



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

February 2026

Brother Hibernians,



As we dig our way out of the second big snowstorm of the winter, I hope all are doing well – keep in mind, just a few short weeks until the first day of Spring! Our next division meeting will be at the Hibernian House this **Friday, February 27th at 8:00pm**. Key agenda items include planning for St. Patrick's Day, kicking off the memorial golf outing for 2026 and other standing business items.

We had a couple of great events at the Hibernian House, including the Halfway to Summer party and another great Comedy Night – congrats to Dennis Madigan and the team for continuing to put together great events and bringing in the crowds. More on that in the Hibernian House roundup. We also had a great day out on the slopes at the annual AOH Skip Trip at Belleayre. A much smaller contingent of skiers showed up this year, only to be met by some brutally cold temp's – but we were not deterred and had a great time.

Thanks to Scott MacMaster for coordinating and organizing the windbreaker purchases to outfit those who ordered for marching in the parade. We look forward to many marching with us (whether or not you have the jacket!).

We're looking forward to the next very busy month. Keep an eye out for emails and Facebook postings about all that's going on.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the souls of our Brothers, John Keahon, Seamus Mullen and Denis Troy; for the souls of Eileen Burke, wife of member Red Burke and mother of members Red and Sean Burke, and for John Wynne, father of member Danny Wynne. May they all rest in peace. Please continue to keep John Crilley, Kevin Haugh, Jack Lynch (father of Tommy), Ann Walsh (mother of Sean and grandmother of Tyler, Dylan and Liam) and Mary Eileen Moran (mother of Joe) in your prayers.

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

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



Event	Timing	Details
Emerald Ball	Sat., 2/28	Pearl River Hilton
St. Patrick's Day Senior Luncheon	Sat., 3/14	As always, need lots of volunteers
NYC St. Patrick's Day Parade	Tues., 3/17	
Rockland County St. Patrick's Day Parade	Sun., 3/22	Line-up at Pfizer at 12:30; Steps off at 1:30.
Benefit for Kevin Haugh	Sat., 4/18, 3-7pm	At Pearl River Elks – SAVE THE DATE!
PR AOH Annual Memorial Golf Outing	Fri., 5/8	SAVE THE DATE!

Rockland Parade



The Rockland County St. Patrick's Day Parade will once again make its way down Pearl River's Central Avenue on Sunday, March 22nd, and we will be marching as a Division, so we once again ask that all members who are able, please come out and march with us. We are the largest AOH Division in the country and this is our hometown parade, so we should *'show up and be counted'*. Anyone who's marched in the past can attest; this is the best view of the parade available. As always, we'll be meeting in the Pfizer parking lot – this year behind our Division honorees, Quinton Van Wynen as an Aide to the Grand Marshal and John Edwards, as our Battalion Commander. We'll make sure to share any and all details as the parade line of march is formalized.

If you joined the Division in the last year or two, you should make every effort to march with your brothers. If you are in town that day and able to cover the less than 1-1/2 mile walk, you should march with your brothers. We know that a number of members already have huge commitments to the parade itself – whether running it or running the Hibernian House at the end of the parade – but even if you have your own house party to focus on after the parade, you should still be able to take 2 hours out and help us proclaim our pride in our heritage. We meet in the appointed spot every year at the Pfizer parking lot, and we'll share more details in the run up to the parade.

Hope to see you there!

AOH Scholarships



LAST AND FINAL CALL! – All applications need to be in no later than February 27, 2026 – no late applications will be accepted. As in past years, the application process for both the NYS and Division 3 scholarships are the same (one application for both scholarship contests). Go to the NYS AOH webpage at: <https://www.nyaoh.com/aoh-scholarship-contest> and download the application.

Next steps after you apply: There will be a written exam based on Irish history. All applicants will be given further information about the syllabus and the timing of the test.

Any questions at all, please contact Dermot Moore (NYS AOH scholarship chair) at dermotmoore@gmail.com (646-302-5111).

Ski Trip



As mentioned above, we had a lighter turnout than in past years, but we were met with amazing snow conditions (albeit, some pretty cold windchills!). Our group of stalwarts were a mix of members, family and friends – of all ages – and a good time was had by all. Make sure to join us next year! Thanks to Tom Moore for all the work spent organizing and getting us all back safe!



Senior Luncheon



Saturday, March 14th at the Hall: We're once again hosting the senior citizens of our community for a St. Patrick's Day luncheon, complete with corned beef, cabbage and plenty of Irish music and dance. ***We really need*** a couple of brothers to step up to man the kitchen, helping with food prep and cleanup, as well as serving up the food. In addition, it is an opportunity for any youth who has community service hours to help out, focused on table service. Kitchen work has two shifts- one at 9am and the clean-up at 1pm, and we'd need youth help from 10am to about 2:30pm for final cleanup. Luncheon officially runs from Noon to 2pm. If you can help, please contact Larry DeGennaro at ldegenn931@aol.com.

