



# The Cairde Connection

*“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”*

Irish Cultural Center at  
Elms College

Volume 9 & Issue 1

August 2008

## Tickets for wine tasting fundraiser on sale: don't miss this fun evening

The Irish Cultural Center announces a fundraiser for the Elms Irish Studies Program. We will host a Wine Tasting with an Irish Accent on Saturday, September 27, 2008 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Mary Dooley Campus Center. Tickets are \$30 each and may be ordered from the Center at 413 265-2537 or purchased at Cabot Liquors, 220 Exchange Street, Chicopee.

The evening offers an opportunity to meet and mingle with friends, as well as to meet the seven Elms College students who traveled to study in Ireland in June. You don't want to miss this fun, unique experience, and help a good cause at the same

time.

The Irish Studies Minor became a reality at the Elms College last year, with seven students taking advantage of a unique opportunity to study in County Sligo (with college credits from the National University of Ireland, Sligo) in June. Study abroad is an important component of the program., which emphasizes Irish history, literature, and culture.

The students took classes in each of the above as well as archaeology. They took tours and engaged in other activities, including archaeological site visits.

**Read about other September events on page 2.**

## 10th Anniversary

**Keeping the Irish arts alive!  
1999-2009**

## Big E volunteers

Calling all volunteers to help at our information booth in the Dingle Cottage, Young Building, Big E, West Springfield. The Fair runs from September 12-28. We provide information on our programs and events, as well as give some assistance to the Dingle merchants. If you can volunteer for **several days**, contact the Center and we'll arrange the schedule. Weekends and evenings are most in need of help. We'll provide entry and parking passes.

Suggested times:

10:00 a.m.-1:00 or 2:00 p.m.

1:00-5:00 p.m. or 2:00-6:00 p.m.

5:00-10:00 p.m.

It's a good opportunity to meet some of our Irish friends.

## Celtic camp brings smiles to children

Fifty-five happy children spent the week on the Elms campus the last week of July and learned all things Irish. Director and dance instructor Mary Ellen O'Brien and the other faithful teachers, assisted by junior counselors, provided a great experience to children in grades one through nine.

On Friday, at the celebration and display of some of the lessons learned, the children danced into the hearts of proud parents and grandparents. They charmed the audience with their singing and playing of the tin whistles. They wowed them with their facility in the Irish language. And they proudly displayed some of the arts projects they completed in five short days. It is universally agreed that this week

should be twice as long. Friendships are strengthened and new friends are found each year. The best way to keep the arts alive is through the children and we have continued that success in 2008.



**Photos of children from Celtic Adventures of Kids taken by Michael Dialessi**



The Irish Cultural Center, founded in 1999, strives to “keep the Irish arts alive.”

### The Irish Cultural Center...

- Serves as a public forum for events, including lectures, musical presentations, films and exhibits
- Promotes ties between the Center and educational organizations in Ireland, especially with the Basket Cultural Center
- Serves as an academic link with Irish American social organizations in Western New England.

Director:

Judith Kappenman, SSJ, Chicopee

### Board of Directors

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**291 Springfield Street**

**Chicopee, MA 01013**

**265-2537 irishcenter@elms.edu**

**www.irish-cairde.org**

## September offers many events

On September 7, R. Todd Felton opens his photography exhibit: *A Journey into Ireland's Literary Heritage* in the Borgia Gallery at 2:00 p.m. For a preview of his works, go to [www.flickr.com/photos/74171715](http://www.flickr.com/photos/74171715). He will have photographs for sale, as well as his book of the same title.

Heather Lowe hosts the fall film series on three Wednesdays in September in the Alumnae Library. Sept 10 *Once*: When not playing for change, an Irish street musician (Glen Hansard) fixes vacuum cleaners in his father's repair shop. One day, a flower-selling Czech immigrant (Marketa Irglova) shows up with her broken vacuum and he soon discovers that she is also a musician. They embark on an eventful week of music and friendship. Sept 17 *Patrick*: Few historical figures inspire more celebration than St. Patrick. Watch his transformation from slave to liberator while learning to forgive his enemies and take up a cause no one believed in. Also showing: *Secrets of the Dead: Irish Escape*: It has been called the most outrageous escape story in the history of the high seas. In the mid 1870's, Irish patriot John Devoy

## Items of interest

The John Boyle O'Reilly Club: Sept 11, Ziti dinner by the Springfield Parade Committee will include a tribute to the 9/11 victims and survivors. Call Nancy Lefebvre 593-5818; Sept 13, Trivia Downstairs 8:00 PM \$20.00 a table (as many as can fit) to benefit the kitchen renovation; Sept 18, Dart league resumes on Thurs nights contact: Jim Feeley 737-1706; Sept 19, Bachelors Supper. Call Steve McGirr 374-9213; Sept 20,

hatched a plan to free six Irish political prisoners from an impenetrable jail in Western Australia.

Sept 24 *Gaelic Storm: Live in Chicago* Filmed live at the House of Blues in Chicago, Gaelic Storm performs some of their greatest songs in this exciting performance!

On September 28, 2:00 p.m. in the Alumnae Library our own Tom Moriarty will begin the lecture series: "The Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies" with a talk on the early Christian period. He will examine several questions relating to early Ireland. How did Christianity arrive in Ireland? What was the nature of Patrick's mission? What were the distinctive features of the early Irish church?

