



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

December 2024

Brother Hibernians



We wish you and your loved ones a healthy, blessed and Merry Christmas. Our next division meeting will be at the Hibernian House this **Friday, December 20th at 8:00pm.** The key agenda item will be final elections for Division Officers.

Thank you and congratulations to Larry DeGennaro, chef Bill Boera and the extended crew for a tremendous Thanksgiving Senior Luncheon – we receive so many wonderful thank you's for this event. Thanks, and congratulations, too, to Sean Walsh who took over the Pot Of Gold fundraiser this year. The first drawing party was highly successful and enjoyed by all. Thanks to Joan Moore and her crew for all the work on the party itself and for coordinating the many great dishes that were donated.

Also, thank you to Dennis Madigan and everyone who came out to support our Night of Dueling Pianos. Another great night of fun for all.

Congratulations to the team –Mike McAndrews, John Shields, Dan Sullivan, and Quinton Van Wynen – for re-starting the Freeze Your Arse Off Golf Tournament. We raised a meaningful amount of money for our Christmas Family Fund while having a great afternoon on the course (and the weather lived up to the event's name!).

On that topic, there is still time for you to swing by the Pub and make a donation to the Family Fund. Our elves are very busy right now, collecting final gifts and getting them wrapped for in-need families and any amount helps us make that possible.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the soul of member Mike McNamara and associate member Frank Aiello – may they rest in peace. Also keep Mrs. Christine Mulcahy, mother of members Billy and Mike Mulcahy, in your prayers for a quick recovery as she battles several health challenges.

As always, we pray that you and your family are healthy and safe.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



- **Special Needs “Reverse” Christmas Parade –Saturday, December 21st**, 12-1pm at OMM Field Parking Lot; more details to follow and in below article.
- **Pot of Gold Party – Sunday, December 22nd**: Final drawing party – see following article for all the details
- **Traditional “Wren Night” at the Hibernian – Thursday, December 26th**: a great night of traditional Irish music, dance, story and craic!
- **AOH Ski Trip – Saturday, January 18th**: a great day of skiing with friends at Catamount – see below article for details.

Special Needs Parade



Special Needs “Reverse Parade” –Saturday, December 21st, OMM Parking Lot: Anyone who helped at the parade in past years can tell you how rewarding it was to see the joy on our visitors' faces as they wound their way through the parking lot enjoying the goodies, costume characters, fire trucks, and Santa of course.

We need volunteers once again and ask that they arrive by **11am for set up** (sorry, my last email said 10am), and the parade runs from noon to 1pm. This is an excellent time for the kids to earn community service hours. We also would appreciate it if anyone can lend us decorations and/or inflatable figures to help us turn the parking lot into a winter wonderland.

If you can lend us a hand or lend us Christmas decorations, please contact Joan Moore at joan55moore@msn.com.

Pot of Gold



The second and final Pot of Gold drawing party is right around the corner on Sunday, December 22nd starting at 2pm (\$12,000 of prizes will be awarded including the \$10,000 grand prize), so don't get left behind! There will be tickets behind the bar at the pub, and we'll have tickets available at our division meeting. Tickets are still available. They are \$100 dollars and enter you in the drawing for a variety of cash prizes, and allow you and a guest entry to the drawing party.

Wren Night



Traditional "Wren Night" – Thursday, December 26th: Our Wren Night celebration is once again on this year. The day after Christmas, St. Stephen's Day in Ireland, we will be getting together for some traditional Irish song, music, dance, and storytelling. This is a great evening of fun for the whole family upstairs at the Hibernian House. The day after Christmas, put the hecticness of the season behind you and come out for some great craic! Fliers are up in the pub – any questions, please contact Dermot Moore at dermotmoore@gmail.com or 646-302-5111.

Ski Trip



Division 3 Ski Trip – Yes – it is back! The bus and the ski mountain (Catamount Mountain this year) are booked – so all we need is a bus-load of skiers of all ages and abilities looking for a great day. The AOH Division 3 Ski Trip is scheduled for Saturday, February 10th. Your ticket (\$140 for adults; \$130 for juniors 19 and under) gets you the round-trip bus, and a lift ticket as well as refreshments and sandwiches for lunch. We leave at 6am and spend the whole day. Again – skiers of all abilities (rentals available at the mountain) and family and friends invited. Sign-up is at the pub – if interested or you have questions contact Tom Moore at tommym929@gmail.com.

