



SCÉALA

Newsletter for the Gaelic-American Club
74 Beach Road, Fairfield CT 06824
www.gaconline.org



CÉAD MÍLE Fáilte One Hundred Thousand Welcomes



Deireadh Fómhair | October 2019

2020 GAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following members have been nominated for the positions of President: Gerry Reidy and Brian Filush; For Sergeant of Arm: Keira Filush, Anthony Hogan and Brian Smith. Bios for these nominees can be found on the back of calendar.

The following positions were nominated and filled without contention:

Vice President - Faith Maciver

Treasurer - Jim Corcoran

Financial Secretary - Tom Harding

Director 2 Years - Amy O'Shea

Director 1 Years - Hilary Dee Koreeda

Director 3 Years - Gerry O'Donovan

All bios all nominees are posted on GAC website
www.gaconline.org

CLAN NA GAEL PRESENTS

"Nobody's Talking to Me" by Tommy Marren

A light hearted comedy set in rural Ireland, the play takes place on the 50th wedding anniversary of Maggie and Mattie Conway, a couple who have not spoken to one another in nearly a decade. Hilarity ensues as miscommunication and meddling family members stir the pot even further in their attempts to prevent the local priest from renewing their wedding vows. Will they find wedded bliss?

Find out for yourself this November.

Directed by Kelsey Guggenheim Dias, our outstanding cast features Emily Barksdale, David Kaminski, Noeleen Nelson, Sue O'Hara, Mike O'Mara, Eamon Speer, Byrne White and Janine Wolfe.

Performances are November 21st, 22nd and 23rd at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, November 24th at 2:30.

Tickets are \$15.

For reservations please contact Elizabeth Power at (203) 873-6556 or cngplays@gmail.com.

TRAD FOR TROCAIRE | SUNDAY NOV 10TH

The Irish Clubs of Fairfield Prep and Luralton Hall will hold their seventh annual "Trad for Trocaire" musical fundraiser on Sunday, November 10th. Trocaire - Ireland's largest international relief organization - provides vital assistance in many of the world's most impoverished communities. So mark your calendars for Sunday, November 10th.

More details to follow!

TRIVIA NIGHT FRIDAY NOVEMBER 15 AT 8:30

Please note new date and time

Wear Orange Yellow and White like Candy Corn and you'll be eligible for a special prize! See you all there!

DAY OF TRAD MUSIC ~ SATURDAY NOV 2ND

The sounds of traditional Irish music will fill the pub from noon to 11PM on Nov 9th. The day's multitalented Performers include, the Shamroques, Damien Connolly, Mighty Shamroques, Loretta Murphy & Friends, Ceol Agus Craic, Mattie Connolly and The Kelly Family. Don't miss this fun, toe-tapping day of trad Irish music!



JOIN US IN THE PUB AT 9PM

Friday	Nov 1	Andy Cooney @ 8:30PM
Saturday	Nov 2	Trad Music Day from Noon to 11pm
Friday	Nov 8	McLean Ave Band
Saturday	Nov 9	Madz & the Ladz
Friday	Nov 15	Karaoke
Saturday	Nov 16	Four or a Kind
Friday	Nov 22	Sharon & Her Band
Saturday	Nov 23	The Coracles
Wed	Nov 27	Highland Rovers
Friday	Nov 29	Susan & Gerard
Saturday	Nov 30	Ruffians



October Events

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - BACK OF INSERT
 ANDY COONEY SHOW - FREE - FRIDAY NOV 1ST @ 8:30PM
 TRAD MUSIC SESSION - WEDNESDAY, NOV 6, 7PM
 MEMBERSHIP MEETING - FRIDAY, NOV 8TH, 8PM
 FRÉAMH ÉIREANN GENEALOGY - SAT, NOV 9TH @ 10:30PM
 DECEASED MEMBERS MASS - SUNDAY NOV 10TH @ 10AM
 HANGING OF THE JERSEYS - SUNDAY NOV 10TH @ 4:30PM
 TRIVIA NIGHT - FRIDAY NOV 15TH @ 8:30PM
 FAMILY FUN NIGHT - FRIDAY, NOV 29TH, 6-9PM
 SENIOR LUNCH - THURS NOV 21ST @ 12 NOON

DAY OF IRISH LANGUAGE

Bhi ar La Gaeilge an-mhaith!!

