



Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians *Pennsylvania*



Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity



2021 Edition III

A Word from Maria, our President...

Dear Sisters,

The cooler weather is upon us but let me back up a little.

On July 29, 2021, our State President, Mary Ann Amesbury, gave a bang of the gavel and the PA State Convention was in session. Everything went as smoothly as possible, and we thank Mary Ann for her past two years of service.

Therefore, we now have a new set of officers, and I could not be happier with the elected ladies. I would like to first thank everyone for allowing me to serve as your Pennsylvania State President for the next two years. It has been my honor to spend the past 14 years on the State Board and work my way from Publicity Appointee to State President. I am honored and intend to uphold my office to the best of my ability.

Ladies, we need to build our membership since it seems the numbers are down, but the good news is we are picking up some younger women who are excited to be part of this great organization. Youth is precisely what is needed! Please talk to your friends and invite them to come to join in the incredible charity work and social events that your Division holds. Now that we are opening up more and more, let us try just one new person per member.

In addition, we need to reach out to the communities where we live and work, so a new position has been formed, and Mary Jo Zamichieli Katona has accepted the position of Community Relations. Please reach out to her or me if you have an idea or a need that you would like to discuss.

Thank you to Maura, who has agreed to continue to as Publicity Chair. She does a wonderful job on this newsletter. And, to all the new officers and appointees who will be with the board for the next two years.

I look forward to attending any events your Division has planned and meeting as many of my fellow Hibernian sisters as possible.

In Our Motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

*Maria Gallagher
PA State President*





Convention 2021 ~ Philadelphia ~ Recap

The 2021 Pennsylvania State Biennial Convention occurred on July 29th- 31st at the Radisson Hotel in beautiful Trevoese. The meetings were well attended, offered valuable updates, information, and provided good cheer for all who made the journey.

Pennsylvania was honored to have National President Karen Keane, National Vice President Marilyn Madigan, Irish Historian & Past National President Mary T. Leathem, National Missions & Charities Chair, Cathy Turck, and our own National Board member MaryAnn Lubinsky (Treasurer & State Webmaster) in attendance, as well as several past PA Presidents. With President MaryAnn Amesbury at the podium, the 2019-2021 Board members and appointees submitted their reports of a successful term. Sadly, some members said good-bye, while others moved to new positions for the upcoming term.

During the joint session with the AOH, the AOH of Johnston submitted their request to host the 2023 AOH ~ LAOH Pennsylvania State Convention. Details will be forthcoming.

Fun Facts

- ♥ LAOH's across Pennsylvania donated over \$120,000 throughout the 2019-2021 term.
- ♥ Pennsylvania currently has 45 Divisions.
- ♥ We have 1,468 members, making us the second largest state.
- ♥ Our State sold 560 masks.
- ♥ Speaker Russ Wylie spoke at the joint session about Commodore John Barry & other Revolutionary War Irish Americans.
- ♥ The next Convention will be in Johnston during the second or last week of July.
- ♥ A 2021-2023 State Board was elected and the new President made several appointments.
- ♥ At the close of the Mass, your 2021-2023 Board was installed.

Congratulations



From left to right: Mary Ann Lubinsky, Maura Roszyk, Brianna Curran, Mary Jo Katona, Carolyn Killion, Sister Lisa Breslin, SSJ, Maria Gallagher, Kathleen Diulus, Maureen Cooper, MaryAnn Amesbury, Carole Cooney-Szydek, Sister Kathleen Smith, RSM, and Patti Flaus (missing from picture Kathleen Varady).

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania proudly announces the 2021-2023 State Board

Sister Lisa Breslin, SSJ ~ Chaplin

Maria Gallagher ~ President

Kathleen Diulus ~ Vice President

Carolyn Killion ~ Secretary

Patti Flaus ~ Treasurer

Carole Cooney-Syzdek ~ Irish Historian

Sister Kathleen Mary Smith, RSM ~ Missions & Charities

Brianna Curran ~ Catholic Action ~

Mary Ann Amesbury ~ Immediate Past President

And Appointees:

Mary Jo Zamichieli Katona ~ Community Relations

Kathleen Varady ~ Freedom for All Ireland

Maureen Cooper ~ Immigration and Education

Maura O'Donnell Roszyk ~ Publicity

MaryAnn Lubinsky ~ Webmaster

***The New Board wishes Good Luck & Blessings to all Boards
across the Commonwealth.***

Always know that we are here for everyone.



