

SCÉAL ÉILE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OF COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN



From the Chairman



A Chairde,

Late spring means (in addition to May Day and Mother's Day) that the Provincial CCE Convention has come and gone, and that all of the Regional Fleadhs (or is it "Fleadheana" ?) are in the works. While our relatively new "West Region" does not hold its own Fleadh, these weekend gatherings at which the annual music competitions take place are among the highlights of the Comhaltas calendar in many parts of the country. Once again, a group of our younger musicians in the Bay Area made the trek east, to Chicago this year, for the Mid-West Fleadh -- and once again they did us proud! They did so well in fact that it is a bit difficult to be entirely sure of the final count, but among them, George Grasso, Autumn Rhodes, Owen Meehan, Dave Cory, and Theo Paige took a combined total of first place in 10 categories, and seconds and thirds in a few more! Be sure to congratulate them when next you see them at the Plough or the Cultural Center, its a great thing to have Cooley-Keegan so strongly represented with good music as well as dancing around the country.

We are also fortunate, of course, to have venues like the Plough and Stars and the Cultural Center to hear such music, and often to dance to it. In difficult economic times like these, we should also remember that these venues also depend on us to remain viable. I have heard that the Irish Center, in particular, has revamped their restaurant offerings, including a new Early Bird special menu, to broaden their appeal -- please consider coming out a bit early before class on a Thursday, or before the dancing on our Saturdays there, and enjoy a nice meal with friends before dancing away the evening!

Slán,
Micheál R



Events this Month



CCE Night at the UICC - On the third Saturday of the month, May 21st and June 18th, CCE will host a night of dancing at the UICC Music begins at 7:30 with dancing at 8PM to live traditional Irish Music. Admission is free. Contact: Michael Riemer (riemer@ce.berkeley.edu).

South Bay/ Peninsula - On Tuesdays we meet at Lily Mac's in Sunnyvale. Lessons: 7:30; Dance to live music 8-10. \$5 donation suggested. Info: Michael Murphy at irishboogieman@yahoo.com 415-999-6062. .

East Bay - Starry Plough in Berkeley hosts ceili dancing on Mondays. Lessons from 7 to 9PM and dancing to live music from 9 to 11PM. Contact: John Slaymaker.

North Bay - Mary McDonagh and Micheal Minihane teach Set Dancing on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at Brosnan School of Irish Dance from 7 to 9PM. There is a \$5 charge for this class. Tea and cakes or sweets will be served. Contact: Mary McDonagh (irishsetdancer@yahoo.com), Micheal Minihane (michealminihane@yahoo.com)

Children's Ceili - The next Children's Ceili will be held at the Irish Cultural Center on June 26th from 4-6PM. Comhaltas Members. Free. Non Comhaltas Members: \$5 per child or \$10 for two or more children.. Contact Josephine Brogan at 415-681-4803 or josephinebrogan@yahoo.com.

See calendar page for address, phone number and web page for all venues.



FOUNDED IN 1951, COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN IS IRELAND'S PREMIERE CULTURAL MOVEMENT. WHEN YOU JOIN COMHALTAS, YOU JOIN PEOPLE IN MORE THAN 400 BRANCHES WORLDWIDE IN SUPPORT OF THE TRADITIONAL IRISH ARTS OF MUSIC, DANCE AND LANGUAGE. WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS. PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION OR VISIT US ON THE WEB AT [HTTP://SF.CCEWEST.ORG](http://sf.ccewest.org)

SAINT PATRICK'S CEILI

The St. Patrick's Day Ceili (a.k.a. Parade Recovery Ceili) on Sunday, March 20th, is without a doubt the most successful, most enjoyable, and best attended Spring event Cooley-Keegan Branch of Comhaltas has had in the 21st Century so far; no exaggeration whatsoever!

