



The Freebird*

VOLUME I

MARCH 2005

The Freebird is the newsletter of the Irish Fair of Minnesota. 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. THIS ISSUE IS DEVOTED TO SUPPORTING ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT CELEBRATE GENUINE IRISH CULTURE.

MAKE YOUR PLANS FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY

CELEBRATE ALL THINGS IRISH AT THE
LANDMARK CENTER SUNDAY MARCH 13TH
AND THURSDAY MARCH 17TH

St. Paul, MN—The Irish Music and Dance Association proudly hosts its 24th annual St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration and 3rd annual Day of Irish Dance.

The Day of Dance will take place from noon to 5 pm, Sunday, March 13th, and the St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration will run 10-4 the following Thursday at the Landmark Center, 75 West Fifth Street, downtown St. Paul.

Attractions include:

- The Irish Marketplace offers authentic Irish merchants, artisans, food and informational resources.
- Traditional Irish dancers
- Local and regional entertainment, pipe bands, storytelling and children's activities will take place throughout the day on three stages.
- Trace your Irish heritage by visiting the Irish Genealogical Society or take a break from the crowds in our tea room.
- Try your luck with our annual 'Win a Trip For Two to Ireland' Raffle! The raffle will be held on Thursday, March 17th.

The Day of Dance and the St. Patrick's Day Celebration are produced by the Irish Music and Dance Association and sponsored by the following: Irish Indeed, Terry Flynn Tours, the Liffey, IcelandAir, Dubliner Pub and MN Irish Fair .

Tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids 5-12 and may be purchased at the door on either day. Group discounts can be arranged by calling 612-990-3122 or e-mail at Info@IrishMusicAndDanceAssociation.org.

Looking Ahead

IRISH FAIR 2005 MUSIC HEADLINERS

Flogging Molly Friday August 12th-- Irish folk meets punk rock; musical diversity;



Danú (above) Saturday and Sunday-- an Irish traditional music group based in Co. Waterford, Ireland

The incomparable **Tommy Makem**, superlative singer, storyteller, actor and bard – Sunday only.

Young Dubliners Fri and Sat August 12th and 13th – known for their intensity and absorbing musical variety.

MINNEAPOLIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

The Minneapolis St. Patrick's Day Parade will be held on Thursday, March 17th, on the Nicollet Mall beginning 6:30 p.m. The parade route will start at Nicollet and 13th Street til it reaches 5th Street.

The history of the parade dates back to 1969 when Duff's Bar and the Bradford's Pub initiated the first St. Patrick's Day Parade for Minneapolis. It was a short caravan between the two pubs, and ironically, was prompted by friendly jibing of some gentlemen of *other* ethnic backgrounds. There was one float provided by the Sons and Daughters of Ireland. The parade has grown since!

The Minneapolis St. Patrick's Day Association is please to announce that **Ms. Blarney 2005 is Chelsie Gawne-Mark of Minneapolis** was crowned Ms Blarney at the 34th Annual Ms Blarney contestant Kieran's Irish Pub on March 1, 2005. She is a Graduate Instructor Candidate in the University of Minnesota Graduate English Creative Writing Program. She also participates in Irish Language classes in the community.

*NEWSLETTER NAME CHOSEN

The people have spoken, and they're saying '**THE FREEBIRD**' will be the name of the newsletter. The name resonates with the notes of Irish emigrant song 'The Fields of Athenry' and with the history of Irish ancestors who got word of events from rovers or newer immigrants they called Freebirds. Thanks to Jim McGovern for his winning entry. Jim will receive a gift certificate to a local Irish pub in mark of appreciation. As well, we did a drawing from the names of all of our entrants to thank them for their participation and Lisa Graff comes out of that the winner of *THE LAST* 2004 Irish Fair t-shirt. *Oooh-aah!*

Thanks again to all who entered and who voted.



HOST FAMILIES FOR NORTHERN IRISH KIDS SOUGHT FOR SUMMER 2005

The Children's Program of Northern Ireland aims to develop respectful relationships between children of all traditions in Northern Ireland through cross-community activities in both their own communities and through their five-week summer visit with families in Minnesota. They strive to provide opportunity to develop understanding and respect for diversity through these relationships and promote constructive approaches to conflict resolution.



The Program is now seeking host families for Summer of 2005. Visit their website at <http://www.cpni.org/> for more information.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM OF NORTHERN IRELAND POT O' GOLD FUNDRAISER!

Share an evening of music and friendship with CPNI, now celebrating their 33rd anniversary!

Dinner, Drawing for \$2500, and Silent Auction
Saturday, March 12, 2005
Cretin-Derham Hall High School
St. Paul, Minnesota

MURRAY'S IRISH TENOR CONTEST FINALS MONDAY MARCH 14TH

Come enjoy the fun and listen to fine local voices as semi-finalists compete for the top spot. **WALK-IN contestants welcome!** The winner selected on the 14th will sing on KARE TV on March 15th and on the Murray's Stage on St Pat's Day, ride in the Minneapolis St.Pat's Evening Parade--and, *most importantly*, wins the bragging rights to being **Murray's IRISH TENOR OF THE YEAR.**

Murray's Chef David Robinson promises to feature some super Irish sampler plates and other Irish dishes for the evening of the contest.
*Murray's Restaurant, 26 So. 6th ST
Minneapolis 612 339 0909*

MINNESOTA FOLK FESTIVAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY DANCE



Minnesota Folk Festival will sponsor a dance on Thursday, March 17, 2005, 7 pm. Music will be

provided by the great Irish group, Legacy. Irish dance instruction by Linda Doran.

Tickets are \$7.50 advance, \$9 at the door. Seniors and children 5 to 16 are \$3.25 advance and \$4.50 at the Door. Children under 5 are free. CSPS Hall, 383 Michigan Avenue, St. Paul, MN.

MINNESOTANS FOR A UNITED IRELAND CEILI

The annual Minnesotans for a United Ireland St. Patrick's Day Ceili will be held Thursday, March 17 from 7 to 10 p.m at Randolph Heights Elementary School, 378 South Hamline. Ave., St. Paul, featuring legendary local Irish band, THE BLACKBIRDS. Dances called by Mike Whalen, easy dance lessons at 6:30. Admission is \$8, students and seniors \$5, children 5 and under free. \$1 off with a non-perishable food shelf donation.
612-871-7110

There are many more events on St.Pat's Day than are covered here. Be sure to check the calendar of your favorite Irish pubs, dance & musical groups, specialty stores and community organizations for details on their activities if you don't see them here.

Courtesy of the Irish Fair Children's Area

NATIVE IRISH DOG TRIVIA QUIZ



Above are all the spaniels registered by the American Kennel Club. Can you pick out the rare native Irish breed that was and is used as a water retriever in the wetlands of Ireland? How about its smaller American cousin that originated in the Upper Midwest and is the state dog of Wisconsin? Answers in next newsletter.

Let us know of other upcoming Irish-related events, news items of interest, folks you would like to see interviewed, topics to be covered, your thoughts, comments, unadulterated praise, feckless suggestions, bold ideas, cheeky criticism, etc. for future issues:

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Until next month,
**Best Regards from the
Minnesota
Irish Fair**