Hibernian House



As mentioned in Chuck's letter, we've had a number of events over the last month, including the Halfway to Summer Party with Rich Meyer and the latest Hibernian House Comedy Night. Thanks to all those who came out to these events! Keep an eye out for more upcoming events – keep an eye out for fliers at the pub and updates in email and on Facebook.

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The Reason for the Season

Celebrating St. Patrick's Day as It Was Meant to be Celebrated

Every March, forty million Americans claim Irish heritage. Rivers run green, pints overflow, and for one glorious day, the whole country seems to decide it has a touch of the Irish. St. Patrick's Day is a joyous time, a time to reconnect with family and friends after the long, cold days of winter. However, this year, let's go beyond the shamrocks, shillelaghs, and green bagels; let us carry something more than pride in the spectacle. Let us remember why we celebrate and why we are proud to describe ourselves as Irish.

St. Patrick was real. He was not a legend, not a symbol, not a meme. He was a flesh-and-blood man — a Romano-Briton, who at sixteen years of age was seized by Irish raiders and sold into slavery on the western coast of Ireland. He spent six years tending livestock on windswept hillsides, cold and alone and forgotten by everyone but God. When he finally escaped and made his way home, most men would never have looked back. Patrick turned around and went back.

He returned not with an army, not with a grievance, but with a Gospel. He preached to the people who had enslaved him. He built churches among families that had bought and sold him like livestock. He ordained priests from communities that had treated him as property. His defining spiritual achievement was not conversion by conquest — it was conversion by forgiveness. He was one of the first recorded voices to denounce slavery. In a world where the weak existed at the whim of the powerful, Patrick offered something almost incomprehensibly radical: reconciliation without condition.

In a world that seems to grow angrier and more tribal by the hour, that witness matters. The virtues St. Patrick embodied — forgiveness, perseverance, reconciliation across the deepest of divides are virtues we need to reclaim. And they are ours to claim as his inheritors, if we are willing to do more than wear his color.

Our proud Irish heritage is under renewed pressure. Irish American Heritage Month has existed since 1991. Every president of both parties has proclaimed it. Congress has recognized it. The National Archives marks it. And yet, walk into most American schools in March, and you will find nothing: no curriculum, no programming, no acknowledgment that the month exists beyond the parade on the 17th.

This invisibility is not an accident. It is the product of forces that have been chipping away at Irish American identity for generations. Consider what has been done to our history. The Ulster Scots — many of them as Irish as any man from Connacht — were

systematically rebranded in the 19th century to distance themselves from the stigma of the Famine Irish. Their contributions to the American frontier, to the Revolution, to the building of this nation, are today categorized as something other than Irish.

Meanwhile, scholars have spent careers arguing that the discrimination the Irish faced — the "No Irish Need Apply" signs documented in hundreds of newspapers from New York to Texas — was a myth, a fabrication, a "persecution complex." Many noted historians uncritically joined the chorus until a fourteen-year-old girl with access to a newspaper database publicly demolished that thesis. It is the modern-day equivalent of the "Emperor's New Clothes," with Irish heritage as collateral damage. Even Molly Pitcher, the Irish immigrant woman who manned a cannon at the Battle of Monmouth, has had her heritage quietly reassigned to a more palatable ethnicity, then had her very existence called into question when researchers found the flaws in that ethnic appropriation.

Our history is being erased quietly, piece by piece. And St. Patrick's Day, ironically, accelerates it. When Irish identity is reduced to one day of green festivity, there is no space left for the thirty days of March that are legally designated for something deeper.

We need to reclaim the space we are owed. Irish American Heritage Month will not promote itself. No federal mandate will walk into your local school board meeting. No university diversity office will spontaneously add the Irish Famine to its curriculum alongside the histories it has decided deserve institutional attention. If Irish American Heritage Month is going to mean anything — if the 32 million Americans who claim Irish heritage are going to have their story told accurately and completely — it will be because members of this Order demanded it, organized it, and showed up for it.

What is at stake is not sentiment. It is the factual record. It is the documented truth that the Irish built the canals and railroads that stitched this country together, that Irish brigades bled on both sides of every American war, that Irish immigrant women in domestic service quietly financed the Catholic institutions that educated generations of American children, and that the Irish experience of oppression, survival, and assimilation is not a footnote to American history — it is one of its central chapters.

This St. Patrick's Day, when you step into the street and hear the pipes begin, take a moment before the noise takes over. Think of a man on a cold Irish hillside, a slave who chose to return. Think of the millions who crossed an ocean, starving, who were told they were not welcome, who built the country that told them to go back where they came from. Think of the history that has been quietly taken from us and that we are quietly fighting to reclaim.

As a Division, we do so much good for the general community, motivated by our faith and heritage, and we do it quietly without bragging. St. Patrick's Day and Irish American Heritage Month are our days to make a statement that the Irish are still here and continue to shape our community for the better. Don't miss that opportunity, "Don't be a Watcher, be a Marcher."