



• UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER •

Unveiling After-School STEM Courses At The United Irish Cultural Center

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

THE CENTER’S RANGE OF KIDS’ programs is undergoing a dynamic transformation and expansion. I have long envisioned an augmentation of our children’s educational offerings at the Center, building off of the triumph of our recent Irish summer camps. With a facility that remains underutilized from the early afternoon until the evening, when music and dance instruction takes over, a remarkable shift is on the horizon.

Community Driven Programs

During the preceding summer months, I engaged in several dialogues regarding an afterschool program at the Center with dedicated members and parents, Adrian and Jaime Fox. Thanks to their committed involvement, starting this September, the Center will launch a comprehensive 12-week array of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) afterschool courses tailored for local children, spanning from Kindergarten to 8th Grade. The enthusiastic response from parents has been overwhelmingly positive, and we anticipate accommodating more than 60 children every Monday and Wednesday afternoon.

The courses will be expertly taught by the esteemed San Francisco-based institution, Engineering For Kids. Their captivating and hands-on educational curriculum aims to acquaint young learners with

the wonders of the engineering discipline. Recognizing that proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and math forms the bedrock of numerous contemporary careers, the course offerings (ranging from engineering to coding) are all about instilling a sense of excitement in young minds about their future prospects.

A Glimpse into the Future

When contemplating the architectural plans for the Center’s forthcoming 2025 building, replete with dedicated classroom spaces, one’s imagination takes flight, envisioning the immersive experiences that youngsters will encounter within a cutting-edge, modern “smart” facility. Picture robotic creations crafted by kids traversing the stairs between the building’s first and second floors—an inspiring glimpse into the potential in the new space.

On the Homefront

As a parent of four children, a significant portion of last month was devoted to preparing them for the start of the approaching school year. This encompassed numerous trips to the school supplies store, acquiring fresh white-soled sneakers, expeditiously completing summer reading assignments, and even embarking on an out-of-state journey to “drop off” one of them at school. These scenarios have unfolded for generations within households throughout

the community.

Our family embarked on a journey across the Rockies to the eastern Colorado town of Golden. This town gained prominence in 1873 when beer brewer Adolph Coors established the original Coors brewing empire there. Much of the campus was built by the Coors family over the last century and a half. My son Shane is now a student at the School of Mines in Golden with a plan to major in Computer Science and Engineering.

Anyone for Banjo?

Much like countless other youngsters his age, Shane is adapting to life in a new town. One of the initial priorities was figuring out how he could continue his banjo education while away from home. A brief search of the Denver area revealed the presence of several Irish music sessions, including one close to Golden at Clancy’s Irish Bar in the suburb of Wheat Ridge (only a 15-minute ride from Golden). I paid a visit to this establishment and met with the resident banjo player Pete Strickler, the host of the Wednesday night session in Clancy’s. Pete lives and breathes the banjo, and as a teacher of Irish music he encourages others to join him in sessions. Talk about Shane landing on his feet, meeting an esteemed banjo player living so close to his new school! Hup!

2025 Project Volunteers

The 2025 Project team is looking for help with web-

site management and video editing. Know anyone that has those skills and would like to help out? Send an email to: marketing@irishcentersf.org

August Blood Drive

Thanks to all who came out for the SFFD Blood Drive! Because of you we ended up with 29 donors registered and 26 donors who donated. We collected 19 whole blood and 7 2RBC; in all, 33 lifesaving units were collected for the hospitals and helped up to 99 people! Way to go! Thanks to SFFD organizer Jeff Marcaletti and a crew of volunteers who worked to turn the UICC into a lifesaving machine!

Liam, It’s Jerry Here!

My last note for this month is dedicated to Jerry Cassidy, who suddenly passed away on August 5. “Liam, it’s Jerry here!” Those were the words Jerry always used to greet me whenever he called, seeking my assistance at the Center. Whatever volunteering bug Jerry caught during his years at the Center, he certainly passed it on to me. More often than not, the tasks turned out to be far more time-consuming than the mere 10 minutes Jerry had initially estimated. If it involved painting, Jerry paid close attention to how I held the brush or roller. I recall a time when I undertook the task of refinishing the wooden stalls in the men’s restroom that had fallen victim to graffiti. It was quite an effort, and when I finally completed it, Jerry offered

his gratitude. Jokingly, I asked, “Where do I ‘cash’ that thank you?” With a mischievous glint in his eye, he replied, “Your reward will come in due time!”

