



what's the CRAIC



November
2025

A PUBLICATION FROM
**The FRIENDLY
SONS OF
ST. PATRICK**
SAN DIEGO



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President's Message



Lads!

The holidays are always a special time for the Sons – and we're not slowing down one bit. Our year-end calendar is packed, and we're already gearing up for the High Holy Season (January through March), which wraps up with our favorite tradition: the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

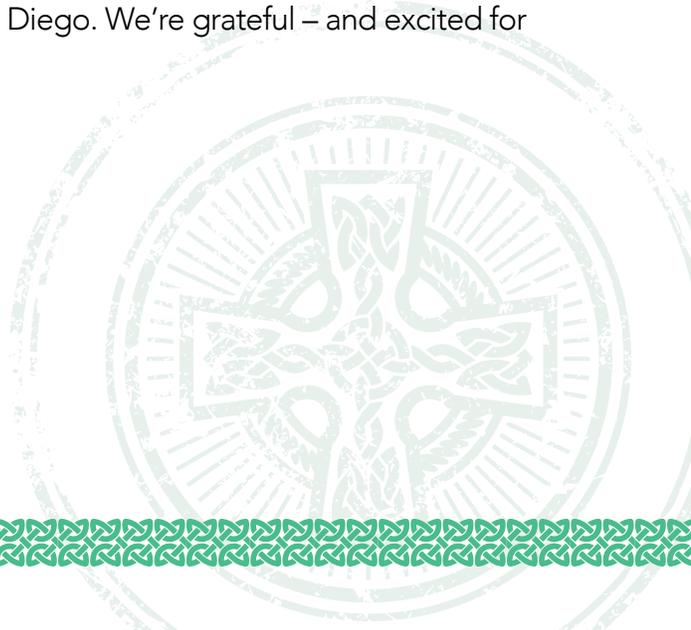
At our October Board Meeting, we shared some great news: new members are joining in strong numbers, renewals are rolling in, and our finances are solid, which allows us to offer more events at little or no cost. Plus, four members have stepped up to apply for Members-at-Large (MAL) Board positions.

Bottom line: this momentum is thanks to you. Your energy, your involvement, and your pride in being part of the Sons, keep us thriving as the biggest (and best) Irish organization in San Diego. We're grateful – and excited for what's ahead.

Sláinte,

Jim Kilgore

FSOSP President 2025 - 2026



Welcome To Our Newest Members

JOINED IN 2025 (to date):

Craig Balsley
Eric Barber
Sean M Brew, Jr.
Warren Brew
Ken Carreno
Sean Carroll
David Casey
Steven Castillo
Tom Courtney
Nathan Donovan
Jeremiah Doran III
Miles Doughty
Chris Dye
Nick Fennel
John Franklin
Seamus Garland
Glenn Gentile
Matthew Hallisy
Ryan Huckabone
Tom Iannacone
Jonathan Junker
Brendan Manson
Mark Martinez
Richard Millican
Steven McGlynn
Adam McGrath
John Mclaughlin
Patrick O'Brien
Sean O'Donnell
Nick Sciabarra
Charlie Quesada

Membership Renewal In January

As one of nearly 300 members strong, we hope you've enjoyed this year's events, the new merchandise, and the camaraderie with your FSOSP brethren. Your board of directors scheduled a busy slate of activities this year and will continue to build on the success of our programs in 2026!

Notification will be arriving in January for your 2026 membership renewal. If you've not signed up for automatic renewal, please plan to renew on the FSOSP website. Be prepared to pay with a credit card online. We can make arrangements for paying by check as necessary.

Watch for the next events, and renewal info, in your inbox. And have a wonderful Thanksgiving, a Nollaig Shona and Athbhliain faoi Mhaise!

New Branded Shirts Are Available

You asked for them, and they are here... just in time for the holidays! The new, and very popular, embroidered polo shirts and the coveted rugby shirts are available to order now! Go to our website's Members section for more info and ordering: [polo-rugby-shirts](#)



Parade Season Is Upon Us!

Veteran's Day Parade Tuesday, November 11

Commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, this year's parade takes on special meaning as we celebrate veterans of all services. As usual, the Friendly Sons will join marching bands, historic military units, vintage vehicles, and other organizations in this proud salute.

