinationals accounting for much of the growth. We have almost a quarter of a million people working in export-focused foreign multinationals - up 100,000 since the crash in 2009.

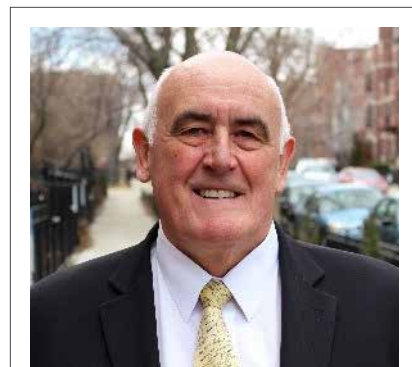
Notwithstanding all of the success, Ireland faces her own challenges today, and none more so than the implications of Brexit. The Taoiseach and Tánaiste with all party support have -to their credit- worked fastidiously to ensure that the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland remain open. It is our duty to preserve the hard-fought for peace, while at the same time managing the economic impact of one of our largest trading partners exiting the EU.

In closing, I would like to thank the Ireland Network Chicago for its continued support of front line Irish service agencies and leave you with the heartfelt belief that Ireland and Irish America's best days are still ahead. I congratulate you on your great success this year and wish you many more.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Billy Lawless

Senator Billy Lawless



IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO COMMITTEE MEMBERS



RUAIRI BARNWELL

Ruairi has lived in Chicago for over 20 years, but hails from Tullamore in the heart of Ireland. Ruairi graduated from Dublin Institute of Technology, Bolton Street, with a degree in Engineering. Today he is a Principal at global design firm, DLR Group, where he leads the smart building design practice. Outside of work, Ruairi enjoys spending time with his wife Andrea, and three daughters Bella, Catelin and Maeve, who each share his passion for soccer and traditional Irish music. He travels annually to the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil to support his daughters' adventures with the Murphy Roche Irish Music School.



JAMES COLEMAN

A native of Co. Galway, James also lived in Dublin and Brussels before moving to Chicago in 2014. James is an attorney in the Chicago office of an international law firm, Mayer Brown LLP, where his practice focuses on commercial litigation and international arbitration. He is a graduate of University College Dublin School of Law and Northwestern University School of Law. Before moving to Chicago, James ran the Brussels and Strasbourg Parliamentary offices of an Irish Member of the European Parliament where he worked on issues important to Irish citizens and the Irish diaspora while managing legislative, press, and constituency affairs.



KRISTEN CURNYN

Kristen Curnyn, is American-born, yet Irish faithful with grandparents hailing from County Cavan and County Mayo. She is a hospitality executive who has managed congresses and trade shows on five continents throughout her 24 year career in corporate and non-profit event management. She is a Certified Meeting Professional and a Certified International Tour Director. Kristen has enjoyed her last few years as an IN Committee Member, and also continues her volunteer work with the Milwaukee Irish Fest, CurePSP and Meals on Wheels. Having grown up in Atlanta and having only spent a few years in Chicago, she still enjoys getting to know the city, still refuses to drive downtown and still loves the winters.



GARRETT DIAMOND

Originally from Co. Meath, Garrett has lived in Chicago on and off for nearly 15 years. A DIT hospitality and Tourism Graduate, Garrett initially spent a number of years in the hotel and bar business in Chicago. He is now working as a Sales and Business Development Representative for Stuart Dean Company in Facilities Services. Garrett spends his time living in Oak Park with his wife Katie and three children, Ciara, Liam and Fiona. He also is a member of the local AOH Chicago Branch.



FERDIA DOHERTY (President)

Ferdia Doherty hails from Gaoth Dobhair, County Donegal. He is founding partner and owner of Farmheads Restaurant Group with establishments in Chicago, Lakeview and Evanston. Prior to joining the merry band of hospitality professionals he was founder and owner of Rain Communications, a design marketing company based in Chicago, London and Dublin. He is married to Nora Gainer and has three children, Behhinn, Aonghus and Maude. As a founding member of Ireland Network Chicago he is excited to be back on the Committee and looks forward to help spearhead some wonderful growth in the network over the coming years.



PAUL DOWLING

Originally from Gorey, Co. Wexford, Paul arrived to Chicago 10 years ago. Since that time, he's worked with Irish Community Services to support the older and more vulnerable members of our community. Paul has an undergraduate degree from NUI Maynooth and holds a Master of Social Work from NUI Galway. This is his first year serving as a committee member for Ireland Network Chicago.



