



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

June 2022

Volume 10/No 6

President: Bob Fitzgerald; **Chaplain:** Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino; **Vice President:** Shawn Lenahan; **Recording Secretary:** Bill Halpin; **Financial Secretary:** Jeff Everett; **Treasurer:** Dave McLaughlin; **Standing Committee:** Bobby Murphy; **Marshal:** Chuck Gleason; **Sentinel:** Jack Kelly; **Webmaster:** Vacant; **Organizer:** Vacant; **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin
(billhalpin@irshcultureva.org)

Pray to Mary Immaculate Patroness of the United States for the strength of mind and heart to defend our religious freedoms, for national moral guidance, and that our country will always be “one nation under God”. This is critically important in this time of contrary moral agendas and the threats from patently evil elements.

June is a special month:

- ✓ **6 June D-Day:** The battle for Pointe du Hoc became one of the most heroic moments of the D-Day invasion. A battalion of U.S. Army Rangers scaled a 100-foot cliff overlooking Omaha Beach with nothing more than ropes and rickety ladders. As enemy gunfire and grenades rained down picking them off, they climbed, secured the strategic high ground, and silenced a battery of long-range German guns. Click on: <https://youtu.be/VL7TxjVqcxY>
- ✓ **14 June: U.S. Army's 247th Birthday and Flag Day:** The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was the military intelligence agency during World War II. In September 1945 President Truman disbanded OSS and transferred OSS operations to the Army. To execute the mission, Special Forces was formed in 1952 and trained to conduct counterinsurgency, unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance and related missions. In 1953 the Army established a paramilitary capability and trained them to obtain intelligence not available by other means. Both elements adapted OSS doctrine. Click on: <https://youtu.be/Nv5z3qwIe9w>

- ✓ **20 June is Father's Day**: Sonora Smart Dodd, one of six children raised by a widower, worked to establish an official equivalent to Mother's Day for male parents. She was successful as Washington State celebrated the first Father's Day on June 19, 1910. It became a nationwide holiday in the United States in 1972.
- ✓ **READ MORE: The Man Who Inspired Father's Day Was a Single Dad and Civil War Vet**

President's Corner

Brothers - the first of our two major fundraising events in 2022, our Annual Shamrock Golf Classic, was a success and I want to start by thanking Brother Dave McLaughlin for staying the course through the slow start and finishing above our goal! Even though the number of sponsors was down, this year's tournament had the most golfers playing in several years. Looking ahead to next spring's tournament, we will be looking for a few brothers to help with the golf committee, even if you don't play golf. Let me know if you can help with this preparations for this important fundraising event.

The ticket sales for the annual Trip for Two to Ireland raffle has started and all of you should have gotten an allotment of raffle tickets along with your membership card. I encourage you sell them to your friends or buy them yourself. We have a total of 1200 tickets available so don't be shy about asking for more to buy or sell. In addition to your individual sales, we are planning for sales tables following Masses at each of the parishes between now and our Halfway to St. Patrick's Day in September. If you see one of these tables outside your church, I encourage you to stop by to help sell a few.

At our 17 May business meeting, we welcomed some new brothers as well as conducting our first Shamrock Degree ceremony in over two years. In addition to the Shamrock Degree and usual Division business, we had a good discussion before voting on an important issue that will come up at the National Convention in July. I encourage you to read the minutes from that meeting to get a good summary of the proceedings.

On a final note, I encourage you to attend our next business meeting on 21 Jun, either in person or via the web. Our Division needs you!

In our motto of Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity,

Bob Fitzgerald



State Quarterly Meeting/Major Degrees Exemplification in Leesburg

The spring quarterly Virginia AOH state meeting was held at the Leesburg VFW facility on 7 May. Eleven divisions sent representatives and each one was provided opportunities to review past accomplishments and future plans. Based on division reports, AOH in Virginia is incrementally growing. A majority of the meeting was devoted to a very lively discussion on a proposed amendment to the National Constitution. Further discussions centered on the need for active measures (instead of relying on the national website) with regard to recruitment. It was noted only eight divisions have appointed an Organizer and there is scant information on their recruiting activities. After lunch, the Brian Boru Major Degree Team exemplified the degrees for 17 brothers, some of whom had traveled from Maryland and D.C. The Maryland and D.C. state presidents were on hand to witness the degree exemplification. Regrettably, General Meagher Division did not send candidates for the Major Degrees.