Seniors' Luncheon



On Saturday, November 23rd, we once again outdid ourselves with the best turnout yet. It was tremendous to see the turnout of our members who volunteered their time in the kitchen, serving and assisting seniors. Special thanks to Kevin Cole, Patrick Holt and Mike Mulcahy for getting there early and sweating out the day on kitchen duty. We also had a tremendous turnout of high school students (big shoutout to the large Albertus Magnus crew) – it's not clear who gets more out of the day – the students or the seniors. Thank you, too, to the talented musicians and dancers, and special recognition of Teddy Herlihy who is there on stage for us at every one of these luncheons.





As mentioned in Chuck's letter, we had a great day on the golf course the day after Thanksgiving, with a healthy number of golfers and all sorts of weather – a little sun, lots of clouds, some freezing rain – everything you'd expect! Between the golf and the raffles we held, we made a good nest-egg for the Christmas Family Fund. Thanks to all who came out and supported the event, to Billy Ford who is always there manning the grill, and a big thank you to Joe Rafter and Broadacres for generously supporting this event.

Also as noted, we're still taking donations for the Family Fund – whatever you can spare to give someone else a chance at some of the Christmas gift-giving we often take for granted.

We've got a variety of events planned at the Hibernian – here are January's:

- Saturday, January 25th – **Halfway to Summer Party** – Yes, a summer party upstairs in the Hall, featuring Rich Meyers – “One Man, One Guitar”
- Sunday January 26th – **NFL Championship Sunday** – Join us upstairs in the Hall for all the ball games. Food, raffles and the coldest beers!

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The Laden Table: A Timeless Irish Christmas Tradition



Christmas is a time of tradition. Every year, millions of Americans enact a tradition that few realize has its origins in Ireland and the mists of time: "the Laden Table."

In pre-Christian Celtic Ireland, hospitality was more than just good manners; it was actually written into the law. Under Brehon Law, all households were obliged to provide some measure of *oigidecht* (hospitality) to any traveler seeking it, even if unknown (the root word 'oigi' means 'stranger'). Hospitality included a duty to provide food, drink, a bed, and even entertainment.

This tradition of *oigidecht* seamlessly blended with Christian teachings about charity when Ireland converted to Christianity. It found a natural expression in the nativity story of Mary and Joseph seeking, but not finding, accommodations in Bethlehem.

This gave rise to the Christmas tradition of the '*Laden Table*': after the Christmas Eve supper, families would reset the kitchen table with simple offerings: a loaf of sweet bread, often filled with caraway seeds and raisins, a pitcher of milk, and a large lit candle. The door would be left unlatched, symbolizing an open invitation for Mary and Joseph, as well as contemporary needy souls, to enter and partake in the warmth of the home.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, when Ireland was subjected to the oppressive Penal Laws that sought to eliminate Catholicism in Ireland, 'the Laden Table' took on a more pragmatic role as a measure of defiant resistance. The candle in the window, ostensibly a gesture of welcome, would also signal the presence of a safe house for Catholic priests, at risk of their lives, traveling in secret to conduct Mass.

The mass emigration prompted by the Great Hunger brought millions of Irish people to the United States; the Laden Table and other Christmas traditions traveled with them. Sadly, as the custom evolved and became more 'mainstream,' the original meaning was, in many cases, lost and replaced with fond gestures like leaving food and drink for Santa Claus, which lost some of the original significance and the values it teaches.

The Laden Table is a reminder of the enduring Irish values of hospitality, generosity, and community. It symbolized welcome, resilience, and hope for generations, even in the face of hardship.

As we reflect on the traditions that connect us to our past, the Laden Table offers a meaningful way to honor those values. Whether as a memory of our ancestors or an inspiration for the present, it speaks to the importance of friendship, unity, and Christian charity—a message as relevant today as ever.