On Saturday, October 5th, dedicated Gaeilgeoir-speakers of Irish- came to the GAC for a day-long event to practice, use and improve their language and understanding of our cultural heritage. Attendees were from New Jersey, NYC, Long Island, Albany, and Massachusetts. All agreed that our club facility, and hospitality were impressive, and the soup-and-sandwich extravaganza prepared by Corky & staff was definitely appreciated!

The day started with flag raising and national anthems, member Chris Conway explained the 1916 Monument project, and also brought along Ogham Arts shop. He donated a poster to GAC of the 32 counties' names in Ogham. Three levels of Language classes were held. Fulbright teacher Yvonne DeFaoite, (Elms College), led the advanced class and spoke on the GAA and the importance to Irish identity.

Several workshops were enjoyed by the participants and we thank our facilitators; Brian Reynolds with set dancing, Matt McCarthy with baking Irish soda bread, Cecilia Dalzell with Irish origami and Des Nolan with Irish castles. The day concluded with a scavenger hunt and door prizes, and with the luck of the Irish, everyone was a winner!

Go raibh maith agaibh to Féile, GAC, Tommy & staff and the many volunteers who all contributed to the success of the day!

TURKEY DRIVE

The annual Turkey drive started the week of October 21st and runs through to the Monday before Thanksgiving (11/25). We will be accepting dry goods in the donation bin (which will be placed in the lobby) and gift cards for the purchase of turkeys. Please bring an item (or two) when you come to the club to enjoy one of the GAC's many events!



MR & MISS SHAMROCK SCHOLARSHIP

The Greater St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee will hold their annual Mr. and Miss Shamrock Scholarship Event on Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019 (snow date Dec. 15) at The GAC from 4-9 pm.

Local high school seniors of Irish descent are welcome to apply. There is a \$3,000 scholarship for the winners, and \$1,750 for the runners up. Please see our www.stpatricksdaysbridgeport.com for the application after November 1, 2019. Local Guidance offices will have the applications as well.

Applications must be completed and sent to Colleen Murphy at: esm163@optonline.net by Dec. 9, 2019

CELTIC CHRISTMAS FAIR

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7TH FROM 9-3PM



Celtic Christmas Fair has a great selection of Irish vendors and unique crafters so you can do all your holiday shopping in one place. Bring the children & grandchildren to have their photo taken with Santa in front of the GAC's beautiful stone

hearth. And don't forget the Lenihan School of Irish Dance will be serving lunch in the Pub. For info contact: Kelli Grady at email bkgrady@msn.com or Sue Shanahan at suz9ck@optimum.net.

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL BBQ CONTINUES!

The "Grilling Gang" is working their culinary magic every Monday! Members are encouraged to bring side salads and desserts! If you haven't been down on a Monday night you don't know what you're missing!

ST. PATRICK'S ANNUAL DINNER DANCE



Saturday December 7th at the GAC. St. Patrick's will honor Mike & Alison O'Connor as the Club's "Gaels of the Year" for their many years of hard work and dedication to promoting and sustaining youth Gaelic football & hurling in Fairfield County. In addition, St. Patrick's will recognize Sean Conway as the Club's 2019 Senior Gaelic Football Player of the Year.

The night begins at 6:30pm with traditional Irish Music by Damien & Sally Connolly followed by the ever-popular Padraig Allen and his McLean Avenue band. O'Neills Pub of South Norwalk will be serving a hearty Irish meal and there will be an Open Bar. Tickets are only \$100. (Discounted ticket price for senior citizens available.) Tickets may be purchased at the Club's website (www.stpatricksgfc.org).