Ninth Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic

Kudos to the division golf committee for pulling together an outstanding tournament, the largest field of golfers in our nine year history. We thank Green Sponsor John Needham along with Hole Sponsors Battlefield Toyota, The Old House Vineyard, Chancellor Eye Care, Knights of Columbus Council 10246, Little Tire Company, The Virginia Irish Cultural Society, Dave Covington, Joe Quimper, Scott Pettyjohn, and Brother Shawn Lenahan. Raffle prizes were acquired or donated by Brothers Rob Burke, Jack Grey, Bill Halpin, Shawn Lenahan, Dave McLaughlin, Pete Needham, and Jake Ruppert, plus Michael Paul and Lake of the Woods Golf Management.

For the second consecutive year (third overall) we selected “Best in the Burg” Lake of the Woods golf course as venue the Shamrock Charity Golf Classic on May 9th. This selection was based on the excellent service provided by the clubhouse and golf management in 2021. Although hard to believe, this year was even better! Golf Manager Eric Barnes and his pro-shop staff did an absolutely outstanding job organizing and preparing the golf carts. Golfers’ names, starting hole

and scorecards were on each cart and the staff went the extra mile to clean carts of as much pollen as possible. Golfers especially appreciated the roaming beverage cart.

Food and Beverage Manager Ryan Richards and his staff prepared and served another masterpiece meal of prime rib, vegetables and a tempting assortment of deserts, including a returning favorite chocolate cake. The tables, covered in white tablecloths were perfect -- large enough to accommodate two foursomes. The service staff was exceptionally efficient and pleasant as they removed used dinnerware from the tables.



Eighty-six golfers played on a sunny, mild Monday morning. The winners were the foursome of Rich McInnis, Terry Sindt, Jim Corsones and Dan Cronin, all LOW MGA members. They posted a 48, an amazing 23 under par! Jim Corsones is not pictured as he had to leave the luncheon for another important engagement.

In a close second place was the foursome of Pete Needham, Charlie Pitts, Dick Hageman, Donny Tilch at 21 under. This foursome has been in the winner's circle before. They won the second and third classics.

Four golfers from the Herbert-Cady Division joined us. It is always a pleasant situation when other divisions join us in making this an outstanding day.



May 2022 a Month for Recognition

To begin we welcomed Tim Lynch to the division. Brother Tim transferred from Father Duffy Division 2, Barnegat, NJ. We welcome Tim and look forward to working with him!

Shamrock Degree 17 May

The Division held its first Post Virus Shamrock Degree exemplification on May 17th. The Degree Team of Jeff Everett (Friendship), Shawn Lenahan (Unity), Dave McLaughlin (Christian Charity) and Bill Halpin (Marshal) guided (L to R) Bobby Murphy, Jerry Timmons, Neil Hornung, Mike Uriell, and Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino through the Lessons of Our Motto.



Hibernian of the Year 2021

Past Division Vice President Dennis O’Leary was honored as the 2021 Meagher Division Hibernian of the Year. His creative initiative in acquiring and engraving our “outreach” Irish coffee glasses, creating an adhesive Division Celtic cross logo suitable for use by school children, and crafting farewell gifts enhanced the division’s image. He also volunteered to ensure the division had food and beverages for the social hour(s) after Division business meetings. During the virus crisis, Dennis engineered the critical technology for virtual meetings providing the glue needed to keep the division active and in touch. Beyond that, Brother O’Leary served as cantor for our annual Memorial Mass and was continually active supporting St. Jude parish ministries.



Hibernian Longevity Recognition



Brother Gene McKenna, a USMC veteran, joined the AOH in Danbury, CT in September 1970 and received our Order's Major Degrees in 1974. In Danbury Gene was honored as the Division Hibernian of the Year. When his career brought him to Virginia and to Lake of the Woods, Gene transferred into the Gen. Thomas F. Meagher Division where he served as Recording Secretary and was a prime mover in Division outreach and fund raising initiatives. He could always be counted on to achieve Hibernian goals and polish the image of our division in the public square. As an example, Gene authored a poem lauding Gen. Thomas F. Meagher Division accomplishments and presented it at the Richmond Virginia Biennial Convention. His dedication earned him a second Hibernian of the Year Award in 2015.

On May 17th Gen. Meagher Division President Bob Fitzgerald presented Gene with a Hibernian pin recognizing his 50 (plus) years as an outstanding Hibernian.