The series continues on October 28 with a talk by Peggy O'Brien, UMass professor and author: "Poets on Pilgrimage: Lough Derg as an icon of Catholicism and Nationalism."

On November 23 Damien Murray will address the topic, "Either Ireland is right or Bolshevism is right: The Catholic Church and Irish American Nationalism after World War I." The lectures are funded by the Irish Consul, Boston.

Scholarship Committee bus trip to Irish Music and Arts Festival in Latham N.Y. \$55. Contact Alesia Barbaro 478-8611; Nov 30, Fall Fashion Show.

Web site: [www.jbo-club.com](http://www.jbo-club.com)

Ancient Order of Hibernians: Oldies Dance on October 25 at the Wherehouse? Tickets \$10

Check out [www.sonsoferin.com](http://www.sonsoferin.com)

## Go h-iontach ar fad - Fabulous! by Gearoid MacOisdealbhaigh

I was nervous. I had never before taken a two week vacation from work and was concerned with what I would be faced with when I returned. On the other hand, I was anticipating the opportunity to spend two weeks in Ballyferriter with people who had the same passion for the language that I had. As it turned out, those two weeks were among the most enjoyable times I have ever spent.

I will readily admit that words have always fascinated me. At times, I probably take things to extremes. Listening to the welcome *i nGaeilge* on the Aer Lingus flight and watching the lettering on all the signs in the airport and on the roads to Ballyferriter were like an assortment of sweets in a candy shop to a chocoholic. The more I heard and saw, the more I needed to learn. The words became addictive.

There were thirty-five students who were studying and practicing their Irish with me at Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne. We all shared a love for the language, but I wanted to learn more about who these people were. I assumed that most of the students would be from the immediate area; I was wrong. There were two young men from Lithuania - a banker and a mutual fund manager. Imagine talk-



**Above right: Chip Costello with some of his language friends: below Danny Sheehy leads the hikers up Mount Brandon**

ing about the economy, Lithuania, and the United States through the medium of the Irish language. Other students were from Canada, the Netherlands, England, Wales, and Poland. Their reasons for learning the language were varied and ranged from personal to professional. The attraction to the Lithuanian gentlemen was that Irish was perceived as a minority language or lesser-used language, and they wanted to help preserve it. (Incidentally, they had already mastered seven other languages.) For others, the pull of their heritage or the challenge of learning something new motivated them. From a prag-

matic standpoint, there were others who were seeking language competency and preparing to pass a language requirement for their teaching jobs in Ireland.

Máire Uí Shígh and Máire Scannláin were wonderful, creative teachers. Classes were supplemented with a hike on the Blaskets with Danny Sheehy, traditional dancing, archaeological site visits, lectures on the language, card games, masses, and opportunities to talk in Irish with your peers or locals at lunch or in the pubs at night. It was the language that enabled us to learn more about ourselves, develop new friends, and appreciate the unique linguistic and cultural heritage of the Dingle Peninsula.

Tá mé ar ais anois. I am back now. As expected, there was plenty of work to do when I returned. In addition, I heard that Manny Ramirez was traded. Although these were important issues, I found myself thinking more about the new words acquired, friends made, and experiences not to be forgotten. Bhí sé go h-iontach ar fad!  
Slán go fóill.



**Irish Cultural Center  
at Elms College  
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Chicopee, MA 01013-2839**

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**Phone: 413-265-2537  
Email: [irishcenter@elms.edu](mailto:irishcenter@elms.edu)  
[www.irish-cairde.org](http://www.irish-cairde.org)**

## ICC Calendar of events

**Ongoing: Language groups meet weekly:** beginners, intermediate, conversation, advanced. Call the registrar at 265-2314 for fall classes

**Genealogy volunteer**  
Ed Callahan (413) 527-5091 or email at [eastgram@aol.com](mailto:eastgram@aol.com)

\* \* \* \*

**Sun. 3rd Sunday of each month, except March: Irish Music Seisiún, 1:00-4:00 p.m.**  
Dooley Campus Center, dining hall annex: Sept 21

**Fall film series,** Wednesdays, 7:00 pm Alum Library Theater  
September, 10 *Once*,  
17 *Patrick and Secrets of the Dead*,  
24 *Gaelic Storm*

**September 5-23, Borgia Gallery: R. Todd Felton photography** Sept 7, 2:00 pm Opening reception

**September 12-28** Big E, West Springfield, exhibit

**September 27** Wine Tasting, fundraiser for Irish Studies program.  
Tickets \$30

**Fall lecture series:**  
The Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies: Sundays, 2:00 p.m. Alum Library Theater  
Sept 28 Tom Moriarty  
Oct 26 Peggy O'Brien  
Nov 23 Damien Murray  
Funded by the Irish Consul, Boston

**December 6,** Christmas with an Irish Touch: Liturgy at 4 pm with entertainment to follow

**Jan 28, Feb 4, 11, 18**  
Film series

**Sale items** available: short sleeved forest green polo shirts embroidered with a shamrock and our name for \$20: short sleeved women's lime green tee shirts embroidered with a shamrock and our name for \$15 and kelly green tote bags with our logo for \$5.

**April 19-29, 2009**  
Journey of the Soul: Springtime in Ireland  
Information session September 7, 2 pm, Fontbonne Room, Dooley Campus Center