The United Irish Cultural Center held immense significance in Jerry’s life. Photographs lining the hallway depict him laboring alongside his lifelong friend Dan McAuliffe during the construction of the Center. Together, they ran a painting business for over 40 years. I can scarcely imagine what it must have been like for someone with such a profound and unwavering connection to the Center for five decades to witness its struggles back in 2018. Since then, I’m certain he found solace in witnessing the recent resurgence of the Center’s fortunes and the unveiling of plans for the building in 2021.

A mere two weeks prior to his passing, Jerry was on the phone with me one Friday, discussing the need for some grease on the entrance gate hinges at Wawona Gates. He followed up that conversation on Monday to inquire whether I had addressed the issue. Indeed, I had. I contacted Mike Bowler, and with the combined efforts of Mike and Joe O’Leary, the gate now swings freely, devoid of any creaking sounds.

Sincere sympathy to Jerry’s wife Sally, daughter Anne, and son Gerald.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam. (May his soul be at the right hand of God).

West Cork Native Showcases Art Collection At The Center

WEST CORK NATIVE (Kilcrohane, County Cork) Jerry Daly showcased his collection of painted art at the Rock the Gates festival on August 26th. Jerry exhibited over 80 individual pieces of his art collection which has developed over the years. The exhibition runs in the St Francis room now until Sunday September 17th. There will be a special afternoon open house during the Halfway to St. Patrick’s Day celebration on September 17th.



Barry O’Connell, Jerry Daly and Vince Keegan.



Kjersti Kjesbu, Derry Brennan and Jerry Daly at the exhibition.

Summer Boxing Series Attracts Bumper Crowd

OUR THIRD AMATEUR BOXING NIGHT of the year drew another robust crowd to the Center on August 12th. Fire in the Ring (Fitr) boxing club brought together the best of the local and statewide amateurs for a 13 bout boxing card. Young Fitr boxer Johnny O’Shea won bout of the night while Irish man Kevin Cummings won best fighter on the night. Boxing will return in 2024.



Best fighter Kevin Cummings, Roscommon; Shane Muldoon, Knock, Co. Mayo; John Callahan, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary at the exhibition.



Johnny and Danny O’Shea.



Kevin and Lily Wade.



Jimmy Ford, Dan Maguire, Jimi Crowley.



Val Kirwan, Gerry Kelly and Stephaine Reidy.



Dan O’Connor and Reese Wong.

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Community News And Milestones

Margaret and Tom McCarthy



MARGARET AND TOM MCCARTHY came out to enjoy Irish music at Rock the Gates on August 26. They recently retired from the Moving and Storage (McCarthy Moving) business after 47 years in business last year. The firm was established on March 17, 1975 and continued until March 17, 2023. Enjoy your retirement!

Marie and Jack Fitzpatrick



CONGRATULATIONS TO MARIE AND JACK FITZPATRICK on being named as honorees at San Francisco Catholic Charities 26th Annual Loaves and Fishes Gala in October. As 2023 Faith in Action Honorees Jack Fitzpatrick (Catholic Charities Board of Directors Emeritus and Former Executive Director, The Carl Gellert and Celia Berta Gellert Foundation) and Marie Fitzpatrick (former Principal at St. Thomas More School, and strong champion of the education in the Bay Area) are being recognized for their vibrant contributions to a stronger, more equitable community, and for their deep connections and commitment to San Francisco and the programs of Catholic Charities.

Annie McBride



Annie McBride and Claire McBride.

Founder of the McBride Irish Dancers Annie McBride, ADCRG is being celebrated by generations of Marinwood dance students for her 45 years of commuting from her home in Oakland to the San Rafael community of Marinwood every Thursday for 45 years! A new era begins in Marinwood with Alisa Belew, TCRG of the Healy School taking the reins while Annie focuses on her many East Bay classes. Her commitment to being one of the first to bring Irish step dancing to the North Bay in the late 70s, having started her own school in 1967, is to be commended.

100s and 100s of dancers were introduced to Irish step dancing as a result of Annie McBride. Best of luck at your upcoming feis—the 41st Annual East Bay Feis, and thanks to you and your daughter Eileen McBride Parker, TCRG for bringing your dancers to our recent Rock the Gates event.

Tom Murphy



UICC MEMBER AND LONG-TIME SUPPORTER Tom Murphy was recently honored by the city for his efforts in organizing a popular Jerry Garcia event. In light of the recent 21st annual Jerry Day at McLaren Park which was a big success, Mayor London Breed presented Tom with a special proclamation celebrating his efforts. Well done!