Three brothers recognized for 25 years were: PSP/PDP Bill Halpin who joined AOH in 1983 (interrupted by consecutive overseas postings); Battalion Chief Jack McGovern, Fredericksburg Fire Dept. who joined in 1992; and Captain Patrick McGroarty, USN, who joined in 1997.

******McKenna's Ode to the General Meagher Division******

At 2011 Virginia AOH State Convention divisions were asked to talk about their division and its accomplishments. Gene crafted this outstanding poem that reflected our division's accomplishments.

We bear the name of General Thomas “Mahr” who led the Irish brigade through battles afar.

From Bull Run, Fredericksburg and more, he led his Fighting 69th in war.

Even the rebel foe honored this man of yore, and held his troops in awe...

While our AOH Division is small compared to many of y'all, we have accomplished much and we stand tall.

We have many armed forces vets and patriotic civilians in our ranks, for which we give thanks.

They all love their heritage true, the Irish green, and the U.S. red, white, and blue

We have almost doubled our membership in only a year and recruited a Chaplain volunteer.

We are proud to report that we support pro-life programs, Catholic scholars, youth work camps, and more, for a small Division as ours this is quite a chore...

Our yearly raffle trip to an Erin bash, provides our needed charity cash.

If you would like to buy in advance, we'll be happy to sell you a chance*

If you win we will pay for your flight, a rental car, and a place at a B&B to alight

In our ranks, we have a resident State Past President, and two State Board

members too, who are all tried and true.

One is Brother Bruce “Denote” we wish to promote for the State Convention VP vote.



The Celt would forfeit his title to the respect of the civilized world, did he not fight with all his heart and all his soul and all his cunning against the empire which has despoiled him and murdered his kin, now with arms, now with artificial famine. There can be no peace between the two people until either Ireland is a desert or is free. There can be neither truce nor compromise.

May 5, 2022 will be among the most significant dates in Irish history

For more than 100 years unionist rulers considered nationalists in Northern Ireland to be the barbarians at the gate, to be prevented from ever gaining power. Those same unionist leaders are suddenly playing a secondary role to the Irish nationalists. Sinn Féin polled some 66,000 votes more than the main unionist party, the DUP. Writing the words “*Sinn Féin First Minister*” has a historical significance that makes one realize how profound this change really is. (adapted from *Irish America* Magazine 28 May 2022)



Ancient Order of Hibernians to Vote on Allowing Female Members

From *Irish America* Magazine, 28 Mat 2022

The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) is set to vote on whether to allow female members in July. The historic conference was announced after the AOH, which is the largest fraternal Irish organization in the U.S., experienced a 20% drop in membership over the last decade.

The organization will revisit its long-standing male-only policy at a conference in Pennsylvania this summer. However, opposition to the proposal comes from the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOH), which says the move would be detrimental to its organization. The LAOH, which is completely separate from the AOH following a tax audit in 2012, has argued that female members of the AOH would not be treated as equal members of the organization.

Daniel O’Connell, the current national president of the AOH, told the *Irish Times* he is “hopeful the LAOH leadership and membership moving forward will embrace a proposal that would give women residing in America another opportunity to embrace their Irish heritage.”

The decline in AOH membership is thought to be due to aging members while some current members believe that younger men are reluctant to join an organization that does not permit female members.

Currently, AOH members must be male, Catholic, and able to prove Irish ancestry, according to the organization’s constitution. The group currently boasts 30,000 members while the LAOH reports just over 10,000.





Division President Bob Fitzgerald submitted “Shamrocks are clovers, but not all clovers are shamrocks”

The word "shamrock" comes from the Gaelic word *Seamrog*, meaning “little clover”¹. As you all know, one of the traditional Irish symbols is a shamrock, and a shamrock appears on the flag of Erin Go Bragh, meaning “Ireland Forever”, and Saint Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity with the three leaves representing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A shamrock can be found on the uniforms of Irish sports teams and on the tail of the national airline, Aer Lingus.