Tables may be reserved and a commemorative journal will be published to celebrate the accomplishments of our Gaels & Player of the Year. All reservations and ads should be sent to: fundraising@stpatricksgaa.us.

THE GIVING TREE



Once again, the Giving Tree will be put up at the GAC on the night before Thanksgiving. We will be collecting presents for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission and Sister Theresa Tremblay's Nursery School children and their families.

Please take a tag (or 2 !), buy the designated present, wrap it (with the original tree tag attached) and return the gifts to the GAC NO LATER December 14, 2018. Please don't take a tag unless you fully intend to buy a gift . Thank you to all who participate.

BUSINESS & TRADES DIRECTORY

Place your professional listing in the GAC Business Directory Trades List at www.gaconline.org. Go to GAC Business Directory Tab and follow prompts to add your listing. And don't forget when you need a business or trade service check the List and support your fellow members.

BUSINESS TRADES NETWORK

A monthly meeting is in the works for the newly formed GAC Business Trade Network. Any interested businesses listed in the GAC Directory should contact Faith Maciver at fmaciver@easct.com

FÁILTE COMMITTEE

We always need for volunteers to work the front desk. This is a great way to meet members of our club and the liquor commission requires all guests to be signed in!

All members must sign in each of their guests: the members name PRINTED for EACH guest and each guest sign their own name and address. Thank you in advance!

If you'd like to join the FAILTE committee, call Bette Leary at 203-767-0117 or betteleary@gmail.com.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Family Fun Night is Friday November 29th with DJ Peter from 6-9pm. Kids Buffet is served from 6:00-7:30. and ice cream from 7:45-8pm. Please clear tables, cleaning up spills and food under and around tables - receptacles are provided for trash and bins are provided for dishes, glasses get returned to the bar. Please DO NOT leave for the evening before clearing your table.

FAIRFIELD GAELIC PIPE BAND

Meets Mondays 6:30 pm at First Church Congregational. Fairfield Gaelic Pipe Band (475)329-0202 or visit fairfieldgaelicpipeband.org.

SUPPORT IRELAND'S GREAT HUNGER MUSEUM

Become a member or donate www.ighm.orgsupport.html.

Club ACTIVITIES

GOOD & WELFARE

Mass cards were sent to Jim Gillick on the death of his son John; To the family of Carole Mezes; And to Patricia Pifko on the death of her father John Gillespie.

Notify Noreen Reda of all member news at npreda4@gmail.com.

GENEALOGY GROUP

FRÉAMB ÉIREANN

Genealogy Group meets Nov 9th at 10:30 am For info Donna Orazio: donnaorazio@gmail.com.

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Ilona Paxton, House Chairperson
203-372-1280

IRISH LANGUAGE GROUP

Monday Evenings:

Irish Reading Class 7:00 PM, contact JMinehan@gmail.com.

Thursday Evenings @ 6:45PM

An informal combined class of beginners and more experienced folks. The class is very informal. We use two books, Gaeilge Gan Stró Beginners' level and Progress in Irish.

LIBRARY

Library is open Monday through Saturday. Monitored children's hours for the Library are Friday and Saturday 6PM to 9PM. Children under 9 must be accompanied by an adult.

Please SIGN OUT BOOKS. NO food or drink is allowed in library. For more info: library@gacemail.org.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

This month's meeting is Friday Nov 8th @ 8pm. All members welcome!

LITERATURE GROUP

The Group meets Monday, Nov 18th at 7:30 to discuss acclaimed novelist Maggie O'Farrell's memoir "*I AM, I AM, I AM*". It is an unforgettable account of a life in near-death experiences. In taut prose, O'Farrell captures the perils running just beneath the surface, and illuminated the preciousness, beauty, and mysteries of life itself. For more information contact clareburnett@optonline.net

SCEALA SUBMISSIONS

Submissions are due Nov 8th
Communications@gacemail.org

SENIORS

Senior Lunch is Thursday, Nov 21st reservations by Sunday, Nov 17th, Lunch is \$7 for members. \$9 for non-members. Ann Hague 203-374-5198; Shirley McMenamy 203-268-5083; Sally Savage 203-366-4826.

