



what's the CRAIC



May
2026

A PUBLICATION FROM

THE
FRIENDLY
SONS OF
ST. PATRICK
SAN DIEGO



IN THIS ISSUE:

USD SCHOLARSHIP

JOHN BARRY

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEST COAST SEVENS

EVENTS RECAP

MEMBER BRIEFS



President's Message

Lads,

I am honored to serve you as your new president. I am hopeful that the upcoming year will be one that makes all of our long-term members and new members very proud. We have established a fantastic board and are moving with great speed to accomplish my two main objectives for the year. As I stated in my speech at the black tie dinner, my two primary objectives are to increase our membership by 100 members before the end of the year, and substantially increase our fundraising efforts to provide long-term financial security for our organization and to increase our ability to support the Irish American community here in San Diego.

As your president, I want to make sure that your voices are heard. To ensure this is happening every single board member has been assigned a squad of Friendly Sons to reach out to and to make sure that you are aware of everything that is going on and to be available to you to answer any questions you have. We want our members heard and we want to make sure you are hearing from us. My hope is that this increased communication will not only allow us to better serve you but also allow you to enjoy the full benefits of your membership. Every event and every social you will be made aware of. Our communication efforts will include email, physical mail, and now direct text messages.

I have great confidence that this year will be one to remember. Through our social and charitable events, you the members can enjoy the fellowship we all share while also being filled with pride that your dues and contributions will make a lasting impact here in San Diego. From our endowment at the University of San Diego to assist students to study abroad, to our socials at Over The Line on Fiesta Island and our Day at the Races at Del Mar, no other organization in San Diego can match the opportunities for fun and for giving back that we provide.

I hope this message finds you well and I look forward to seeing you, thanking you, and sharing a pint and a song with a purpose.

Sláinte,

Brian Dougherty

FSOSP President 2026 - 2027



Welcome To Our Newest Members

JOINED IN 2026 (to date):

Robert Anschick
Stephen Cashman
Bryan Farmer
Joseph Gates
Nikolas Gilligan
Bert Hornyak
Keith James
Aidan Lynch
Mark McCrea
David Monahan
Herb Morgan
Brennan Mulrooney
Brian Mulvaney
Brian Murray
Ryan O'Rourke
Michael Reilly
James Rooney
Brian Ryken
Tom Walsh
Bill Watts

USD Scholarship Luncheon

On St. Patrick's Day, March 17th, The University of San Diego hosted its annual Scholarship and Endowment luncheon, attended by Past Presidents Tim Lane and Everett Evleth, and President Brian Dougherty.

The Endowment, envisioned by Doc Lamar and Mark Wheelan in 2018, aimed to raise \$50,000 for scholarships to study in Ireland. The Club was expecting a ten-year timeline to meet this goal. However, an anonymous member's generous donations and several successful fundraisers helped us reach the goal by July 2022.

The endowment now stands at \$86,640 toward a \$100,000 target, supporting seven students – six at University of Cork and one at Trinity College. FSOSP members have also provided additional support beyond the endowment for travel expenses. Spring of 2025 recipients are Hailey Howell, Megan Maguire and Carli Ziegler. Thank you Friendly Sons of St. Patrick!



Hailey Howell



Megan Maguire



Carli Ziegler



l-r: Tim Lane, President 2022-23, Brian Dougherty, President 2026-27 and Everett Evleth, President 2024-25

John Barry: Father of the American Navy

In the story of America's founding, few figures better embody the bond between Ireland and the United States than Commodore John Barry. Often called the "Father of the American Navy," Barry was not only a skilled naval commander but also a symbol of the Irish immigrant's contribution to the birth of the republic.

From Wexford to the New World

Born in 1745 in County Wexford, Ireland, Barry grew up in a seafaring culture shaped by trade and hardship. Like many Irishmen of his era, he sought opportunity across the Atlantic, arriving in Philadelphia as a young man. There, he quickly established himself as a capable merchant captain, earning a reputation for discipline, courage, and leadership.



A Patriot at Sea

When the American Revolution erupted, Barry sided decisively with the colonial cause. In 1775, he was given command in the Continental Navy, making him one of its first commissioned officers.

Barry's early victories were crucial for morale. Commanding the Lexington, he captured the British ship Edward – one of the first American naval victories of the war. Over the course of the conflict, he became

known for his relentless pursuit of enemy vessels and his refusal to surrender, even when outgunned.

Leadership and Legacy

Barry's contributions extended beyond the battlefield. In 1794, under President George Washington, Barry was appointed the first commissioned officer of the newly formed United States Navy – earning him his enduring title.

Why John Barry Still Matters

Today, John Barry's name appears on ships, memorials, and institutions across the United States. His legacy lives on in the traditions of the U.S. Navy and in the enduring story of Irish-American service and leadership.