The use of the shamrock as Ireland’s national symbol dates back thousands of years, but there appears to be confusion in today's world about what constitutes a traditional shamrock. By definition, a shamrock is a clover that specifically has three leaves, no more and no less. Do not confuse a shamrock with a four-leafed clover, which is NOT a shamrock. Some researchers note that the Druids (priests of the ancient Celts) claimed that a four-leafed clover was a good luck charm against evil spirits. These days, most people have forgotten about the “evil spirits” part and just remember that they are supposed to be good luck, and perhaps somehow confused that with the "luck of the Irish". You may find four-leaf, five-leaf, or even six-leaf clovers as a result of a genetic abnormality...but none of these abnormal clovers are shamrocks.



Upcoming Division Events



Bingo! Every Thursday and Saturday evening 6:30PM at St Michael the Archangel High School, 6301 Campus Drive, Fredericksburg. Bring the family!

June 7: Division outing at FredNats game

June 21: Division meeting 7:30 PM, K of C Hall, 4724 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg

THE DIVISION DOES NOT MEET IN JULY



Our Division Prayers



¹ Most Irish-English translations (i.e. New English–Irish Dictionary; Google Translation, Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language, and Wiktionary) translate *seamróg* as shamrock. Clover is translated into Irish as *Seamair*

Keep our brothers, family members and friends in your prayers

- **David Chichester:** recovering from hernia surgery
- **Joe Daley:** COPD
- **Russell McLaughlin:** Dave McLaughlin's brother - frontotemporal dementia (FTD)
- **Loretta Larzelere:** Bob Fitzgerald's sister-in-law suffering from seizures and Alzheimer's
- **John O'Brien:** Hugh O'Brien's brother-- recovering from stroke.
- **Jerry O'Brien:** Paul O'Brien's brother – cancer
- **Ruth Pettinger:** Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) inoperable brain tumor.
- **Donna Maffeo:** Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer)
- **Brian Kiernan:** VAAOH President, lymphedemic edema
- **Nolan Banks:** Former FS Jeff Banks' son (chemo-compromised immune system) *Pray for the intercession of Venerable Father Augustine Tolton:*
<http://www.toltoncanonization.org/prayer/canonizationprayer.html>
- **Mary Lou and Keith Bowers:** St Jude parishioners/friends of Deacon Aaron
- **Alice Wilkowski (stroke)** associate of PDP Shawn Lenahan

Pray for the repose of the souls of deceased Brothers and family members

- **John Hogan:** Meagher Division 2015 Hibernian of the Year, died 14 Feb 2022
- **Christopher Grey:** son of Brother Jack Grey, died 15 February 2022
- **Dawn Forest:** Wife of Brother Dean Forest, suddenly on 13 January 2022.
- **Bob Phillips:** Brother of Bill Phillips who died on 30 January 2022
- **Lois M. Hanson:** mother of Edwin Hanson who died peacefully on 18 November 2021
- **Mary O'Brien Gardner:** mother of Jill Lenahan, mother-in-law of PDP Shawn Lenahan who died on 12 November 2021

*Send notifications to Committee of the Sick Chair Bobby Murphy (smurphy823@gmail.com)
Send requests for inclusion in our newsletter to billhalpin@irishcultureva.org*



General Meagher Division Attire

Every brother should have these articles of clothing

Semi-formal/formal occasions: The AOH "uniform" is green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers and optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH Masses, funerals, dinners, parades, State and National conventions, and other public events.

Informal events (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo or sweatshirts (optional ball cap) are appropriate.

Division Logo Items: Point of Contact for Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps is Shawn Lenahan (s_lenahan@verizon.net)

Green Jacket: Brothers procure their own green jackets. One source: http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html. Visit the website; call the 800 number; tell them you're with AOH and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived. Kelly green is the color. A second source recommended by Major James Dooley Division: <https://www.uniformsinstock.com/collections/blazers/products/executive-apparel-winston-mens-kelly-green-blazer>

AOH Sash: Brothers procure their own sashes. The AOH tri-color sash represents the national colors of Ireland and should be worn over the right shoulder (green closest to collar) crossing to the left hip. Measure from right shoulder to left hip in inches; keep in mind the sash will normally be worn over a jacket, a raincoat/overcoat (and a growing waistline). Sashes are available from: **D. & E. Morrissey** (954-426-3514/ <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com/donations.html>). The National Hibernian usually has an ad for D & E Morrissey. **Gettysburg Flag** offers tri-color sashes and "special prices" for larger orders. <https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>

This newsletter is an unofficial publication providing information to members of the Gen. Thomas F. Meagher Division and others who may have interest in division activities. It is published by Bill Halpin and unless shown otherwise, he is the author of the contents.