About 75 fun-starved souls arrived but left satisfied (nourished?) because their hearts were filled with the joys of a wide variety of dance selections from our visitor-friendly Ceili dances to pulse-pumping polka sets to quirky couple dances, such as "Peeler and the Goat". We even mixed it up with the mother of all mixes, "John Paul Jones," ultimate in the "partner roulette" experience.

Our ears perked up with the delightful, exhilarating sounds of Live Oak Ceili Band (Miliosa & Richard Lundy, Lew Milligan and Peter Persoff), who also masterfully "navigated" the "choppy waters" of the stop-start nature of John Paul Jones. Our ears were also inviting us to be entranced and enchanted with the lovely, soft voice of special guest, Sarah Kramer, who nevertheless commanded quiet attention from the whole room. Finally, worth noting on acoustics, Michael Riemer and Jim Nunnally also did a "sound" job of tweaking the hand-held microphone – often a pesky issue in the past – to help meek, mild-mannered leader/caller, Michael Murphy, sound like the "voice of Bach." Well done gentlemen!

Even though St. Patrick events in the past have been brilliant, this most recent offering displayed a grand energy, rare flair and smooth flow that will be impossible to forget, especially by this floor hound who has collected miles of memories from over 30 years of attending Ceilis.

Many thanks and congratulations to all participants who helped make St. Patrick's Ceili 2011 an enormous success. Could the success of this past Ceili be a suitable argument for having even more Ceilis besides the three we already do? Feel free to share your thoughts with our esteemed editor, Tim Sullivan.

See you on the dance floor. Michael Murphy

GENERAL MEETING

General Meetings of the Membership are held on the first Tuesday of the month. The next ones will be on May 3rd and June 7th starting at 7:30 at the UICC. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. (No meeting in July)

SONG AND STORYTELLING

The next Singing and Storytelling Seisiún will be hosted by Michael Jones on May 6th

412 Winding Way
San Carlos
650 622 9598
mfj@ieee.org

The June Seisiún, on the 3rd, will be hosted by Patrick McEvoy

251 Chestnut
Palo Alto, California 94306
1.650.493.3773
swagman@swagman.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please help support Celtic music, folk music, and public radio by taking pledges at the KALW pledge drive on Saturday May 14th. Volunteers are needed between 2pm and 8pm during the station's Celtic, folk and bluegrass programs. Food and training provided as well as on-air recognition for Comhaltas. Please contact Jennifer Mahoney at jenny.mahoney@gmail.com or 415 216-5490 if you can help out.

SPECIAL THANK YOU

A long-time goal (indeed, one of Kasey's dreams) is to have costumes for our dancers and musicians to wear at various events and performances. Thanks to the industrious fundraising efforts of Pari Livermore, we were able to have a number of ladies' and mens' vests sewn to wear in the parade. What a lovely enhancement our new vests are! Sorry you could not be with us for this debut, Pari, but we wish you good health and hope to see you back soon. Thank you so much for all your hard work on behalf of this on-going project.

CCE CLASSES

CCE sponsors the following classes at the UICC.

Adult Irish Language
Children's Tin Whistle
Children's Fiddle
Children & Adult Bodhran

For more information, please contact Josephine Brogan at josephinebrogan@yahoo.com or 415-681-4803. Pre-registration and payment is required to secure a place for all classes.



St. Patrick's Day Parade - 2011



To all the volunteers who worked on our First Place float in the St. Patrick's Day Parade:

Year after year you show up and work together building and decorating our float to make it beautiful. Even the greatest ideas don't mean much if there is no one to make it happen--it wouldn't happen without you. You are so appreciated. Thank you very much for giving of your time and effort. Those who worked on the float: Dan McAuliffe, Pat Nash, Theresa Joyce, Pat Joyce, Kasey Curtin, John Bykoff, Joannie O'Leary, Sean Griffin, Jennifer Mahoney, Morgan Kulla, Cathy Mibach, Don Mibach, Al Arnolfo, Jim O'Donnell, Connie Lynch, Mary McDonagh, Frank McDonagh, Jim Ansbro, Terry Ritts, Craig Ritts, Tom Sleckman, Roger Gargano, Katherine Scanlon. - Kasey Curtin