Additionally,

***We wish Congratulations to two very deserving Lady Hibernians
from our great Commonwealth who were rewarded for the devotion
to the Order with the***

National Lifetime Membership Award

Congratulations

Rae DiSpaldo



***Donna Donnelly
Kearney***



And, to Pittsburgh's Division 23 ~ Lawrenceville
for winning the Pittsburgh St. Patrick's Day Parade Mary Long Award



And, Happy 50th Anniversary Division 2 ~ JFK Pottsville



50



50



And, Congratulations *finally* to our current Past President, MaryAnn Amesbury who was finally able to serve as the Grand Marshal of Wilkes-Barre's St Patrick's Day Parade.



Finally yet importantly ~ we wish to Congratulate Colleen Bowers on her work to end domestic abuse.

As many of you know, Colleen has been fundraising, raising awareness, and advocating since the death of her daughter, Melissa, ten years ago.

Her goal is to strengthen domestic abuse laws across the country.

An employee of Amazon, Colleen, was thrilled when they recognized her efforts and supported Domestic Violence Awareness month.

She now looks for support from Apple in collaborating on a partnership with The Center for Victims.



Over the summer at the New York and Pennsylvania LAOH Conventions, she passage of resolutions concerning this topic ~ and they did, next up, Virginia and California. (Yea!)

On October 23rd, the Allegheny County AOH stepped up and took the Men's Challenge Pledge.

A pledge of unity and support for Colleen's "You are NOT alone" campaign, which supports The Center for Victims, Thank you Gentlemen!

Cheers to you, Colleen!

Don't forget to periodically check the Pennsylvania LAOH Website

<http://statepalaoh.com>



- ✚ The History of the LAOH
- ✚ The History of the Pennsylvania LAOH
- ✚ State Board Members Introduction Letters and means to contact
- ✚ The Anna C. Malia Ruddy Award winners
- ✚ Bylaws
- ✚ Newsletters
- ✚ Information from Degree Teams
- ✚ Photo Albums
- ✚ Important Dates
- ✚ Fundraising from the State and Divisions
- ✚ State Convention details already available!

Also check out our Facebook page at LAOH Pennsylvania State & our Instagram page

Ladies Just a Reminder!

✚ With the election of new Boards, please remember to send the correct names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails of the new Board to our State Secretary, Carolyn Killion.

✚ If you send someone an email, please do not assume that they have received it.

If you do not get a response, please follow up with a phone call or reach out to someone else in the Division. With so many more people utilizing technology, emails are not always received, go to junk, or can be missed by the receiver.

✚ **2022 National Convention Update**

The 2022 National Convention of the AOH and LAOH will take place in Pittsburgh's Downtown Wyndham Grand Hotel from Tuesday, July 12 through Sunday, July 17, 2022.

The Wyndham Grand is located right in the heart of downtown Pittsburgh and is within walking distance of PNC Park, Heinz Field, the Cultural District, numerous restaurants, bars, shopping, casino, and other entertainment venues. The hotel has 712 guest rooms, a 24-hour fitness center, an indoor swimming pool, and a jacuzzi. The room rate is \$129.00 plus tax.

Check-in is at 4:00 p.m., and checkout is at noon.

This room rate is good for three days before the Convention and three days after the Convention.

Valet parking is \$35.00 per day. There is a lot near the hotel, and parking is \$25.00 per day.

The Pittsburgh airport is located 17 miles from the hotel.

To date, a package price has not yet been established. However, the package price will be set sometime in October. The package will include the Icebreaker on Wednesday, July 13, Irish Night on Friday, July 15, and the closing banquet on Saturday, July 16.

Additional information will be forthcoming as soon as more details of the National Convention are finalized.

News & Photos from Around the Commonwealth

We ask that all Counties & Divisions submit their
Good News and Photos to share with each other

Our Lady of Knock Celebrations around the State



Division 3~ Carbondale



Division 4 Trinity Delaware County



Division 2 Notre Dame Montgomery County



Division One ~ Bristol



Philadelphia County



Division One Lehigh Valley



Division # 3 ~ Máire Drumm ~ Montgomery County

As many in our area were impacted by Ida ~ we donated several gift cards for Giant, Home Depot, Kohl's, and Lowe's.



On Thursday, October 28th, we finally met for the first in-person meeting since the pandemic.

The primary focus of our meeting was honoring the anniversary date of the death of our namesake, Máire Drumm, by reading a short biography of her life and death.

Máire was born October 22, 1919, in Newry, County Down and was murdered on October 28, 1976, by unionist thugs dressed as doctors while in Belfast's Mater Hospital recovering from eye surgery. She was the vice-president of Sinn Féin and a commander in Cumann na mBan.