SET DANCING

Lace up your dance shoes because Set Dancing is back every Thursday at 7:30pm. Contact Brian Reynolds 203-214-2921.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Thank you to everyone who joined us for song, dance, games and a delicious buffet as we ushered in autumn at Oktoberfest, chaired by Kevin O'Neil.

Special Thanks to all who celebrated all past presidents and recognized Jim Carolan for his service at the Past Presidents Dinner Dance, hosted by Gerry Reidy.

For information on upcoming events contact social@gacemail.org.

CHERISH THE LADIES ~ CELTIC CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 1st at 4pm | Edgerton Center for the Performing Arts
One of the most engaging and successful ensembles in the history of Celtic music, Cherish The Ladies have shared timeless Irish traditions with audiences worldwide for over thirty years.

Tickets: General admission: \$30* | Faculty and staff: \$25 | Students: \$10
*GAC members will receive \$5 off the general admission ticket price.

Visit the box office on campus to show proof of membership.
Visit www.sacredheart.edu/ctl2018 to purchase tickets online or call the Edgerton Center box office at 203-371-7908.

FREE CONCERT ~ ANDY COONEY IN THE CAROLAN ROOM ~ FRIDAY NOVEMBER 1ST ~ 8:30PM

Dubbed *An American Gift to Ireland's Heritage* by Jim Mahoney of *The New York Daily News*, Cooney has made his mark not only on the Irish/Irish-American front, but also within the world of country music. His outstanding voice and dynamic stage presence has always been a favorite among young and old everywhere.



HANGING OF THE JERSEYS - NOV 10 AT 4:30PM

And Lighting of the Hearth



Let's hear it for Tipperary Hurling and Dublin's All Ireland (five in-a-row) Football Champs - history for the GAA!! And we'll be hanging those Jerseys at about 7:45pm. This is always a fun event with music by Camac, Food, Fans and Great Craic! Contact: Noreen 203-273-0483.



The stars magically aligned on Saturday, October 12th during the 10th annual Dancing with the GAC Stars! The coveted mirror ball trophy was

awarded to the magnificent Kelly Maffei for her dazzling hustle. Bert Reynolds jumped into second place for her energetic jive. Kathy Niznansky, John Moran, Nancy Day and Lorraine Stopa shined as they amazed the audience with their vibrant ballroom routines. The show opened with lively performance by 18 alumni dancers. Congratulations to all the dancers and to Monika and Henry of Fred Astaire Dance Studio of Southport for another grand night of dancing.

CLAN NA GAEL NEWS

The Clan Na Gael Players are please to Announce the 9th One Act Playwright Contest that will run from October 15, 2019 thru April 15, 2020 with monetary prizes. The purpose of the contest is to support and encourage emerging playwrights of all ages. Clan Na Gael's Playwright Contest is seeking original writings of not less then 15 mins and no longer then 30 mins, scripts are restricted to plays that have not been produced, published or won other contests. Membership in the GAC is not required to enter and the submitted script does not have to have an Irish theme.

Scripts are to be submitted by email in word format and follow all 2019 Rules and Instructions. For Rules, Instructions and Submission forms, please send email to cngoneactplay@gmail.com. For questions contact Nancy O'Neil at (203) 377-1070.

Many Thanks for support of Readers Theatre

Thanks all of the people who came to the launch of our new Readers Theatre. We appreciate your comments, and the lively Q&A following each performance. We have begun the process of choosing our next script. Thanks for suggestions!



DECEASED MEMBERS MASS ~ SUNDAY NOVEMBERS 10TH AT 10AM

Mass will be celebrated in the Carolan Room with refreshments to follow. It is a beautiful way to remember our loved ones. Please join us.

