

**REV. JAMES T. O'REILLY DIVISION 8
LADIES ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS**

www.div8aoh.com



LAOH NEWS OF INTEREST

Summer 2020

Dear Members,

It is hard to believe that the month of August is upon us already. In only a couple of short weeks, we can only hope to start up our Hibernian activities. I hope you are all having a healthy and safe summer. It certainly has been different.

IMPORTANT: We remain hopeful that we will be able to resume our Monthly Meetings at the Claddagh. Our next Monthly Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 9th. In the event we are unable to meet at the Claddagh on September 9th, we will Zoom our September Meeting. ***More information on this will be available in our September Newsletter, our Website and by email.***

Typically, I would have a few pages of news, old and new to bring to you during the summer, however, this year has been one of a kind. We managed to get through about two and half "normal" months and boom, the World changed. Since there had not been a meeting since March, President Sullivan and I decided to have a June zoom Division meeting which with the help of John Michael Pelletier and Erin Capano, was a welcomed avenue for us to take. President Sullivan and I had also held zoom officer meetings prior to this which gave us an opportunity to catch up on any important issues before us.

It seemed as if everything Irish in our lives was postponed, starting with the Luncheon, the Parade, our Division meetings, the National Irish Step Dancing competition and ending with the cancellation of our National AOH-LAOH Convention which was turned into a virtual convention the weekend of July 25th. This happened through the efforts of many hard working AOH and LAOH National Officers. We must congratulate our own President Sullivan for serving as a National Director for the past 8 years. Be assured, the National AOH will continue to benefit from his talents and efforts as the National AOH President has already put him in charge of a couple of committees. President O'Connell would be crazy not to.

Back in March, congratulations went out to Lisa Breen, our 2020 Irish Woman of the Year, a well deserving recipient. The AOH awards included the Very Rev. Christopher J. Casey as the 2020 recipient of the Richard Cardinal Cushing Award, and Mark J. Alaimo as our 2020 Irishman of the Year. Both awards were presented at the Dinner Dance. The 2020 John E. Fenton Citizenship Award was given to Larry F. Giordano.

Unfortunately, as the months went on, our events such as the 3-card bingo, the fundraiser at the Irish Cottage, the St. Bridget's Tea, our April, May and June physical meetings, (oh how we missed our ice cream!) and our State Board meeting and banquet were all cancelled. Although our Tea was cancelled, we had two worthy individuals that have been chosen to receive the 2020 Scholarships. Receiving the Margaret M. Webb \$1000.00 Scholarship was Emily Grant, granddaughter of LAOH member, Jane Heggarty. Receiving the Eileen Donovan Memorial \$1000.00 Scholarship was Mary Grace Bunker, granddaughter of LAOH member, Rita Murphy. Congratulations to both ladies. Thank you to Michael Donovan who graciously remembers us every year with the donation in memory of his mother.

Continuing into the summer, both your Presidents, AOH and LAOH were extremely busy on zoom calls with the National Boards. I myself must have been involved in at least 7, not to count a 77-person Immigration and Education zoom meeting. That was an education in itself! The LAOH National Board now consists of President - Karen Keane, Vice President - Marilyn Madigan, Secretary - Mary Ann Lubinsky, Treasurer - Sandi Swift, Irish Historian - Colleen Bowers, Missions and Charities - Cathy Turck and Catholic Action - Peggy Cornish.

Our Juniors were flourishing back when they met in February and March. We are all proud that Division 8 LAOH is the only division within the State of Massachusetts that has a Junior Division. Under the leadership of Isabelle Gannon, these young girls work very hard at celebrating and learning about their Irish heritage and we should congratulate them

for that. There are approximately 15 Junior Divisions across the Country and it is nice to know that we are one of those few. Our Division currently has 7 members, ranging from age 17 to age 6. The officers are President – Gianna Fiore, Vice President – Isabella Fiore, Secretary – Kylie Paris, Treasurer – Madison Mackland Rivera, Irish Historian – Tess Sullivan, Missions and Charity – Nora Sanzi and Mistress At Arms – Mary Kate Bevilaqua.

Regarding our own Division, we currently are strong in membership with 177 members with 4 new members and one rising Junior. I would always encourage more members to come to our meetings. Also, I would be remiss if I did not mention the importance of our dues being paid on time. I am repeating myself but please remember, we are a charitable organization funded by the members and fundraising activities.

I would like to suggest a few events to take place in the fall or winter, however we must wait for the State regulations to be set along with our own cities and towns. The ideas would remain as being a trip to Foxwoods, 45's – Left Right Center tournaments, an "Afternoon of Irish Music" at the Claddagh Pub and a possible "Mystery Trip." Again, I ask that we band together to try our best to come up with more activities and events that would not only strike up the interest of our elders in the Division but also spark up the interest of some of our younger members and even encourage more to join. Your help is needed in keeping our Division not only strong but also committed to continuing our heritage.

I need to thank my officers, Carol Calderon, Marie Pacheco, Ellen Melvin, Helen Mathison, Joyce Buckley, Cathy Callahan, Nora Carroll Bevilaqua, Kathleen Melvin, Lisa Breen and Susan Fink. We have tried to keep in touch the best way we could during the last couple of months and I know their commitment to our organization is still as strong as it was before the pandemic. I encourage you to let people know how proud we are to be called Hibernians and do not hesitate to let people know what our organization stands for. I also thank all the AOH members that continue to support our causes, our events and our organization. The Men's Division is growing in membership and is continually looking at new ways to seek new members. Hopefully, we can hold more joint events to bring about the unity in our Division 8. Our State President, Margaret O'Connor is doing her best as well to keep our Divisions across the State communicating.

I think being a dedicated officer of any Division requires one never to take a break in being committed to coming up with new ideas to get members, retain members or to hold events that balance our cultural interests as well as our social interests. Every one of us knows how fragile our organization can become, whether on a Division, State or National level. Many organizations similar to ours are struggling to survive, whether it be for financial reasons, lack of participation or lack of interest. I've said many times, Division 8 LAOH is no different, but I ask that we band together to try our best to continue to grow in numbers and cause an awareness of our organization.

In closing, I would **again** like to thank my sister Hibernians for all the help, advice and support you have given me during my reign as your President. As we begin again in September, I count on this continued support and hope that our goals and ambitions will help this Division continue to strive long after I am your President. I thank you for the privilege to serve as your President and to represent you all.

Once again, I leave you with these words of Ronald Reagan,

"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,



Anne-Marie Nyhan-Doherty, President, Division 8 LAOH - Lawrence

cc: Karen Keane, National LAOH President
Margaret O'Connor, Massachusetts State President