



# Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

Pearl River, NY

May, 2012



Brother Hibernians, \_\_\_\_\_



Our next meeting will be held on Friday, May 25 at 8pm. Welcome aboard to new members Msgr. Weber, Walter Bentley, Martin Murphy, and Pat McGovern. Congratulations and many thanks to Monsignor O'Keefe and all the staff at St. Margaret's; to coordinators Ed O'Dea and Kevin McNulty; to Phil and Linda Sheridan and their elves Mary O'Sullivan, Brian Booth, Teresa Morrissey and Jim Gallagher; to guest speaker Pat Moroney; and to our scholarship winners for a fantastic Communion Breakfast on April 15. Congratulations to the AOH Senior Softball Team who are in first place with a 3-0 record. They play most Sundays at 9am at Veteran's Field and you can follow their progress on the league website, [www.rocklandseniorsoftball.com](http://www.rocklandseniorsoftball.com). Congratulations to Terry Greenan who was named by the Irish Echo as one of the top fifty small business entrepreneurs of NYC.

Dan Callanan reports the following Good and Welfare...Please say a prayer for the

repose of the souls Tom Lynch's brother Paul, Marty Davin's mother-in-law Patricia Riley, and Gerry Conroy's sister Rosemary Powell. Ray Gallagher's daughter Christine is back home from Connecticut recharging her batteries in preparation for more treatments. Dermot Moore's father Tom is in hospice in New City, Kevin Donohue is home from the hospital and battling severe infections. Connie Smith returned from Florida and is looking and feeling great. John Gannon and Bill Ford delivered Larry McKeever to the fundraiser at Del Arte's and the squire put on a show displaying that his brain is just great and that he still has a great sense of humor. There wasn't a dry eye in the joint.

Please join us on May 28th for the Memorial Day Parade in Pearl River. Happy Mother's Day to all of our wives and mothers and, as always, please keep our troops in your prayers.

*Yours in Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity,*  
Dermot O'Connor Moore, President

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**PETER DUNNE**

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**LARRY MCKEEVER**

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**JOHN GANNON**

## CALENDAR \_\_\_\_\_

May 13	Mothers Day Breakfast
May 17	Golf Outing
July 9-13	National Convention
July 15	Rockland County Feis
May 28	Memorial Day Parade

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Ancient Order of Hibernians



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## MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST

Sunday May 13th, 2012

9am to Noon

Location: Hibernian House

Cost: Free!

Volunteers needed especially  
afterwards for clean-up

Please contact Jack O'Connor @

845-735-7475

if you plan to attend  
or have any questions

## HIBERNIAN HOUSE

As you probably realize the pub has had a price increase as of May 1st. This increase, the first in over 2 years, was necessary because everything we buy is going up and although we are a benevolent organization we have to make a profit to be able to have moneys available to donate to our charities. Thanks for your understanding.

The weather has not cooperated with the Tuesday afternoon golf but eventually it will, even with Gannon playing. If you would like to play please sign the sheet in the pub. There will be a \$5.00 pot luck meal after the golfers return at the House.

Again we ask if anyone has some time and could do small repairs at the Hibernian House, painting, clean the sheds, etc. It would be appreciated.

Now that the State Grant has come in we can look forward to completing the front of our building and perhaps a sign.

The Hibernian House Board

## PHILIP J. MURPHY MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING

The 2012 Philip J. Murphy Golf Outing that will be held on Thursday May 17, 2012 at Blue Hill is SOLD OUT.

Get your payment in now if you want to guarantee your spot. For \$50 you can still join us for a 3 hour reception from 6pm to 9pm at Emmett's Castle - but please let Sean know now so he can adequately plan for the night.

We still need volunteers and there is a sign-up sheet in the pub. Please contact Sean Walsh at 845-201-8384 or email [div3golfouting@optimum.net](mailto:div3golfouting@optimum.net). Friend us on Facebook at PhilipMurphy GolfOuting.

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

The rooms at the Turning Point are all sold out but rooms are still available at hotels close to the resort entrance.