To all the dancers who performed during this St. Patrick's Day season:

Thank you for giving of your time and talent to entertain at various retirement homes and in the parade. Many smiles were seen on the faces of those enjoying the dancing and music. Thank you for coming to practices and performances and for helping to make it possible to win first place in the parade. The dancers are: Dan McAuliffe, Kasey Curtin, Mary McDonagh, Frank McDonagh, Tracy Griffin, Sean Griffin, Cathy Mibach, Jen Mahoney, Pat Nash, Al Arnolfo, Connie Lynch, Bill Ngai, Maureen Murphy, Joannie O'Leary, Michael Murphy, Terry Ritts, Judy Forrest, Dave O'Mara, Martin Sirk, Aine Minihane, Micheal Minihane, Martin Giles, Martine Millere, Geli Millere. Carrying our banner and flags, leading the float were the ever-faithful Pat and Teresa Joyce, Linda Joyce and Diane Joyce. Cheering everyone on were Oceanlight; Sopan; Jim & Peggy O'Donnell; Sarah, Sophia & Quinn Alvarado & Abrahm. A great, steady job driving the rig and flatbed is due to the steady hand of Galway man, John Keon. - Connie Lynch

A huge bouquet of thanks is due Kasey and Connie for their devotion to organizing the materials, details, helpers, choreography and logistics each year so these events can take place and thrive. THANK YOU!

Tourists, visitors and San Franciscans alike were treated to the lively, radiant traditional music provided by our wonderful musicians. Crowds all along the parade route clapped, danced and cheered to the tunes of John Sherry, Barb Southworth, Lew Milligan, Michael Riemer, Linnea Sepe-Forrest, Sean O'Donnell. Their lively renditions kept everyone in the best of spirits coming up Market Street and especially at the reviewing stand! Thank you for sharing your talents with us.

For years, we have been recipients of wonderful benefactors in our community, without whom we literally would not be able to enter our float in the parade. They have been with us through thick and through thin, good times and bad, rain and sunshine...and we are deeply indebted to Charlie & Karen Cunningham and their crew (Cunningham Moving and Storage) and Bill & Betty Welch and Steve & Kathleen Welch (Duggans Funeral Home - 17th Street, SF). The Cunninghams generously provide us with the rig and flatbed every year, and space and equipment to construct the float - a phenomenal gift - especially when it could be used for their own jobs! The Welch Family opens their doors to us on Parade Day, enabling us to meet, don costumes, put finishing touches on the float, etc. Richard takes care of us and our cars with the dedication of a father to our project every year! To these unassuming, benevolent friends who quietly share so that we may be part of the wonderful St. Patrick's Day Parade every year - we all say a Mighty Thank You from our hearts!!!



CCE Convention 2011



Attendees of the 2011 Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Convention gather for a group photo.



T. Kevin Mallen Scholarship Awards



Congratulations to the young members of our Comhaltas branch in our traditional Irish music program who were awarded T. Kevin Mallen Scholarships for the year 2011: Sean O'Donnell, Padraig Lyons, Eoin Lyons, Claire Flaherty, Riley McKeon, Connor Sheedy, Cormac Lyons and Sinead McKeon.

Aside from their music lessons, these young people meet to share tunes and would be happy to have more company. A new tin whistle class with instructor, Ceri Garfield from Clare, has been started with 6 new students!! We feel a Youth Ceili Band in the making!!

Sean O'Donnell is our Youth Officer and would be happy to talk to any young people of the community who would like to participate in our activities. Contact Sean at: sodonnell12@siprep.org



News and Tidbits from CCE Members...



The **Frank Rooney Band** was honored to play for the Grand Marshal's Dinner at the UICC on March 4, 2011. Thanks to Cathy Mibach, Connie Lynch, and Margaret McAuliffe for the generous invitation. The music of Frank, Lew Milligan and Barb Southworth was enjoyed by all!