Join us at The Waterfront after 7:45 am for breakfast, then Parade staging begins at 9:30 am on Harbor Drive (in front of the County Admin Bldg). No-host afterparty at the Waterfront. Full parade dress attire.

[More information on the website »](#)



Ocean Beach Holiday Parade Saturday, December 6

For more 45 years, Ocean Beach has hosted one of the best Holiday Parades in SoCal. And the Sons are marching and singing!

Festivities to start at 3:00 pm, at our friend Chris Gouveia's home: 4713 Newport Ave

Smilin' Irishman Candidate, James "Doc" Monley will host "A Pour for Donations" whiskey tasting table!

5:00 pm Parade Step-Off! Full parade dress attire.

Immediately following, join the Sons' afterparty on the second deck of **The Holding Company** with food, drink, and plenty of song!

Friends & family are welcome for all festivities.

[More information on the website »](#)



Holidays In Ireland: November & December Traditions

As autumn fades and winter settles across the Emerald Isle, Ireland transforms into a place of twinkling lights, ancient customs, and heartfelt gatherings. The holiday season – stretching from early November through the New Year – blends solemn remembrance, cozy celebration, and deep-rooted tradition in ways that feel both timeless and uniquely Irish.

A Season of Warmth and Connection

In Ireland, the holidays are less about commercial bustle and more about connection – to family, to community, and to tradition. Whether it's a candle in the window, a pint shared by the fire, or a song sung in remembrance, each celebration carries the warmth of Irish spirit that endures long after the season ends.

November: A Time of Remembrance and Reflection

The month begins with **All Saints' Day** (Lá Fhéile na Naomh Uile) on November 1 and **All Souls' Day** (Lá na Marbh) on November 2. These are days to honor loved ones who have passed – often marked by attending Mass, lighting candles, and visiting cemeteries. Many families leave small candles burning in windows as a symbol of remembrance and welcome for departed souls.

Throughout November, communities also observe **Remembrance Sunday**, particularly in Northern Ireland, to honor those lost in war. Poppies are worn, and ceremonies are held in towns and villages countrywide.



December: From Festive Streets to Fireside Traditions

By mid-December, Ireland begins to glow. City streets from Dublin to Galway sparkle with Christmas lights, carolers fill the air with music, and shops brim with cheerful bustle. The Irish celebrate **Christmas (Nollaig)** with both modern festivity and enduring customs that stretch back generations.

The Weeks Before Christmas

Irish homes are decorated with wreaths, holly, and candles – the latter often placed in the window as a



symbol of welcome for Mary and Joseph. Traditional Christmas markets, such as those in Galway, Waterford, and Belfast, offer handmade crafts, mulled wine, and festive food.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

On **Christmas Eve**, families attend midnight Mass, often followed by a quiet toast at home or a visit to the local pub for one last festive pint before the big day.

Christmas Day itself is centered around family. A hearty meal of roast turkey or goose, stuffing, vegetables, and the Christmas pudding fills the table. Crackers are pulled, drinks shared, jokes told, and laughter is abundant.



St. Stephen's Day and Beyond

The fun continues **St. Stephen's Day (December 26)** – known elsewhere as Boxing Day. Many take to the countryside for the **Wren Boys** tradition, where musicians once dressed in old clothes and straw hats, “hunted the wren,” and paraded through towns playing music. Today, it's more of a community festival, with lively music and charity fundraising.

After the New Year's countdown, the Irish festive season officially ends on **Nollaig na mBan** or **Women's Little Christmas**, celebrated on January 6. It's a day when women traditionally rest after the holidays while men take over the household chores – a finale to the season of goodwill.





Upcoming Events

Our events and those of other organizations the FSOSP support offer something for every member. As they have become more numerous and complex, Sons participation is necessary for success! Please contact the event Chair listed to offer your time and talents. The more you participate the more you get out of your membership!

Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial: Veteran's Day Ceremony (see ad)

Saturday, November 8 • 11 am
6905 La Jolla Scenic S Dr. La Jolla, CA
Free to attend | Volunteers wanted | More info to come
Contact: Everett Evleth

Veterans Day Parade

Tuesday, November 11 • Parade 10 am
Harbor Drive (In front of the County Admin Bldg)
Free to attend – Pre- & Post-parade at the Waterfront
Chair: Greg Swanberg

17th of the Month Club : Barley & Sword

Friday, November 21 • 5-8 pm (see ad)
Barley & Sword 3052 El Cajon Blvd Ste 102, San Diego
Free to attend
Chair: Chris Hodgetts

The Ocean Beach Holiday Parade

Saturday, December 6 • 5 - 8 pm
Free to attend / Family & Friends Welcome
Festivities to start at 3:00, hosted by Chris Gouveia
at his home: 4713 Newport Ave, San Diego
Immediately following the parade, post-party on the
second deck of The Holding Company
Chair: Bill Kennedy

More events to come!

[Click for event info on our website »](#)

Smilin' Irishman Contest (see ad)

Saturday, January 17 • 6-9 pm
McGregor's Ale House
Advance Tickets: \$20 single | \$30 couple
\$25 single | \$35 couple at the door
Chair: Chris Hodgetts

Annual Membership Luncheon

Friday, February 13 • 11:00 am-3:00 pm
Tom Ham's Lighthouse
2150 Harbor Island Dr, San Diego
Details to come
Chair: Adam Powell

Black Tie Dinner

Friday, March 13 • 5:30 pm - 11 pm
Marina Village Seaside Room
1936 Quivira Way, San Diego
Details to come
Chair: Bill Kennedy

St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival

Est. Date: Saturday, March 14 • Parade 10:30 am
Festival 9 am - 6 pm
Balboa Park, Sixth Avenue & Laurel Street
Free to march / Festival \$10
Chair: Greg Swanberg

St. Patrick's Day Sing-Along

Tuesday, March 17
Details to come



Friday, November 21 ♣ 5-8 pm
Barley & Sword Brewing Company
3052 El Cajon Blvd, Ste 102, San Diego

Join us for an evening of good fellowship and good beer!

Meet new members, visit with old friends, celebrate a great year!
This edition of the 17th of the Month Club meets at one of San Diego's hottest new breweries, Barley & Sword.

DRINK SPECIALS (TBA) View their current offerings here: barleyandsword.com.

And in case you missed it at the last 17OTMC, the delicious Clash of the Ash Irish Lager is a collaboration with San Diego's newest Hurling team, the **Rovers**.

Come by for a pint with your fellow Sons. Support Doc Monley, our Smilin' Irishman candidate, and support this fine brewery.

RSVP here: [17OTMC](#)



Join the Irish Community for a night of competition, music, and good craic!



FUNDRAISER FOR THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE & FESTIVAL

Since 1981, The Smilin' Irishman Contest has been the largest fundraiser for the annual San Diego St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival. Vying for the title each year are members from the county's most prominent Irish and affiliated organizations. Contestants will share a song, a toast, a joke, and their knowledge of whiskeys while the rest of us "vote" with our donations. Join us for the fun and be sure to vote early and vote often!

Saturday, January 17, 2026 🍀 6 - 9pm



10475 San Diego Mission Rd, San Diego

Advance Tickets: \$20 single | \$30 couple

\$25 single | \$35 couple at the door

Purchase tickets at: fsosp.com/smilin-irishman-contest

LIVE MUSIC with Ass Pocket Whiskey Fellas
Food & Drink Specials 🍀 Raffle Prizes

ALL FEES & DONATIONS MAY BE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Please consult your accountant for details.

Events Recap

Olde Fashioned Irish Wake and Half Way to St. Patrick's Day Party

September The Ould Sod hosted our annual event, and it was a stirring one at that...both emotions and drinks were stirred (some shaken, some poured).

Father/Rabbi Shlomo O'Brien (**Mark Wheelan**) led the procession and performed the Wake ceremony by giving all in attendance a brief lesson (and a chuckle) on why this event is so dear to the Sons. Members of the **San Diego Emerald Society Pipes & Drums** lead the funeral march around the block. And **Jada Martinez** (Mark Martinez's wife) was this year's honorary corpse.

Entertainers **Timmy Ford & Brenden Kennedy** sang every Irish song in the book and there were tons of raffle prizes. A great time was had by all – kudos go out to chair **Scott Dickerson**!



Open Board Meeting

October A group of nearly 50 board members, past presidents, and general membership convened at the Marina Villages Sunset Room for our once-a-year open Board of Directors meeting. Great food and Guinness on tap were served along with a docket full of FSOSP business. New members got a look at how the Irish sausage is made and all contributed to making it a fun and informative evening.