MAT GALLAGHER

After stints in Beijing and Hong Kong as an active member of the Irish community and working with the Irish Consulate, Mat now brings his talents to the Ireland Network Chicago. Though sporting an English accent, he's a proud Irish passport holder and can sing you anything from Christy Moore's back catalogue.



PAUL GILLEN

Paul was born in New York City and raised in Ridgewood, NJ. His Irish roots extend to Sligo, Fermanagh, Longford and Kerry. He's a graduate of Baldwin Wallace University, Berea, Ohio. He has a background in media sales and is now a licensed health insurance agent with Healthcare Solutions Team, Lombard, IL. He is a resident of Evanston; is the founder and past president of the Evanston chapter of BNI (Business Networking International) - Professional Community Connections. In addition to his Irish heritage and citizenship he is proud of his three adult children Mallory, Connor and Cameron.



MOLLY MCGRAIL (Secretary)

A graduate of National University of Ireland, Galway, M.A. Arts Policy and Practice, Molly has since worked as the Event Manager at the French-American Chamber of Commerce, Chicago. Fluent in French and Italian, and continuing to learn Irish after a Gaeltacht Summer Award in 2018 in Gaioth Dobhair, Molly joined the Committee in 2017 and was elected Secretary in 2018. Although a native of Houston, Texas, Molly has lived in six different U.S. states and two foreign countries, and is always looking for an excuse to get back to Ireland.



JUDY MCKEEVER

Judy is from Dublin and is a graduate of UCD and NUI Maynooth. She has been working in Tourism and Travel for 20 years and proudly promotes the island of Ireland. She has worked as a Failte Ireland approved National Tourist Guide. Her work in travel has also taken her to Africa and throughout Europe. She has lived in Germany, Australia, New York and San Francisco. Chicago has been home since the summer of 2018. She swims with a masters swim team and loves the view of her newly adopted city looking up from the lake! Judy joined The Ireland Network committee in May 2019.



JOE MCKITTRICK (Treasurer)

Joe is one of the original three founding directors of the Ireland Network Chicago in 2003 and our current Treasurer. With 25 years in banking & finance, he has a successful career as a Treasury Manager with PNC Bank's Lower Middle Market division and specializes in designing complex Treasury Solutions for clients up to \$100 million in revenue. Joe, who hails from a true GAA family from Swords, Co. Dublin, played Rugby in England and minor football for Dublin.



RORY MONE

Rory Mone is a Real Estate broker with Berkshire Hathaway. He has more than 20 years experience with real estate and construction of investment properties. He is originally from Clontibret, Co. Monaghan, Ireland and has been living in the U.S. for 21 years. He is very passionate about all types of sports and a huge fan of the GAA, where he played for the Monaghan county. Rory also played rugby with the Southside Irish Rugby Club. Rory enjoys exploring the world with his wife, Nathalie who is originally from Brazil.



DOLORES (DEDE) SIMON

Dede is the current Deputy Director of Business Services for the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Within her purview at IDES, Dede is responsible for seven divisions that benefit businesses of all sizes throughout the State of Illinois. Dede graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a B.B.A in Marketing. She is the class correspondent and the former President of the Notre Dame Club of Chicago She lives in the River North area of Chicago and enjoys spare time with her friends and her two sons and their families, who live and work in Chicago, along with her daughter and family in Boston. Dede is a dual U.S. and Irish citizen and is looking forward to attending the Notre Dame versus Navy game in Dublin later this year.

Too much work,
and no vacation,
deserves at least
a small libation.
So hail! my friends,
& raise your glasses,
work's the curse
of the
drinking classes.

