



## • UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER •

# Investing In Young Scholars, Musicians And Cultural Ambassadors

by Liam Reidy, President, United Irish Cultural Center, (lreidy@irishcentersf.org)

The Center has been a hive of activity over the past few weeks, with ongoing weekly Irish music, bagpipes, drumming, and Irish dance practices. But that's just the beginning – there's plenty more in store for our younger members in the weeks ahead!

### Supporting Our Scholars

First on the agenda is our annual Leo T Walsh scholarship program, which provides financial support to graduating high school seniors and eighth-grade students from local grammar schools as they embark on the next phase of their educational journey. In its 31st year, this program has awarded over 700 scholarships since its inception in 1994, thanks to the generous contributions of our community supporters and donors. We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our scholarship recipients at the award ceremony at 3pm on May 19th, followed by graduation festivities here at the Center later in May.

### Irish Camp Turns Four

Our annual Irish summer camp is gearing up for its fourth year, with an impressive 80 kids signed up to join Camp Director Máire Clerkin and her experienced team between June 10th and 28th. This year, campers will delve into the world of traditional Irish ballads and party songs, exploring the iconic sounds of artists like Si-

néad O'Connor, Christy Moore, and many more. Máire shares, "Ireland is famous for its music, and our campers will embark on a journey through both classic and contemporary Irish melodies, bringing these timeless stories to life through song and theatrical performance."

### A Delight for Campers

At camp, every participant will have the chance to shine, whether it's through singing, acting, dancing, or playing instruments. With a mix of indoor and outdoor activities, including sports, arts and crafts, and technology workshops, our campers will be fully immersed in Irish culture and creativity. And with three weeks of workshops covering everything from music and dance to storytelling and theater, our campers will collaborate to create a spectacular theatrical production to showcase their talents on June 28th.

### Camp Sign Up

There are still some spots available for this year's summer camp which runs from 9am-3pm daily Monday through Friday. Starts June 10th and you can sign up online. [www.irishcentersf.org/programs/irish-camp/](http://www.irishcentersf.org/programs/irish-camp/)

### Kids' Music Workshops

Don't miss our kids' music workshops during the traditional Irish Music Festival weekend from June 21st to 23rd! We'll be offering instruction in bodhrán, tin whistle, bagpipes, banjo,

fiddle, and more—a perfect opportunity for young musicians to develop an interest in a musical instrument and connect with their Irish heritage.

### Giants Irish Night

Eleven-year-old Tanner Manning has been selected to sing "The Star Spangled Banner" to kick off the SF Giants game against the Cincinnati Reds on May 10th as part of Irish Heritage night at the Giants. What a great honor for our Irish community to take center stage at our local big league ballpark. Tanner is a great UICC ambassador—thriving in our Youth Music Program as he's taken to the bagpipes. In addition to his singing talents, he's also a talented Irish dancer. We are excited to cheer him on May 10!

### Wawona Gates Turns 4

We will celebrate the four year anniversary of Wawona Gates on the weekend of June 21-23. The outdoor space at the Center was very popular during the pandemic and continues to serve as an event space for several events and for private parties during the year. Look for the music and dancing line up next month!

### AOH Young Ambassadors

In early June, two young men (Tony Sheridan and Shane Reidy) from the local community will travel to the Saint Patrick Center in Downpatrick, County Down as part of the

Ancient Order of Hibernians National Young Ambassadors Program. The aim of the program is to create a network of informed and influential young individuals throughout America with specialist knowledge and links to the northern part of Ireland. The Young Ambassadors program aims to develop a meaningful and on-going relationship with Ireland and will continue to represent it when appropriate throughout the rest of their lives through their work in the AOH.

### Keepers of the Steps

The Keepers of the Steps exhibition "Irish Dance—Celebrating the Roots, Rhythms, and Rituals of the San Francisco Irish" at the San Francisco Historical Society downtown has been extended until July. Great news if you have not had a chance to check it out. Check the Museums website for opening times. [www.sfhistorical.org/PathwaytoChange](http://www.sfhistorical.org/PathwaytoChange)

Members of the Irish community are invited to an evening discussion on peace and reconciliation in Ireland, taking place here at the Center on Thursday May 23rd at 7pm. Entitled "Planning and Preparing for a New and United Ireland" the event will feature two guest speakers from Ireland's Future, a leading civic group which enjoys engagement with people from all across the entire political spectrum in Ireland. Niall

Murphy is a Civil Rights Attorney and Karen Sethuraman is the only female Baptist Minister in Ireland. Organized by the Knights of the Red Branch and *The Irish Herald* this event promises a lively, informative and positive discussion around the best ways to achieve a fair and just society for all the people of Ireland.