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Gaelic American Club
74 Beach Road
Fairfield, CT 06824
www.gaiconline.org



executive committee nominees

Elections for the following Positions will take place at the GAC on December 8th

GERRY REIDY

NOMINEE FOR REELECTION AS PRESIDENT



I have been a member for 25 years and during those years I have served as a Director, Vice-President and on a number of Club committees. The membership of our Club has grown to 6,000 and gross revenues now exceed \$ 2,000,000.00 a year. An organization of this size presents many managerial and operational challenges and issues. In this regard, I have benefited from being involved with Club over the years. I have also benefited from working this year with an extremely hardworking, knowledgeable and dedicated team and I owe them my thanks.

In addition to my wife Rosemary, my three sons, Griffin, Brian and Mike are also members and the first of the third generation of the family is in the process of applying for membership. The generational membership has caused me to be mindful of both the short term and long term strategic implications to the Club of any decisions we take and plan for the future.

An example of a project that brings immediate as well as long term benefit is the opening up of our side yard for the enjoyment of our members. The installation of picnic tables, large umbrellas, soccer goals, volley ball nets and outdoor games has been well received by all; particularly by the children who are our future members.

There are a number of very important initiatives that we have started in the past year that I would like to finish. These include a total redesign and replacement of our basement pumping system to prevent the periodic flooding we experience. This has been a very complicated engineering problem, but when the new system is installed and operational, we will be able to put our elevator back in service.

(continued next column)

(Gerry Reidy Bio Continued)

This election is my report card. If you are pleased with my performance as President this year, I would appreciate your coming out to vote for me. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as President this year.

BRIAN FILUSH

NOMINEE FOR PRESIDENT



I am a lifelong member of the Gaelic American Club with roots in Sligo and Mayo. My uncle Michael O'Brien, whose uncles were the famous Clancy Brothers, was the bagpiper who dedicated the GAC. My sister performs with the Highland Rovers while my daughters' study Irish dance. I am a Director of FÉILE and work to enhance Irish cultural experiences.

I grew up in Fairfield and live in Trumbull with my wife, Ashley and our daughters. By profession I am a firefighter for the city of Norwalk. I respect our Club's past and, as a young parent, appreciate how our Club can bring our heritage alive for the next generation. I will bring enthusiasm and new blood to promote our Club. I welcome your support and ask you to vote for me as the next President of the GAC.

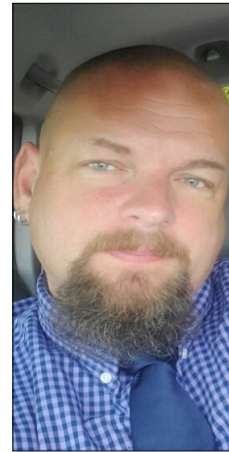
KIERA FILUSH

NOMINEE FOR SARGENT AT ARMS

I have been a member for just over 10 years and I am excited to take on this opportunity. My Irish heritage is very important to me as my roots are in Clare and Mayo. This has inspired me to seek this chance to be more involved in the club and support the culture. My family has always been civic minded and I have a professional background in organization and management. When I moved from Nebraska to Connecticut, the GAC was one of the first organizations I became a part of. Many of my family are also members and we enjoy our time here together. Helping to promote the future of the GAC is something that is important to me and my family.

BRIAN SMITH

NOMINEE FOR SARGENT AT ARMS



My name is Brian Smith and I am running for the position of Sargent at Arms on the GAC Executive Committee. I am a Connecticut native and presently reside in Monroe, with my wife and daughter. I received my Bachelor Degree in Arts (Social

Work) and my Master Degree in Health Administration from Western Connecticut State University. My career has been focused on the field of developmental disabilities, with the past 18 years working for the State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services. Beyond the routine roles and responsibilities of my current position as an Assistant Regional Director of the Individual and Family Support Division, I am also an active participant participate in numerous regional and statewide committees focused on enhancing and developing services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

I am excited for the opportunity to enhance my involvement in the Gaelic American Club, beyond those associated with my daughter's involvement with Lenihan School of Irish Dance and routine GAC activities. I am looking forward to being a part of the continued success and growth of the club for the years to come. Thank you for the consideration and support!