News from **Barb and Tom Southworth**:

Dan and Erica Southworth (and family!) are moving to Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dan (son of Barb and Tom) has accepted a position at the University of Michigan. He will teach and mentor graduate students at U Michigan beginning Fall, 2011. Barb and Tom are very proud of "the kids" and plan to make frequent visits to see the grandboys (and their parents). And yes, there is at least one Irish music bar in town! (Don't be surprised if Barb tries to pass her grandchildren off as midgets to get them into the Irish bar.)

Incidentally, I know that some of our musicians (i.e., Autumn Rhodes, Dave Cory, George Grasso) did REALLY well at the Midwest Fleadh, thereby qualifying to compete in the Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann in Cavan Town from August 13-22, 2011, but the results from the Midwest Fleadh have not yet been posted, so the details will have to wait for the next Sceal. - **Barb**

The **Cooley-Keegan Branch** would like to extend our condolences to Dave O'Mara whose father passed away on March 19th in Ireland and to Michael Jones whose father passed last Wednesday, April 20th in England. May they rest in peace.

Congratulations to **Terry and Craig Ritts** on the birth of their second grandchild, a beautiful baby boy named Quin! Now cousin Annabelle will have a playpal. - **Moe**

The **Comhaltas North American Convention** in San Antonio, Texas on March 24-27th was a wonderfully fun, entertaining weekend. A grand crew of 30 represented the SF Cooley-Keegan Branch and joined a big crowd from the US, Canada and Ireland to sing, dance, chat, play innumerable wonderful tunes, tour the sights and taste the cuisine of San Antonio!!

In this month's "Sceal Eile" (Another Story)...here are a few stories to whet your appetite and entice YOU to come to the 2012 CCE Convention in St. Louis, MO... (inquiring minds DO want to know!!!)

"The convention San Antonio was my first convention and I am now wondering why I didn't attend previous ones! It was such a magnificent weekend of great dancing, superb music, talented workshop instructors and most of all amazing people from all over Canada and the US with a common goal of having fun. Kudos to the San Antonio convention committee who planned an excellent weekend. That's all I can say on this topic however as we all know the saying "What happens in San Antonio stays in San Antonio!" I'm already looking forward to next year's convention in St. Louis and I hope to see you all there too!!" - **Deirdre McNamara**

Well, who can keep a secret for long? Can you guess which two tall, dark-haired, stunning ladies managed to sprint their way onto the dance floor to pose between two Texas Rangers (on duty) during the ceili, for a photo???

And which fine gentleman in his cowboy hat and boots escorted three ladies to the "Cowboy Dancehall" in San Antonio and expertly (and patiently) whirled each of them around the floor until the wee hours???

Someone picked up a lost soul at the Alamo. This poor soul said his mates lost him!! Left him stranded, out from Ireland, no car, no phone! Since Ralph had an empty seat beside him on our tour bus, he generously offered it to the lost soul. Our tour director quickly picked up on the extra person, 'cause the count of people on the bus leaving the Alamo was higher than leaving the hotel! Poor thing had a puzzled look on her face and went to the other bus to see if they were short one!! On return to our bus, she asked if we were willing to keep the lost soul. After a long pause and short discussion we decided to keep him on our bus BUT he had to give us a song! He did, with great gusto - we all joined in on the chorus, and all was well. Ollie it was great having you on our bus!! - **Mary McDonagh**

Do take a look at the wonderful piece Eamon O'Loughlin from Canada did for the Irish Examiner USA. It was published this week and can be viewed online at: www.irishexaminerusa.com (flip to pages 18 / 19).



Set Dancing



1st Thursday: Plough and Stars in San Francisco at 8:00pm. Music by the Shannon Céilí Band.