## OVERFLOW HOTEL INFORMATION

Mention "Hibernians" for special rates

Shuttle Service available among all hotels and Turning Stone Resort

Fairfield Inn & Suites at Verona (315) 363-8888 – includes deluxe continental breakfast

\$115 King or Double Queen, \$125 Extended King Suite

LaQuinta Inn & Suites at Verona (315)-231-5080 – breakfast included

\$109 Kings, \$119 Double Queen & \$129 Triple Occupancy

Discount convention event packages are available till June 1st. Visit [www.hibernians.com](http://www.hibernians.com) and click on the convention logo.

## LAOH

Hi Ladies

A Big Thank You to Mary O'Sullivan for Hosting the County Birthright shower and pot luck dinner. We had a good crowd with representatives of all divisions in Rockland and a successful and fun night was had by all.

Our next event is our Ascension Thursday (May 17) dinner with Mass at 5:30pm at St. Aedan's, please wear your sash. Following Mass, dinner will be at Slattery's in Piermont, NY. Cost is \$40.00 by 05/12/2012 to May Kreider; 366 E. Crooked Hill Road, Pearl River, NY 10965; 735-7875. Price includes appetizer, salad, choice of entree, dessert, coffee/tea, beer, wine and soda (cash bar). The guest of honor is: Linda Sheridan.

Our next County Meeting will be on May 22 at 8PM at the Hibernian House. We will be marching once again in the Memorial Day Parade (May 28th) and will do a presentation to Montrose. Dress for the day will be white shirts and black pants and shoes. Please make every effort to march and show your support for all our troops and veterans who have given so much so that we can enjoy our freedom here.

Mark your calendars for June 10th when we will hold our Scholarship/Essay Winners Communion Breakfast. Mass will be at 9AM at the Hibernian House with breakfast immediately following. Congratulations to all our winners.

Our next Regular meeting will be June 12 at 7:30 at HH. Wishing all of you a very Happy Mother's Day.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,  
Joan Moore, *President*

845-735-8793 (h) • 845-536-2742 (Cell)

or email: [joan55mmoore@msn.com](mailto:joan55mmoore@msn.com)

*Have a  
Happy Memorial Day!*

# Matthew McGrath

## "The Prince of Whales"



There once was a time when Irish giants roamed the earth; their feats of strength and courage becoming legendary. However, these were not the mythical Cuchulain, or Finn McCool; they were real men who pushed the boundary of what was thought to be humanly possible. They were known as "the Irish Whales" for their size and strength and they dominated the strength events of the Olympics for the first part of the twentieth century. This was in an age when Olympic athletes were held to a strict amateur code, there were no high priced endorsement contracts, and more than a few of these "gods of the arena" could be found pounding a beat on the streets of New York when not competing. None was more renowned among these giants than Mathew McGrath.

McGrath was born on a small farm in Nenagh, County Tipperary in 1876; the oldest of eleven children. He began his early strength behind a plough and in the backbreaking labor of the harvest. For what little recreation there was to be found on a farm, Matt would read books on Greek mythology and the ancient Olympics or listen as his parents tell stories of Irish folklore around the fire on cold winter nights. Appropriately as it would come to pass, a favorite story of young Matt's was a tale of a landlord who challenged one of his tenants to throw a sledge and the tenant beat him soundly. The tale inspired the young McGrath to take up throwing the hammer, the event for which he would gain world renown.

McGrath emigrated to America at the age of 19. Like many Irish immigrants he traveled light: a single carpet bag with one spare shirt, socks and princely sum of six pence in his pocket. However, like those before and after him, all young McGrath asked upon arriving in America was an opportunity. His first job required him to work thirteen hours a day, seven days a week. Yet, true to a promise made to his mother to "treat his body like a temple", McGrath still made time to exercise; going to the local blacksmiths and lifting the anvil followed by throwing an improvised weight against a mattress he had hung on a wall. With such Spartan discipline McGrath was soon an imposing figure standing six feet tall and weighing 248 pound. McGrath became an American citizen in 1899 and joined the New York City Police Department in 1902, the start of a nearly forty year career where he would rise from Patrolman to Inspector. During the course of his NYPD career McGrath would

twice earn the Medal of Valor: one for single handedly subduing a fleeing armed murderer and the other for jumping from a bridge into icy cold water 30 feet below to rescue a man who had accidentally fallen.

