

The Freebird

Volume IV

June 2008

The Freebird is the newsletter of the **Irish Fair of Minnesota August 8-10, 2008**. Its purpose is to keep us connected, provide updates, celebrate successes and share our stories, and to support the mission of the Irish Fair by promoting and cultivating Irish culture.



[YOUR PHOTO GOES HERE...!]

Summer is upon us, and that means it is time once again for the annual Irish Fair Photo Contest. This event is a stirring way for amateur photographers to showcase their talent, while celebrating All Things Irish. The rules are straightforward, and entry couldn't be easier! Highlights are as follows:

- The contest is open to amateur photographers.
- Prizes will be awarded in four categories: *Scenery*, *People*, *Studies in Black and White*, and *Kids Pics*. *Kids Pics* may be any subject or style, but the photographer must be 16 years of age or younger.
- Top prize in *Scenery*, *People*, and *Studies in Black and White* is a fine art limited edition photograph from *Ireland in Black White*. Ribbons awarded for runner's up and for *Kids Pics*.
- All entered photographs will be displayed for the duration of the Fair in the pavilion, giving the photographer much exposure in a high-traffic environment. As well, top photos will be published in **The Freebird** (with the photographer's permission).

Note: photos need NOT be taken in Ireland! Photographs detailing any Irish cultural event or in some way conveying the Irish experience are welcome, regardless of the geographic location. The contest rules and entry form may be downloaded from the Irish Fair website:

http://www.irishfair.com/information/entertainment/contests/irish_photo.php

Any further questions about the contest may be directed to Will Harrison, the contest manager, at finnboru@yahoo.com.

We are proud to have again as a sponsor for the photo contest Barry Hendrickson and his *Ireland in Black & White* exhibit. As noted in the Irish American News, "Barry Hendrickson's much acclaimed series of portfolios, *Ireland in Black & White*, is a stunning and breathtaking look at the vast and surreal landscapes of Ireland. His dramatic black and white images of thought provoking and starkly beautiful panoramas conceal the rich and tragic history of Ireland.

You can see some of Barry's luminous work at <http://www.irelandinblackandwhite.com/>

IRISH FAIR OF MINNESOTA MUSIC HEADLINERS



[Flogging Molly](#)
[Tannahill Weavers](#)
[The Elders](#)
[Wild Colonial Boys](#)
[Romantica](#)
[Scythian](#)
[More TBA](#)

August 8-10, 2008
Harriet Island in St. Paul
FREE ADMISSION

JOIN US FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL RUN WITH THE CELTS 5K AND FAMILY 1K

The 5K race will be on a certified race course that starts and ends on the festival-grounds at Harriet Island. The Family 1K, held around the Harriet Island grounds, is an enjoyable event that families can do together. The race will be held on Saturday, August 9, 2007. The Family 1K Run/Walk starts at 9:00 a.m., and the 5K Run/Walk starts at 9:30 a.m. Both the 5K and Family 1K start and end at Harriet Island. The Family 1K is \$12.00 in advance or \$15.00 on race day. The 5K Run/Walk is \$20.00 in advance or \$24.00 on race day. For more information and to register online, visit <http://www.events.runningroom.com/site/?raceId=3895>

All participants receive a Run with the Celts t-shirt and can enjoy Finnegan's Irish Amber and other goodies at the Runner's Oasis after the race. Dress up and show your Irish pride! Prizes awarded for the best costumes. Prizes also awarded for the top finishing male, female, and family. Stick around after the race to enjoy all the Irish Fair of Minnesota has to offer! Enjoy some great Irish fare, music, dance, storytelling, wares and many other great Irish cultural activities at this free festival. Best of all, the race is a fundraiser for t [The Legacy Fund](#) (see article below) of the Irish Fair of MN, which gives back to the Irish community and other new immigrant populations.



LEGACY FUND SUPPORTS COMPUTER CENTER FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

As most of you know, the Legacy Fund of the Irish Fair supports Irish groups/events and those that support new immigrants through a competitive grant program based on merit and need. Here's a recent opportunity where the Legacy Fund was able to make a difference.