Katie McFadden



WELL DONE TO KATIE MCFADDEN for representing San Francisco so beautifully on the international stage. The SF native, daughter of Dymphna and Leo McFadden, and firefighter for the state of California with aspirations to be SFFD chief one day, Katie McFadden just returned from Ireland where she proudly represented her home town as the San Francisco Rose. She made it home just in time to hold court and champion future Roses at Rock the Gates.

Patricia and Les Mize



PATRICIA AND LES MIZE, parents of our marketing manager and Keepers of the Steps coordinator Eileen Mize, just celebrated their 54th Wedding Anniversary. Both born to Irish mothers in San Francisco, they grew up in Marin County, and raised six children in Marinwood where they still reside, enjoying their 8 young grandchildren. They couldn't make it to Rock the Gates this year—but they were representing at home!

**UNITE SF**

& Irish Center SF

present



Join us for **Sunday 9.17.23**

Halfway to St. Patrick's Day

& International Irish Dance Day

with

Anthony Arya Band

Whelan Academy of Irish Dance

& a special visit from Mayor London Breed

A Celebration in Wawona Gates 

2700 45th Ave San Francisco at Wawona



UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER of SAN FRANCISCO

5th ANNUAL

Oktoberfest

by the Beach

with music by Alpine Sound

Indoor & Outdoor Beer Gardens

September 30, 2023

from 4 pm

2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

TICKETS: www.irishcentersf.org



Irish Center SF

presents



Arán & Im

with Manchán Magan

Friday, October 6, 2023

United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco

2700 45th Ave San Francisco





• UICC •

Crowds Turned Out In Big Numbers To Rock The Gates

ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2023, nearly 1,500 turned out for the 2nd annual Rock the Gates Summer Music Festival at the Center. This family friendly festival certainly had something for everyone— not just in terms of a range of music, but also various other attractions such as a Classic Car Show that dominated their block of 45th Avenue, a special art exhibition featuring large mixed media on canvas by Irish-born, SF artist Jerry Daly, the Irish Dance museum “Keepers of the Steps” hosting a dress and shoe drive for no-longer-needed Irish dance regalia, a special Whiskey Workshop by a local rep from Clonakilty Irish Whiskey, a special Irish Coffee collaboration with next door neighbor Java Beach, face painting (thanks Kevin Birmingham) and a bounce house (thanks, Cyril Hackett) for the kids, and so much more!

The festival featured over a dozen bands, primarily from around the Bay Area, across three stages along with appearances by dancers from seven Bay Area Irish Dance Schools and several pop-up processions by the San Francisco Irish Pipers Band. The Irish Center

is very much a neighborhood community center, so this summer festival serves as a great way to connect with friends and neighbors during the back-to-school time when people are back from summer adventures.

Aside from rejoicing in a team of extraordinary volunteers who turned out in force, event highlights included the Irish dancers (nearly 100 in total!), 80s dance band, Dirty Spoon, the U2 tribute band— L.A.vation, The Hooks closing down the Emerald Pub, the SF Irish Pipers Band, the multi-generational fun being had by all, and a lot of rockin’ great music!

The festival serves as a great Open House of sorts for all the amenities the Irish Center has to offer for members, prospective members, neighbors, and friends. The Irish Center is a great event space and also boasts a library and research room for all things Irish, meeting space for youth music lessons, local church services, blood drives, polling place, meetings and events, and more. Check out our website at www.irishcentersf.org for a calendar of events or for event rental information.



Irish Pipers Take over the Wawona Gates Stage.



UICC marketing coordinator Eileen Mize, Vice President of the Board Anne Cassidy Carew, and Events Manager Aileen Dulohery.



Bill Carey, Sophie Breall, Kathleen Dowling McDonagh, Brendan Cormack, Francie Bedinger, and Kevin McDonough.



Cathy Mibach and Carol Barazi.



Leo Cassidy, Liam Reidy, and Dennis O'Keeffe.



Vince Keegan, Jim and Jamie Fogarty.



Chris Del Carlo and Roger Gargano.



U2 tribute L.A.vation brought down the house with “Sunday Bloody Sunday.”

THE UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER of SAN FRANCISCO

MAD HATTER Tea Party

13th Annual

Hats encouraged; tea & sandwiches, sweet treats, & assorted goodies provided

Sept. 10, 2023 1-3 pm

Fundraiser for Patrick J. Dowling LIBRARY

www.IrishCenterSF.org



Irish musician Darren Kiely with Aoihinn Reidy.



San Francisco Rose Katie McFadden with Irish Consul General Micheál Smith



UICC Board member and Membership Coordinator Maggie Overbay.



Volunteers Nancy Sanchez and Pati Traktman.



Denise Bray and Edel Gorman.



Val Kirwan with Martha Cohen.