~ Oscar Wilde ~



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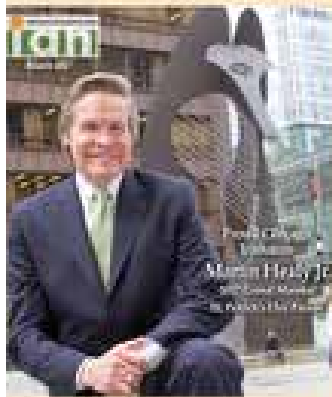
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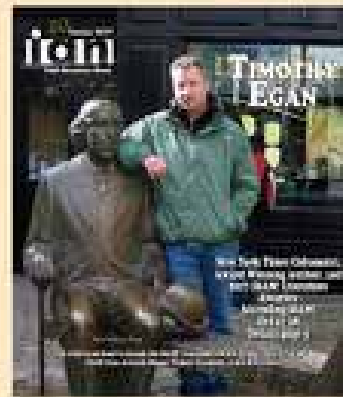
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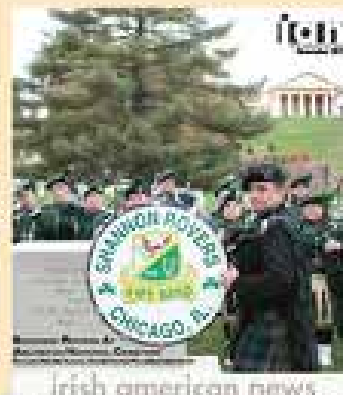
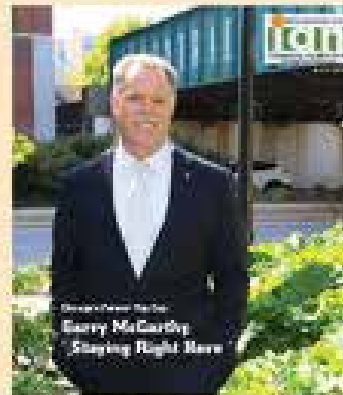
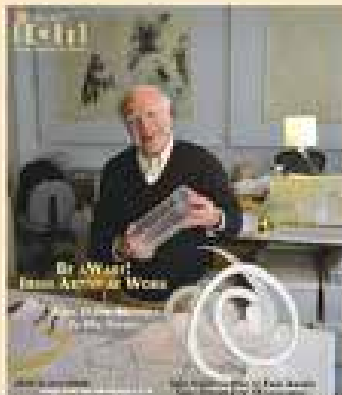
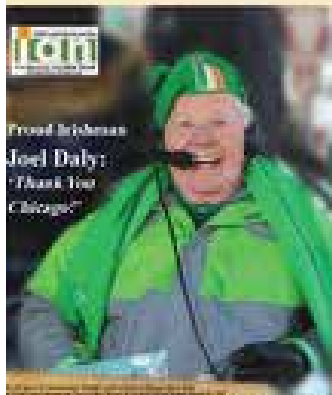
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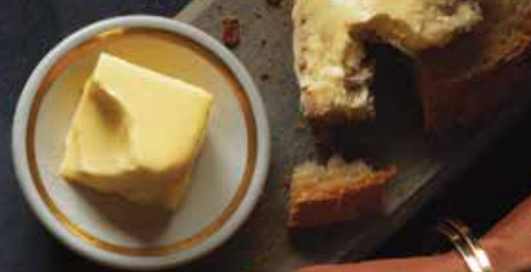
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Making Connections

*Irish Network USA congratulates
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and Ireland Network Chicago
on a successful 2020 Ball.*