For over 25 years, The English Learning Center at Our Saviour's Outreach Ministries has been providing quality educational services free-of-charge to adult immigrants and refugees newly arrived in the Twin Cities. Their mission statement reads: "educationally empowering immigrant and refugee adults and their families towards self-determination." As well, the center creates bridges of understanding between cultures. Located in the Phillips neighborhood of South Minneapolis – a "gateway community" for over a century, the Center is currently challenged to teach students who have been in the United States for one year or less – sometimes as little as two weeks. It offers classes for adult immigrants and refugees in the English language, math, computers and citizenship exam preparation. Classes are offered four evenings each week, year-round.

Access to technology is critical for new immigrants and refugees building new lives in the U.S. not only to gain language skills, but also in applying for jobs, renting apartments, choosing children's schools. Thus, the English Learning Center operates a student computer lab which contains eight networked computers and one printer. Students are not left to figure things out on their own; volunteers and staff are available to assist them whenever the lab is open – from learning how to point-and-click to setting up their own email accounts, to researching on the web. Unfortunately, the system that the Center has has become piece meal, outdated and ...clunky.

The Center asked for and received a grant of \$3,000.00 toward a purchase of proposed total cost of eight new desktop (total cost \$6,400) for use by new immigrant and refugee students. We welcome them and wish them the best, remembering the struggles ---and the help-- our own ancestors experienced when they came to these shores.

For more information about English Learning Center see <http://www.osom-mn.org/>

AN GHAELGE

Maireann croí éadrom i bhfad.

A light heart lives longest.

Courtesy of Gaeltacht Minnesota <http://www.gaelminn.org/index.htm>

MORE IRISH STORYTELLING AND THEATRE AT THE 2008 FAIR

Because of the success and fun with last year's weekend-long storytelling experience, the cultural area will repeat it, with some new additions. We are proud this year to welcome veteran storyteller Michael Cotter to our weekend. Mr. Cotter is a 3rd generation Irish farmer from Austin, Minnesota, who has created his own storytelling festival in Austin. He has also performed on stages around the country, including Illinois, Texas, Jonesborough, Tennessee, Harvard, The Clearwater festival at West Point, and The Smithsonian Institute in Washington D. C. We will also be adding Jenie O' Gorman, Nancy Donoval, and Nan Montgomery from the Northstar Storytelling League, as well as welcoming back Carol McCormick, David Zander, Eoin O' Neill, and John Gleeson (right) from last year.



John Gleeson, storyteller at the Irish Fair

Speaking at our Eóin McKiernan speaker's tent this year will be Bill Meulemans from Aurora, Oregon. Bill is a professor of political science, who taught at King's college in Belfast for 11 years. Bill will be speaking on, "Hope and Hate: Protestants and Catholics in the new Northern Ireland", also the title of his book that will be published soon.



Sheri O'Meara and Friends

We are happy to have performing on the Showboat on Sunday, performers from Milwaukee Irish Arts. This is an umbrella organization in Milwaukee that sponsors, theater, storytelling, guest speakers, and much more, all under the artistic direction of our friend, Professor John Gleeson, Center for Celtic Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. they will be performing two different 1-act Irish plays on the Showboat.

We are pleased to add Sheri O' Meara (left) to our cultural committee. Sheri, the lead singer for *Locklin Road* (<http://www.locklinroad.com/>), one of our veteran local Irish

bands, has agreed to coordinate the IMDA workshop tent this year. Sheri is in touch with many local musicians, and has already made some great suggestions that should once again help make this one of our *most popular areas to visit* at the Fair.

IRISH FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are still needed for this year's Fair. Volunteering is a great way to meet other energetic, interesting people who enjoy All Things Irish---and the ONLY way the Fair can survive. So if you'd like to spend some time renewing old acquaintances, making new friends and having fun while contributing your time to the worthy cause of keeping the Irish Fair free, please register at our website www.irishfair.com where you will find a list of areas and times.

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

6th Annual IMDA Bus Trip to Milwaukee Irish Fest -- Everyone is invited to the Irish Music & Dance Association (IMDA) bus trip to the **Milwaukee Irish Fest** <http://www.irishfest.com/>. This event, the world's largest Irish festival, will be held August 14-17, 2007 and over 100,000 visitors are expected attend. The IMDA has put together a bus & hotel package to make this an easy and inviting option. Past and current riders have included many community members, musicians, dancers and theater group members which have made for a song filled and active ride down! **The deadline for room reservations is July 16th**. For more information or to sign-up contact Lisa Conway at 612.990.3122 or go to www.IrishMusicAndDanceAssociation.org.