



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

June 2020

Brother Hibernians _____



As we head into the Independence Day holiday, I hope all are well and finding more and more bits of normalcy as our world slowly reopens. Here's hoping that we can do it as quickly as possible while maximizing the safety of all and avoiding any backsliding.

As the joke goes, it's hard to believe the first three years of 2020 are already over – it's been quite the slog. We have continued to try to conduct what division business we can virtually or creatively. Please see the follow-up story on delivery of scholarships to this year's winners. Also, as an organization, we have continued to focus on charities in support of relief efforts around the pandemic, especially those delivered by Catholic organizations – see the article that follows on distribution of some charity dollars that you, as members of this organization, have raised.

Our latest Division 3 and Hibernian House officers' meeting focused on how we continue to fulfill our mission as a fraternal organization and eventual restart all activities in a responsible manner. In the short run, that means opening the pub. A team of members met at the Hibernian House several weekends ago and did a thorough clean-up of the outside grounds. This was done in memory of Phil Sheridan who would always organize such an effort each spring – if I started naming them, I know I'd forget someone (suffice to say, they picked possibly the hottest day yet this year, God bless them). In the longer run, reopening considerations include re-starting division meetings and even considerations like running the Pot O' Gold in a post-COVID world. As always, I thank the officers and other volunteers for their efforts and consideration.

Good & Welfare – Please remember John Crilley, Larry Cronin and Gene Flood, all fighting various medical issues, in your prayers. Please also continue to remember all those in our community affected by the pandemic. Please also say a special prayer for our law enforcement professionals. Amidst all the unrest, they continue to show up and do their jobs despite all sorts of criticism and increased risk. Their fortitude demonstrates that for them, this truly is a vocation, not just a job. Finally, with the Fourth of July this weekend, please remember all our uniformed service members who continue to protect our lives and our freedoms.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Division Scholarships



Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 outbreak, Division 3 continues in our mission to support our heritage and the educational aspirations of the young in these trying times. As mentioned last month, nine children of members earned division scholarships, totaling nearly \$10,000. The students had to submit a resume detailing their academic and community service involvement in addition to sitting an examination on Irish and Irish American history.

While we couldn't have our typical Hibernian Mass followed by a Communion Breakfast where we typically presented the scholarships, scholarship presentation took on a "personal touch" as members of the scholarship committee, along with member and County Legislators John McGowan, made house calls to deliver the awards. Each scholar was presented with a check, a certificate from the Division commemorating their achievement, as well as a certificate of recognition from the Rockland County legislature. We thank Vince Tyer (also a member and County Legislator) and John for obtaining the County resolution for recognition, and the scholarship committee for 'thinking outside the box' and finding a meaningful way of recognizing these individuals.

Amidst the current challenging times, we take pride in being able to look to the future by providing assistance for the education of tomorrow's leaders. See some pictures of the presentations.



Charities



Over the last month, we have donated \$500 each to three Catholic charities in the local area, with a focus on those that are helping individuals impacted by the pandemic. I was fortunate to be able to present the money to representatives of each organization along with a box of face masks (again, available due to the generosity of our members). In these times, the masks were as appreciated as the funds – given that most people in need at this time rarely have the extra money to spend it on PPE. Following is a little bit about each charity:

- Albertus Magnus High School “Falcon Fund” – This is a fund that was set up to help families in the school who were adversely affected, whether it be health or economics, by the COVID pandemic. We presented the gift to division member Chris Power, Principal of Albertus Magnus.
- Saint Aedan’s Society of St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry – St. Aedan’s has been running their food pantry for many years with a regular list of clients, but since the outbreak of coronavirus and the economic downturn that followed, need has dramatically increased. Fortunately, charitable giving is also up, according to Deacon Jim Maher, who met with Phil Lane and I to accept our donation.
- Saint Joseph’s – Our donation is going to help student Ryan Orlando, whose mother died as a nurse in Valley Hospital fighting Covid-19. The money will go to the continuation of his education at St. Joe’s. With the loss of his mother, he is now living with his grandmother. See the following story on northjersey.com:

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/coronavirus/2020/04/23/nj-coronavirus-valley-hospital-nurse-hero-her-sons-and-patients/2998154001/>





As mentioned, preparations at the Hibernian House continue. A lot of the 'heavy lifting' is done, but the devil is in the details. Right now, Frank and Pete are attending law school to fully understand the various rules and regulations necessary to open an indoor facility serving alcohol and no food. We would insert a joke here about passing the bar, but the team has their hands full with CDC, Federal, State and local guidelines to consider. For instance, there are a variety of required elements in the facility – such as touchless hand sanitizer dispensers at doors – as well as considerations around daily and intra-day cleaning. The team continues to work through those elements while getting the more mundane elements in place – like removing all the outdated beer and restocking the bar.