However it was in track and field and the Olympic games that McGrath would gain international notoriety. McGrath was to capture twenty-one National Championships in weight throwing and compete in four Olympiads between 1908 and 1928. McGrath's first appearance was in the contentious 1908 Olympics, an Olympics marked with controversy from the start. It was to be the first Olympics with an opening ceremony of a parade of the athletes behind "their countries" flags. Many Irish athletes refuse to march behind the flag of Great Britain, Finns refused to march behind the flag of the Russian empire that ruled them at that time. The American team complained that while the flags of most of the participating nations (*and even some that were not!*) were flying above the stadium the American flag was omitted. The team became more enraged when the British Olympic committee offered the lame excuse that it was because "they couldn't find an American flag in London." As the respective teams marched into the stadium and approached the royal box they were expected to dip their flag in salute to King Edward VII. The American flag was being carried for the U.S. Team by young shot putter Ralph Rose. Legend has it that as he approached the royal box he heard McGrath's unmistakable Nenagh accent saying "dip that flag and you will be in a hospital tonight." The U.S. flag was not dipped, a tradition that remains to this day, an action that was later defended by team captain and fellow NYPD officer and Irish American Martin Sheridan with the famous retort of "That flag bows to no earthly King."

McGrath would earn a silver medal in the 1908 Olympics, bested only by another Irish American and NYPD officer John Flanagan. In the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, McGrath won the gold medal in dominating fashion (*the shortest of his six throws was over 15 feet longer than any other competitor's best throw*) and set an Olympic record that stood for 24 years. World War I deprived McGrath and other athletes of a chance to compete in 1916 and one can wonder at what records he may have set. At the 1920, Olympics in Antwerp, McGrath finished fifth after injuring his knee during the competition. In 1924 in Paris, McGrath again took the silver medal, setting (*and still holding*) the standard for the oldest American track and field medalist ever. An off day at the 1928 Final Olympic try-outs barely kept him off the 1928 Olympic team at the age of 52. In describing McGrath's Athletic career U.S. Track and Field Federation historian Hal Bateman stated "Without doubt, Matthew McGrath is an Olympic legend. For him to have competed for as long as he did, in that day and age, is incredible. He was a very outstanding athlete on an elite level - a national champion in 1926 at the age of 50... To do this nowadays is almost unthinkable!"

One other part of Matt McGrath's life must be mentioned, one for which he never received public media acclaim nor gold medals. After he and his wife lost their only child at a very

### Did You Know That...

Irish speedster Eamonn Coughlin, known as the "Chairman of the Boards" won the prestigious "Wanamaker Mile" a record seven times. He ran a 3:49.78 mile in 1983. It is still the second fastest indoor mile of all time and is still a European record. He became the first man over 40 to run a sub-four minute mile.

In 1906, Peter O'Connor and two other Irish athletes, Con Leahy and John Daly, were entered for the 1906 Olympics in Athens (later renamed the "Intercalated Games" when the Olympics went on a four year schedule) by the IAAA and GAA, representing Ireland. They were given green blazers, caps with a gold shamrock, and the 'Erin Go Bragh' flag. However Olympic rules were changing as the Olympics became more nationalistic; only athletes nominated by National Olympic Committees were now eligible. Since Ireland did not have an Olympic Committee, the British Olympic Council claimed the three as their athletes, the three Irish athletes only learning about the change upon arriving at the games. O'Connor went on to win Silver in the long jump competition. In what would be the first protest at the Modern Olympics, O'Connor scaled the flagpole and removed the Union Jack that had been raised to signify his second place finish and replace it with Irish flag, while the pole was guarded by Irish and American athletes and supporters.

Irish American John L. Sullivan holds the distinction of being the last bare-knuckle boxing heavyweight champion of the world & first gloved heavyweight champion of the world. Sullivan is also the first American athlete to earn over \$1 million.

young age, the McGrath's became attached to a young Chinese lad whose father worked at a guest house they frequented in the summer. They became aware that the young man's father had lost his job, his mother having previously deserted the family. The McGrath's opened their hearts and home to the boy and said he could stay with them for a few weeks until the father got back on his feet. The few weeks quickly turned into years and the McGrath's were appointed legal guardians of the boy whom they sent to a prestigious private school and ensured that there was a small annuity for the young man when Matt McGrath's giant heart stopped beating in 1941 at the age of 65.

The accomplishments of Matt McGrath would be enough to fill the lives of ten men. May we never forget this gentle Irish American giant for his strength, courage and humanity.



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**Neil T. O'Sullivan, CPA / PLLC**

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