IrishAmerica250 is an initiative dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the profound role Irish Americans have played in shaping the United States over the past 250 years. From the signing of the Declaration of Independence to the present day, Irish heritage is deeply woven into the fabric of American democracy and culture.

Throughout this year as the nation celebrates the United States Semiquincentennial, we'll be teaming up with IrishAmerica250 to help tell the stories and join the national celebration of Irish American's contributions to our nation's democracy.

Read more about IA250 here:
irishamerica250.org



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!

GAA West Coast Sevens Tournament

Saturday, May 23 • All Day
Southwestern College 900 Otay Lakes Rd, Chula Vista
Free to attend [More info »](#)
Chair: Trevor Wessman-Lavelle & Brian Dougherty

Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial: Memorial Day Ceremony

Monday, May 25 • 11 am - 12:30 pm
6905 La Jolla Scenic S Dr. La Jolla, CA 92037
Free to attend [More info »](#)
Chair: Mike Hartigan & Everett Evleth

Irish O'Pen Golf Outing (see ad)

Saturday, June 13 • 7am Check-in
Admiral Baker Golf Course
\$175 pp until May 23 [Register Here »](#)
Chair: Scott Harmes & Dave Casey

Over The Line (OTL) Tournament

Saturday-Sunday, July 11-12 & 18-19
First games start 7:30 am
Fiesta Island
Free to attend [More info »](#)
Chair: Scott Dickerson

Irish Heritage Padres Baseball Game

Giants vs. Padres
Saturday, August 1 • 5:40 pm
\$66.05 – \$90.20 [More info »](#)
Chair: Trevor Wessman-Lavelle

Day at the Races

Friday, August 14 • 3 - 7pm
Del Mar Racetrack
\$40 [Get tickets here »](#)
Chair: Dee Harmes & Bill Perez

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

Saturday, September 19 • 5 - 8pm
The Ould Sod
Details Coming
Chair: Adam Powell & David Hall

Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial: Veteran's Day Ceremony

Saturday, November 7 • 11 am - 12:30 pm
6905 La Jolla Scenic S Dr. La Jolla, CA 92037
Free to attend – Details Coming
Chair: Alex Williams

Veterans Day Parade

Wednesday, November 11 • Parade 10 am
Harbor Drive (In front of the County Admin Bldg)
Free to attend – Details Coming
Chair: Mark Hudson & Greg Swanberg

The Ocean Beach Holiday Parade

Saturday, December 6 • 5 - 8 pm
Free to attend – Details Coming
Chair: Bill Kennedy

More events to come! [Click for event info on our website »](#)



WEST COAST SEVENS: Irish Sport Meets the Pacific

Memorial Day Weekend Saturday, May 23, 2026
All Day • Southwestern College

The West Coast Sevens brings the energy of traditional Irish sports to the U.S., uniting players and fans in a lively weekend of Gaelic football, hurling, and camogie. Played in a fast-paced “Sevens” format with seven players per side, the tournament delivers quick, high-intensity matches and a festival atmosphere.

Gaelic football blends elements of soccer and rugby, while hurling—often called the world’s fastest field sport – thrills with lightning speed and skill. Camogie showcases the same excitement on the women’s side, highlighting athleticism and the growing global reach of Gaelic games.

More than just competition, the West Coast Sevens is a celebration of Irish culture, bringing communities together through sport, music, and camaraderie.

Whether you're a lifelong follower of Gaelic games or a curious newcomer, the West Coast Sevens offers a thrilling glimpse into one of the world's richest sporting traditions. It's more than just sport – it's Irish culture in motion.



Tournament information:

sandiegogaa.com/sevens/

To learn more about San Diego teams and these sports, visit:

friendlysonssd.org/mission/community-athletics-youth-sports/





Events Recap

73rd Annual Black Tie Dinner

March Another splendid night at Marina Village Conference Center in a beautiful room with on outdoor space for cigars, drinks, and good craic, the Sons celebrated the 2026 BTB in style.

Over 190 Sons and guests enjoyed this year's outstanding entertainment. Starting with **Máirtín de Cógáin** singing a number of a cappella tunes then the Irish National Anthem, the next treat was the **The Helix Highlander Pipe Band** lead by **Travis Neal**. After the presentation of the colors by the **United States Marine Corps Color Guard**, **Father Kevin Sweeney** lead the invocation.

This year's Blackthorn Award was presented to **Bob Cruger** – see Tim's speech – and many of us wish we had Bob's speech on video!

Comedian **James P. Connolly** rocked the house with his brand of musings. A retired Marine, and a fine Irish lad, James said that his dad would've been proud to know he was addressing such a fine organization! FYI: while serving in Desert Storm, he was ordered to write jokes for a Colonel. Those guys never had it so good.