As mentioned last month, we will keep everyone informed via email, call and post and Facebook, of timing on re-opening as soon as we know more.

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June History

“If They Get the Flag, They’ll Get Old Mike”

From a rise of land known as Chin Ridge, the men of the 75th Ohio saw a sight that must have made their blood run cold. They were part of Union General John Pope’s Army of Virginia (not to be confused with the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia), which had in the Summer of 1862 been proceeding south in an attempt to capture Richmond and end the war. However, troops under the famed “Stonewall Jackson” had outmaneuvered Pope and reoccupied the old First Bull Run/Manassas battlefield where the American Civil war had started a year ago. Sensing an opportunity to crush the vaunted Jackson, Pope turned to engage him while ignoring reports that another Confederate force was approaching on his left flank. Now the men of the 75th were seeing that other Confederate force, led by John Bell Hood’s Texans, sweeping over the battlefield like a tidal wave, having already annihilated several other units in their path.

Knowing the overwhelming force they were about to be hit with, and realizing that they would need to hold the ground to buy time for the rest of the Union Army, Lt. George Fox turned to the Color Bearer holding the regiments Stars and Stripes and dryly stated that *“They will get the Colors today.”* The Color Bearer responded in an Irish brogue, *“If they get the flag, they’ll get old Mike. Now mind that, Lieutenant.”* “Old Mike” was 21 years old.

Michael Brady was born in Cavan in 1840 and was a youngster when the famine struck the land. His mother died in 1848, and young Michael and his father emigrated soon after. Not long after arriving, the older Brady fell ill, and Michael became the provider for the family. When war was declared in 1861, Michael arranged for a neighbor to care for his father for \$4 a week, and he enlisted in the 75th Ohio (a Union private only received \$13 a month).

During the Battle of McDowell on May 8, 1862, the regiment’s Color Sergeant was shot causing him to drop the national flag which began to roll down the hill towards the Rebels. Without hesitation, Brady broke from cover to retrieve the flag, which he began waving defiantly at the enemy. For his act of courage, the men of the 75th regiment insisted that the young Irish immigrant be given the honor of carrying the National Flag despite the concerns of the 75th’s Colonel that at only 5 feet 4 inches Brady was too small.

Yet, the diminutive Brady was a giant on the field of Second Manassas. The Buckeyes were nearly overrun when Brady again rallied the men by running forward while waving the Stars and Stripes. His actions did not escape the attention of the Confederates, and within moments 90 bullet holes pierced the American flag, shattering the staff while another ball pierced the chest of the gallant Brady. Despite collapsing from his wound, Brady manages to drag himself upright and raised the flag once more. Seeing Brady fall, Captain Andrew Harris and a few others ran back to retrieve the colors. Despite being mortally wounded, the young Irish immigrant gripped the flag so tight that Harris later said he had to pry each finger off the staff to free it. Comrades carried Brady from the field, but he died soon after. The Confederates had gotten “Old Mike”; they never got his flag.

After the battle, Lt. Fox, the man who wrongly predicted that the Confederates would capture the Colors only to be chided by Brady, wrote to Brady’s father, *“Michael was loved by all who knew him. From our Colonel who*

commands this Brigade to the Private, he is known to be a good brave whole souled soldier.... I believe I can say of him something that I cannot of any other member of the Company. He never had a quarrelsome word with anybody– nor has he been at any time reprimanded for neglect or non-performance of duty.”

Let us always remember the sacrifices of Michael Brady and the scores of other Irish Americans who died under the flag of the United States, not for a piece of cloth, but for the values it calls us to follow.

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