Steve Lenox, President INUSA

Across the United States

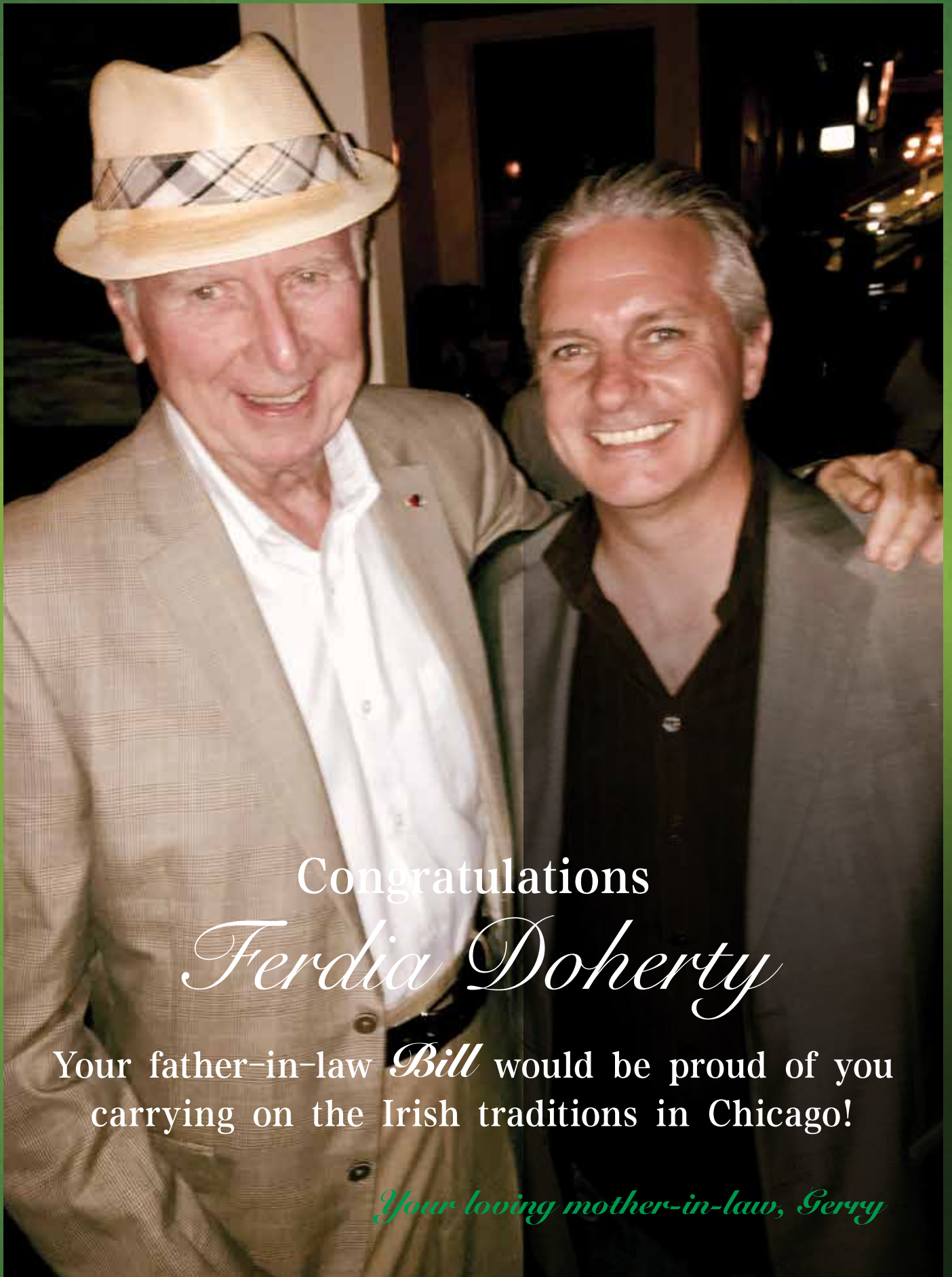
Irish Network USA is proud to support chapters and their members across the United States. INUSA helps Irish and Irish-American professionals across the United States to connect with their peers and to develop relationships that will foster success in their business, economic and social ventures.

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MARCH 17:
 St. Patrick's Day Celebration

APRIL 25:
 Irish American Hall of Fame Gala

JULY 10, 11 and 12:
 Irish Fest

Irish American heritage center

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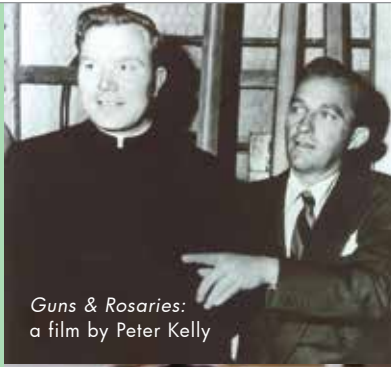
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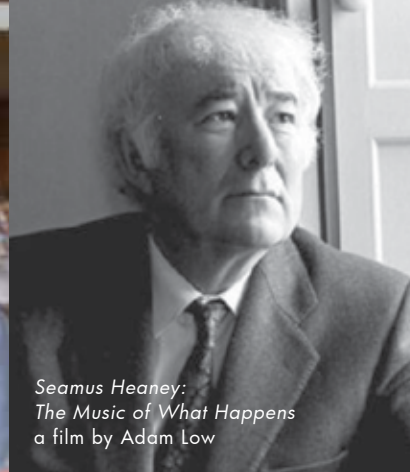
Guns & Rosaries:
a film by Peter Kelly



Sea Fever
a film by Neassa Hardiman



A Bump Along the Way
a film by Shelly Love



*Seamus Heaney:
The Music of What Happens*
a film by Adam Low

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The Advisory Board is tasked with overseeing the long-term strategic vision and ensuring the continued growth of Ireland Network Chicago. Thank you to the Advisory Board for their dedication and service.

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Seamus Byrne
Ferdia Doherty

Katie Fitzpatrick
Imelda Gallagher
Helen Garrahy
Molly McGrail

Joseph McKittrick
John O'Loughlin
James Sheehan
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A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a dark blue school uniform with a teal collar, is sitting on a large green exercise ball. She is smiling and looking to the right. The background is a blurred gymnasium with yellow and blue equipment.

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