Also, the Presidential passing of the gavel from **Jim Kilgore** to **Brian Dougherty** (who delivered an excellent speech), a parade briefing by **Mark Hudson**, a joke from **Bob Mulrooney**, the Benediction by Father Sweeney, and last but not least, the closing whisky toast and 'Danny Boy' by **Frank O'Dwyer**.

At the end of an outstanding dinner and program, **DJ Eric Cahill** provided the party music while the lads adjourned for cigars. All the Guinness, cocktails, and cigars were supplied by the Friendly Sons.

A big thanks goes to **Bill Kennedy** for chairing another an excellent night with the lads!

View event photos on our [website »](#)



Comedian: James P. Connolly



Robert Cruger, Blackthorn Recipient

Speech delivered by Tim Lane:

Our 2026 Blackthorn award winner comes to us via Los Angeles, California. He is a graduate of North Hollywood High School, where he had dreams of becoming a movie star. After realizing that stardom would be difficult to



achieve, he came to San Diego way back in 1983. Our fine city has never been the same...and more than likely will never recover.

After earning his bachelor's degree in business from Woodbury College, he landed a job in consulting, supporting high profile clients like the San Diego Labor Council – and the (then) newly formed San Diego Nice Guys! This began our awardee's lifetime dedication to giving back in our San Diego community began and has never ended.

Along the journey, our awardee built a family with his wife and three children while serving as the President of the original TCS Publishing here in San Diego, and then as a network executive for CBS – where he was rumored to turn down a proposed midnight rendezvous

with Betty White. Someone dodged a bullet on this one, and I think it was Betty White!

For 50 years, our awardee has selflessly served his community as a member of the San Diego Nice Guys, as a fellow Friendly Son, as a supporter and champion



of Marine Corps Family Christmas, where he has assisted in raising hundreds of thousands of dollars and as well as a volunteer docent supporting the Mount Soledad Veteran's Memorial – all while handing out endless wisdom and a warm smile, over a Pacifico (NO EFFING LIME!) at Waterfront's Table 8.

This philanthropic spirit and dedication to helping others runs in the family, as this year's winner is also the proud husband of your San Diego Woman of the year! Nancy Nichols.

Please join me, Everett and David, and your Past Presidents and Board of Directors, in congratulating and honoring your 2026 Blackthorn Award winner, Mr. Bob Cruger!



Events Recap (continued)

St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival

March "Here, There, Irish Culture Everywhere!", the theme of this year's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival, celebrated the global presence and timeless joy of Irish culture – from the green hills of Ireland to the sunny streets of San Diego and beyond.

The Sons raised a whopping \$25,000 in January at the Smilin' Irishman Contest to help fund the 2026 event and were title sponsors for the main stage.

About 200 members of the Friendly Sons participated in the parade – marching or riding – up 5th and down 6th. It was a sea of green as the lads represented for the club in their usual synchronous fashion as thousands of attendees from across the county came out to help celebrate all things Irish.

And just when we thought it couldn't get any better at the festival, the advance team used out new double wide canopy to set up a spacious compound layout in a prime location. The redesign featured a prominent

stage-front space where members and their guests congregated, ate, drank, and celebrated the day elevating the group's visibility and encouraging greater interaction with the public.

Featured onstage were Tony Cummins and Friends, Skelpin, Ass Pocket Whiskey Fellas, The Shamrockers, and The Fooks.

The 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival was another memorable day...thanks to the contributions and involvement of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick!

Caps off to **Mark Hudson & Greg Swanberg** for an outstanding job organizing the event, and all the volunteers that made this happen for the members! They were onsite in the afternoon before the Black Tie Dinner for set-up and at the end of the festival for tear down...we owe all our gratitude ten-fold!

View photos on our [website »](#)

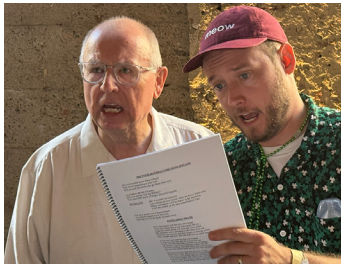
Events Recap (continued)

Irish Sing-Along

March The annual St. Patrick's Day sing-along moved down the street to Luce Loft this year as the In Case Trio, **Mike Reidy, Noel & Bill Hall**, marked their 51th Year(!) by playing over three hours of Irish songs for the large crowd's delight.

The new space served a good selection of drinks and food as advertised: corned beef sandwiches and plenty of Guinness! Well attended by the Friendly Sons, and others there for the cóisir, all agreed the event made for a wonderful celebration of our highest Holy Day!