Thanks to **Bill Kennedy** and **Brian Dougherty** for making this event a success!

Member Briefs

Oktoberfest

Many Friendly Sons attend the El Cajon Oktoberfest each year, a few volunteer as well. And this year was no exception. Hosted by the German American Societies of San Diego, the event was held at their clubhouse. It's among the more authentic German cultural festivals in the region – especially for those looking for more than just a beer garden, but the whole Bavarian ambiance.

Held over two weekends, some Sons and their families gathered on the first Saturday, September 27 to enjoy a full lineup of traditional German food: bratwurst, ox-on-the-spit, sauerkraut, red cabbage, potato pancakes, salted pretzels and European pastries.

German beers and liquors were served in a festive beer-fest tent. And live German folk music, oompah tunes, and chicken dances were played by Guggenbach-Buam (from Baden-Württemberg). Folk dancers and attendees added to the festive night in trachten (traditional dress). Prost!

See you next year? Or as they say at the fest, "Bis nächstes Jahr?"



MT. SOLEDAD NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

Honoring a Legacy 250 Years at Sea, on Land, and in the Air.

Saluting the history of the Navy and Marine Corps,
and their enduring impact in San Diego.



San Diego's Unbreakable Bond with the Military.

This Veterans Day, the Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial will honor all veterans, paying special tribute to the 250-year legacy of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps and their strong history with San Diego. We will recognize two historic installations, Naval Air Station North Island and Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and two men who represent their origins: Commander Theodore Gordon "Spuds" Ellyson and Major General Joseph Henry Pendleton. This event is a powerful reminder of how their early dedication shaped a lasting legacy.

Open to the Public • Free to Attend

Free Parking and Shuttle Services from the
Mt Soledad Presbyterian Church and French American School

For more information
soledadmemorial.org/event/veterans-day-2025

(858) 384-2405 • www.soledadmemorial.org

The Mt. Soledad Memorial Association is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. (EIN 95-2373533)



House of Ireland International Christmas Festival (December Nights) December 5-6

More info on their [website](#)

Celebrating its 90th anniversary, the Cottage will feature traditional Irish fare and an International Spirits Garden for an Irish beer or a proper Irish Coffee.

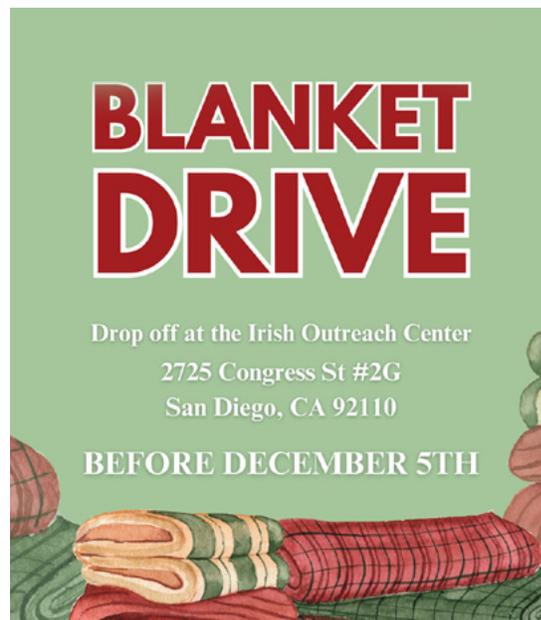


Irish Outreach Center Saturday, December 13

Mendoza Elementary School
in Imperial Beach

More info on their [website](#)

A charitable community event of San Diego's Irish community, bringing festive cheer, especially to children and families in need.



Sunday, December 21

2:30 pm | \$28-\$75 | [website](#)

Balboa Theatre 868 Fourth Ave

A family-friendly holiday show blending Irish dance, music, storytelling and carols.

Don't miss local Irish dance school Clan Rince School of Irish Dance. They will be onstage as guest dancers performing alongside international professionals.

YOUR 2025-26 FSOSP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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2nd Vice President
Bill Kennedy

3rd Vice President
Sean McGowan

4th Vice President
& Secretary
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THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

SAN DIEGO

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Valley Center, CA 92082

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