ANTHONY HOGAN

NOMINEE FOR SARGENT AT ARMS



Is a Long time member of the club and presently serves on the clubs facilities group. Original from Lisdoonvarna Co Clare Anthony now resides in Fairfield CT with

his wife Christine and their sons Michael and Patrick and looking forward to giving back to the Irish American community.

Dear Fellow Members,

"Well the temperature has dropped, the leaves are rapidly descending from the trees and much to the relief of my friends, I have put away my shorts for the winter. As you can see from the proliferation of tombstones and skeletons in the neighborhood, we are starting the annual run up to Samhain or as more familiarly known to many of our members; Halloween. The Celts in Ireland 2,000 years ago celebrated November 1st as the first day of the new year with an "end of summer" festival. It was believed that on the night before, on October 31st, Samhain, the veil between "the here and the hereafter" was at its thinnest of the year, allowing the ghosts of the departed to pass through and walk the earth and they celebrated the return of the departed with bonfires and the wearing of costumes. We will continue that tradition with a children's Halloween party on Saturday October 26th at 11Am. They will have to do without the bonfires however. If you are really into bonfires you will have to go an Orange Order event in Northern Ireland on July 11 as we have no plans to celebrate it here.

It is amazing to think of how many ancient and not so ancient Irish customs have crossed the pond to the New World. There are a number however of Samhain traditions that never made it made it to the New World. Among these were the matchmaking aspects of the festival. In 18th century Ireland a matchmaking cook might bury a ring in her mashed potatoes on Halloween night, hoping to bring true love to the diner who found it. Of course that assumes the diner didn't discover it as a result of swallowing it. I suggested it to the folks at Lisdoonvarna but with all the liability lawyers running around, they decided to give it a pass.

Speaking of traditions, I can report that the Past Presidents Dinner Dance was a great success. We had a number of past presidents in attendance including Maryann Doonan who is also the Grand Marshall of the 2020 Bridgeport Parade.. If you didn't make the party, put it on your calendar for next year. I hope to schedule it a few months earlier in the year under a tent in our side yard.

We continue to strive to preserve and hand down our Irish culture and traditions. As part of this continuing mission, we have scheduled a night of traditional Irish music with Andy Cooney in concert at the Carolan Room on November 1st at 8:30. As a bit of payback to all of those who have been part of this mission over the years, there will be no charge. We hope all members (well maybe not all as there are 6,000 of us) will come out and enjoy the evening.

In addition Greg Burnett, Chairmen of the Club's Traditional Irish Music Committee in cooperation with Sacred Heart University has arranged for a joint GAC-Sacred Heart Irish Christmas concert at the university by "Cherish the Ladies" on Sunday December 4th at 1PM. While it may not be "Christmas in Killarney" it's the closest you can get to it without paying the airfare.

Another tradition at the Club is the annual "Hanging of the Jerseys". This event which will take place on November 10th starting at 4 PM (or some time thereafter) will give the All Ireland champions in hurling and football (Irish that is) bragging rights for the year by the taking down of the jerseys of last year's champions and replacing them with the Jerseys of this year's winners. The bragging rights for this year go to Tipperary and Dublin and a representative of those counties who will be revealed that evening, will do the honors. A free buffet will also be served.

Lest we forget, the Club also has a soccer team who (if I can mix my metaphors) continue to hit the ball out of the park. They have just won their "First Division' Champions Trophy and will compete in November for the State quarterfinals.

Between our soccer team and St. Pat's, we are going to have to build a larger display case to handle all these awards. That leaves rugby. While we don't have a team, we have arranged for the screening of the Rugby World Cup games on a delayed basis (unless you want to get up or stay up to watch it at 3AM) on Saturday afternoons.

For all our members who have a touch of German in their ancestry, I can report that Oktoberfest was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended as was Dancing with the GAC Stars as well. I want to thank our staff and volunteers for all their work in making these events a success.

In signing off, I would like to invite all members to join me at the Club on November 10th at 10AM for the Mass for Deceased Members.

Slainte

Gerry Reidy"