Photos on our [website](#) »



San Diego City council recognized the 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival with a declaration presented to the Irish Congress parade chair Allison Haefner.

Member Briefs

Mark Wheelan Mt. Soledad's 2024 Volunteer of the Year

November In 2024, Mark Wheelan was honored as Volunteer of the Year by the Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial – a recognition reserved for individuals who embody exceptional dedication to honoring America's veterans.

Wheelan's contributions reflect the very heart of the memorial's mission. As a key member of the organization – also serving in leadership as Treasurer – he has gone beyond administrative duties to actively support events, engage visitors, and help preserve the stories of the thousands of veterans commemorated on the hill in La Jolla.

The award highlights volunteers who demonstrate sustained commitment, reliability, and a personal investment in the memorial's purpose. Wheelan's recognition underscores his role as a steady, behind-the-scenes force as well as a visible ambassador for the site's educational and commemorative efforts.



Scott Dodge, ICSC Executive Grand Marshal, St. Patrick's Day Parade



March Scott was recognized by the Irish Congress of Southern California (ICSC) – a distinction that reflects both leadership within the organization and longstanding commitment to the Irish community in San Diego.

The role of Executive Grand Marshal is reserved for individuals who play a pivotal part behind the scenes – helping organize, sustain, and elevate one of the region's most visible Irish cultural traditions: the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival. Dodge's involvement with the ICSC spans years of service, supporting the planning, coordination, and execution of events that celebrate Irish heritage and community spirit.

His connection to the organization is well documented; for example, he has represented the ICSC in official capacities, including presenting commemorative items tied to the parade and its honorees.

As Executive Grand Marshal, Dodge's recognition highlights not only ceremonial prominence but also the essential leadership and volunteer commitment required to sustain a major cultural institution. His contributions help ensure that San Diego's Irish traditions continue to thrive for future generations.

Annual Irish O'pen Golf Tournament



June 13, 2026 • Admiral Baker Golf Course
Shotgun Start at 8am

OPEN TO ALL GOLFERS – BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED FOR:

Closest to the Pin ! Longest Drive ! Championship Team

Entry Fee \$175 pp until May 23

After May 23: \$200 pp | Registration closes midnight June 1

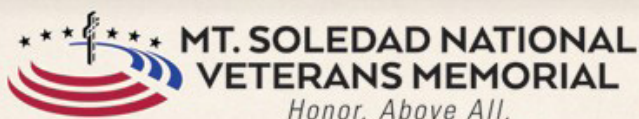
Includes: golf fees, cart, buffet lunch, and drinks on the course

[REGISTER NOW](#)

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE AT EVERY LEVEL

Tournament Sponsor • Golf Ball & Towel Sponsors • Trophy, Watering Hole, and Tee/Hole Sponsors

If interested, contact: Scott Harmes (619) 316-7818 | harmes.scott@gmail.com
or Brian Dougherty (619) 206-1046 | injuredworkerattorney@gmail.com



Join Us this Memorial Day

Honoring the bravery and sacrifice of

CPL. PATRICK "BOB" GALLAGHER
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MONDAY, MAY 25TH • 11:00 AM



Irish immigrant Cpl. Patrick 'Bob' Gallagher earned the Navy Cross during the Vietnam War for heroically shielding his fellow Marines from a live grenade. Today, his 'uncommon valor' is immortalized by the U.S. Navy through the naming of the destroyer USS Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), ensuring his spirit continues to protect the nation he adopted.



250 Years of Valor
ETCHED IN STONE

We don't just preserve names; we protect the American Story. As the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, the Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial stands as a sentinel of service—connecting the ideals of 1776 to the brave men and women on our walls today.

6905 La Jolla Scenic Dr. South, La Jolla, CA 92037 • (858) 384-2405 • www.soledadmemorial.org

The Mt. Soledad Memorial Association is a California Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation



YOUR 2026-27 FSOSP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Brian Dougherty

1st Vice President

Bill Kennedy

2nd Vice President

Sean McGowan

3rd Vice President

Adam Powell

4th Vice President

Trevor Wessman Lavelle

5th Vice President

Scott Harnes

Secretary

Chris Hodgetts

Treasurer

Scott Dickerson

Members at Large

David Casey

David Hall

Michael Hartigan

Blaise Nauyokas

Bill Perez

Alex Williams

Master at Arms

Mark Hudson

Sergeant at Arms

Gregory Swanberg

Past President

Jim Kilgore

Chaplain

Capt. Kevin Sweeney

General Counsel

Sean Brew



THE
FRIENDLY
SONS OF
ST. PATRICK

SAN DIEGO

P. O. Box 1595

Valley Center, CA 92082

A 501(c)(3)

Charitable Corp.

EIN# 47-4868675