2nd through last Thursdays:

- Lessons at the United Irish Cultural Center (UICC) in San Francisco at 7:30pm -- check at bar for room. Taped music:
- Plough and Stars in San Francisco at 9:30pm. Shannon Ceili Band typically plays on the 1st and 2nd Thursday; Topsy House on the 3rd and 4th and last Thursday;
- Dancers are encouraged to contribute \$5 to support the live music.

Tuesdays:

- Lily Mac's in Sunnyvale. Lessons: 7:30; Dance to live music 8-10. \$5 suggested to support the live music.

Mondays:

- Starry Plough in Berkeley: Ceili dancing on Mondays. Lessons from 7 to 9PM and dancing to live music from 9 to 11PM. Contact: John Slaymaker.

2nd and 4th Fridays:

- Brosnan School of Irish Dance in San Rafael: From 7 to 9 pm. There is a \$5 charge for this class. Contact: Mary McDonagh (irishsetdancer@yahoo.com), Micheal Minihane (michealminihane@yahoo.com)



Seisiún



Slow Seisiún:

- Junior Seisiun/slow seisiun is now held one hour prior to each Children's Ceili at the UICC. Please check the calendar for details and dates.

Seisiún: - Sundays and Tuesdays starting at 8:30 at the Plough and Stars, various hosts.

Song and Storytelling Seisiún: Held on the first Friday of each month, check above for details.

COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OF
COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN
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Bhealtaine 2011

De Dómhnaigh SUNDAY	De Luan MONDAY	De Mairt TUESDAY	De Céadaoin WEDNESDAY	Deáardaoin THURSDAY	De h-Aoine FRIDAY	De Sathairn SATURDAY
May 1 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	2	3 <u>CCÉ Meeting</u> UICC 7:30PM <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	4	5 <u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	6 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Michael Jones San Carlos	7
8 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	9	10 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	11	12 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	13 <u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Rafael	14
15 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	16	17 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	18	19 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Topsy House	20	21 <u>CCE Ceili</u> UICC 8PM w/ Live Music
22 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	23	24 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	25	26 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Topsy House	27 <u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Rafael	28
29 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	30	31 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's Sunnyvale <u>Song Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	Jun 1	2 <u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	3 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Patrick McEvoy Palo Alto	4



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Meith 2011

DÉ DOMHNAIGH SUNDAY	DÉ LUAN MONDAY	DÉ MÁIRT TUESDAY	DÉ CÉADAOIN WEDNESDAY	DÉARDAOIN THURSDAY	DÉ h-Aoine FRIDAY	DÉ SATHAIRN SATURDAY
May 29	30	31	Jun 1	2	3	4
<u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	<u>Song Seisiún</u> Patrick McEvoy Palo Alto	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>CCÉ Meeting</u> UICC 7:30PM <u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	<u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Rafael	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Topsy House		<u>CCE Ceili</u> UICC 8PM w/ Live Music
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Song Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Topsy House	<u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Rafael	
26	27	28	29	30	Jul 1	2
<u>Children's Ceili</u> UICC 4-6PM <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> Lily Mac's, Sunnyvale <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Ceili Band	<u>Song Seisiún</u> Location TBD	

Plough and Stars - 116 Clement Ave. (Between 2nd and 3rd), San Francisco, (415) 751-1122 theploughandstars.com

U.I.C.C. - 2700 45th Ave. (At Sloat Blvd.), San Francisco, (415) 661-2700 www.irishcentersf.org

Lily Mac's - 118 S. Murphy St. Sunnyvale (between Washington and Evelyn Aves)

Starry Plough - 3101 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley (510) 841-2082 starryploughpub.com

Beckett's Irish Pub - 2271 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley (510) 647-1790 www.beckettsirishpub.com

Bronsan School of Irish Dance - 1879 2nd Street, San Rafael (415) 259-0992 bronsanschool.com

You can also visit the following websites for events:

San Francisco CCE - Cooley-Keegan Branch - sf.ccewest.org

Santa Cruz CCE - Clifford-Hoban Branch - www.folkplanet.com/cce