### SFFD Blood Drive

The SF Fire Department Blood Drive hosted by Engine 19 at the Center on April 23rd collected 41 Units Helping 123 patients!

### Ronald Reagan

I had a note recently from John Haggerty (Santa Clara) who pointed out an omission in last month's message. As part of my notes on Irish American Heritage month, I noted that three of California's Governors (Pat Brown, Jerry Brown, and Gavin Newsom) had some Irish ancestry. However, I omitted to mention that California Governor (and later, two-term American President) Ronald Reagan also had substantial Irish ancestry. Indeed, all four of his father's grandparents were Irish immigrants. Thank you John for helping to fill out the historical record.

### World Champion Dancer

Congratulations to Hanah Logar (Whelan Academy) who won the World Senior Ladies Irish Dance championship in Glasgow, Scotland recently.

## Cartoon Saloon: Irish Animation Studio Visits The Center

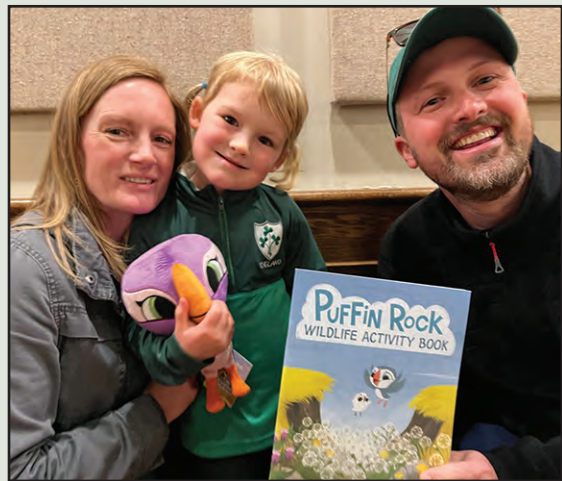
IN OUR ONGOING EFFORTS TO expand our children's Irish arts programming, we were delighted to host Jeremy Purcell, Director of the recently launched Puffin Rock Movie from Cartoon Saloon, on Saturday, April 27th.

At the Cartoon Saloon

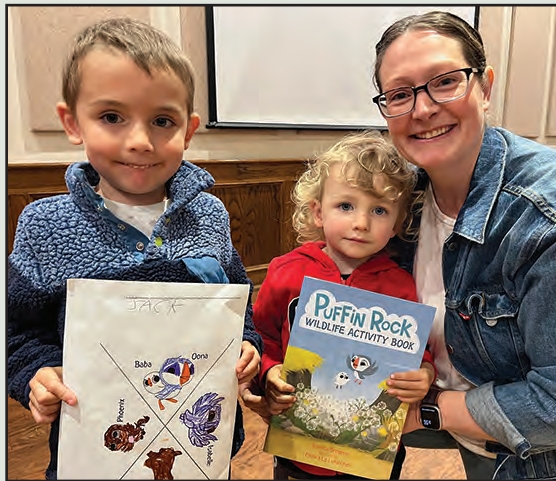
workshop, attendees enjoyed a screening of various Puffin Rock cartoons on the large screen, followed by a lively discussion led by Kate Gunning (SF Irish Film Festival) with Jeremy, who shared insights into his journey as a digital animator in Ireland.

Kids also had the chance to unleash their creativity by coloring their favorite Puffin Rock characters.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Irish Center's Annual Appeal Fund and our UICC members whose support made this event possible!



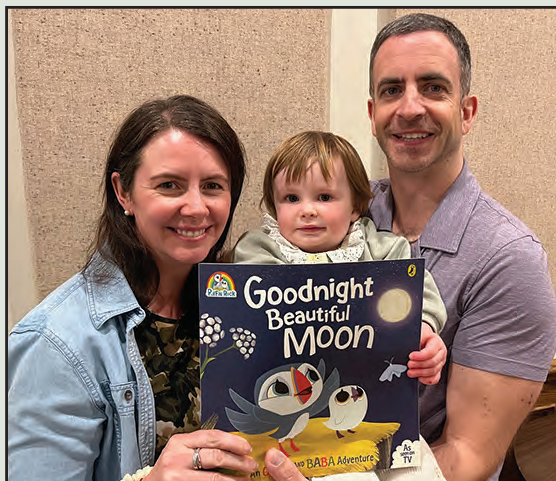
Aisling, Jack and James Storey.



Lindsay, Quinley and Tim O'Dwyer.



Kate Gunning and Jeremy Purcell.



Fidelma, Juliette and Rob MacNamara.

## Céilí On The Lake Irish Dance & Music Festival

THE CENTER HELD A PROMINENT spot at the first annual Céilí on the Lake on the weekend of April 27-28th. The UICC booth was set up and staffed by a small but mighty crew of volunteers—wonderful ambassadors for all the cultural programming efforts and exciting plans for the new Irish Center. New memberships were signed up; email addresses collected for communication; plenty of information about our building plans were offered; Taytos flying off the shelves; secondhand books sold to

benefit our Dowling Library with awareness raised as to what our Library has to offer; questions asked and answered about our history and where we are located; ancestors looked up in the history book when someone shared they thought their grandfather helped build the Irish Center; children delighted in the craft options of fairy wands and Saint Brigid crosses; plans for Irish dance dress donation and ephemera as we promoted the collection efforts of Keepers of the Steps; the delights of our youth music program.



Jamie O'Keefe and Anne Cassidy Carew at the UICC Booth at the Céilí.



Jamie O'Keefe, Anne Cassidy Carew, Renee Lazear, Eileen Mize & Josephine Brogan.



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**Irish Heritage Shines Bright At The Ballpark!**

GET READY FOR AN EXTRA SPECIAL TREAT at the San Francisco Giants game against the Cincinnati Reds on Friday, May 10th, because the Irish American community has a fantastic reason to arrive early.

Eleven-year-old Tanner Manning (pictured right) has been chosen to perform the US national anthem at the San Francisco Giants Irish Heritage Night. It's a tremendous honor for our community to be in the spotlight at our local big league ballpark. Tanner is a great UICC ambassador—thriving in our Youth Music Program as he's taken to the bagpipes. In addition to his singing talents, he's also a talented Irish dancer. Best of luck to Tanner! We're confident you'll hit it out of the park! Tanner's grandparents, John and Kathleen Manning, are original charter members of the Irish Center, adding even more significance to this memorable occasion. We are excited to cheer him on May 10!

Below: Representatives from several Irish organizations came together at 24 Willie Mays Plaza in April to finalize plans for the Giants Heritage Night.

*Pictured left to right: Liam Frost, Eamonn McCusker; Celine Kennelly, Eileen Mize, Paul Connie, PJ Masterson, and Nic O'Loughlin.*



**Connaught Social Club Sign Finds New Home**



*UICC President Liam Reidy accepts the Connaught Social Club sign from Mike O'Driscoll at the Patrick J Dowling Library.*

IN APRIL, MIKE O'DRISCOLL VISITED the Patrick J Dowling library and bestowed upon the Irish Center a cherished relic: the Connaught Social Club sign, tucked away in his late mother Rose Driscoll's garage for years. Crafted by Larry Donnelly, Rose's brother-in-law, this sign was a staple at dances and picnics over the decades. Larry Donnelly, also known for installing the double stairs before the Irish Center's grand opening, played a significant role in its establishment. Rose O'Driscoll (nee Lennon) from Cloone, County Leitrim, and Mike's father, a native of Baltimore in west Cork, were both founding members of the Irish Center when it opened its doors on March 8th, 1975. As the Center approaches its 50th anniversary on 45th Avenue next year, this donation serves as a poignant reminder of its rich history and enduring community spirit.

**AOH Division 17 Round Up**

THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 17 held their monthly meeting at the Irish Center on April 16th. The building was a hive of activity the same night with pickleball in the St. Patrick's room, and meetings held by SF Youth GAA, and the LAOH. Book your next meeting at the Irish Center call 415-741-8803. Your Center, Your Community!

*Pictured top right: Hibernians John O'Rourke, Ed Reidy, Liam Frost and Steve Murray. Below right: Sean Flynn, Fr Michael Healy, AOH Chaplain, with Mike Keohane, AOH Div 17, President. Below: Hibernian Jim Gleeson with AOH Div 17 President Mike Keohane.*



**Youth Pipers Latest Recruit**

CONOR O'SULLIVAN from San Mateo is the latest young recruit for the San Francisco Irish Pipers band.

Conor will explore both the chanter and drumming pads in the coming months.

Conor's father Paul serves on the board of the United Irish Societies, and is a grandson of Joan Guiney. Danny and Brian Guiney are Conor's uncles.



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irishcentersf.org  
For information  
about the Center,  
the Rebuilding  
Project,  
Membership,  
events, and much  
more ...*



Three 1-week sessions  
New 6-7 age group added  
Final Show June 28 @ 7 pm

**SPACE IS LIMITED**

THE UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER presents

**IRISH CAMP**

Youth Summer Program

2700 45th AVE @ WAWONA in SAN FRANCISCO'S OUTER SUNSET

JUNE 10-28, 2024 | AGES 6-16

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June 21, 22, 23 2024

A festival of traditional Irish music on the west coast

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