The following is one of our favorite quotes of Máire,
*"The only people worthy of freedom are those who are prepared to go out and fight for it every day,
and die if necessary."*

Chartered in October 2008, our Division is proud of the support from Máire's family in Ireland.

At our ceremony, roses were given to all Sisters to celebrate. RIP, Máire!

Check out this video of Máire ~<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqftc6axwDA>



Division #3 ~Carbondale

At our monthly meeting held at St. Rose Family Center on August 17, 2021, we celebrated Our Lady of Knock Feast Day with a Prayer Service provided by our Chaplain, Sister Kathleen Smith.



Participants of the Prayer Service were Kathy Connor, President; our newly degrees sisters: Mary Ann Durkin Pauswinski; Janice Joyce; Dukie Brunori; Cindy Burke; and Sister Kathleen Smith.



We are so proud of our Sister who earned their Degrees at the Convention, Ann Brunori; Cindy Burke; Janice Joyce; and Mary Ann Pauswinski.

CONGRATULATIONS to our Division and County Chaplain, Sister Kathleen Smith, RSM, who was elected to the State Office of Missions and Charities at the PA State Convention.



Pictured with Sister Kathleen are the newly elected AOH State President, Edward Dougherty, LAOH State President, Maria Gallagher, and our Division President, Kathleen Connor.



Division #11 ~ Oakland ~ Pittsburgh

In September, we proudly marched in the Pittsburgh ½ way to St Patrick's Day Parade Celebration.



It was absolutely wonderful to host our Masquerade Charity Ball again!

The money we raise through the Masquerade Charity Ball helps with our charitable endeavors throughout the year. Including providing meals for homeless shelters multiple times over the cold winter months, Christmas cheer to a local family(s) in need over the holiday season. The money additionally helps with our regular support/donations including Mary's House, Miriam's House, the Columban Sisters and Fathers, St. Bridgid Court, and the Crime Victims Center/Women's Shelters.





Our sisters Colleen Bowers, Mary Ellen Myers marched in the Columbus Fay Parade with Patti Flaus and St. Patrick himself. Also, County Council Sam DeMarco stopped by for a picture!





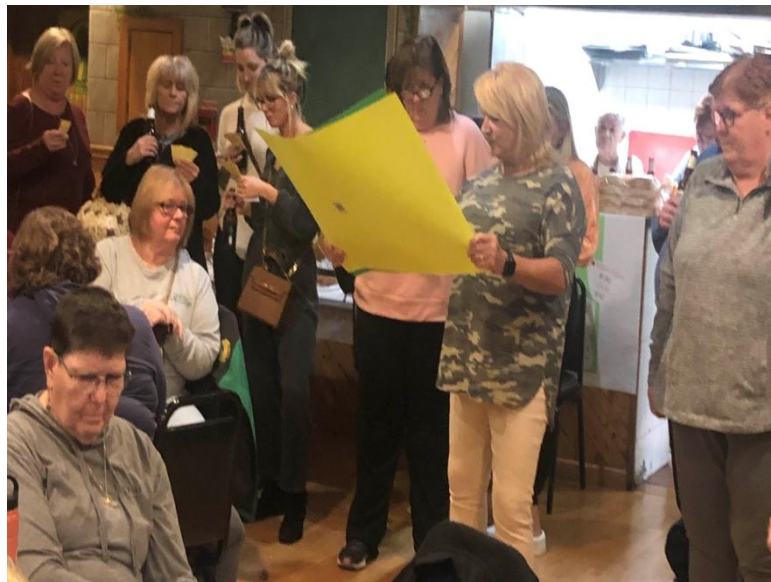
Division #39 ~ St. Brigid ~ Philadelphia

On September 14th our Division attended the Phillies v Cubs game.



And on Nov. 3rd, we enjoyed each other's company while participating in Basket Auction Night, a fundraiser for our charities! It was our first official fundraiser post Covid shutdown and it was a wonderful success! Everyone was so happy to be together, catch up on news and share memories.





**Fundraising is the
gentle art of teaching
the joy of giving.**

Hank Rosso



Division #4 ~ Mary Ellen O'Neill ~ Washington County

Dorothy Weldon presented the 2021 National Achievement Irish History Award and the Pennsylvania State Irish Historian Achievement Award to Gina Carmella Beneccio of West Newton, Pennsylvania.

Gina was presented a check from the LAOH National Board and one from us acknowledging her efforts and participation through submitting a Power Point Presentation.

Gina is preparing to begin studies at St. Vincent College, Latrobe, Pa. August, 2021.

Congratulations Gina!



Division #1 ~ The Mary Ellen Everett ~ Bristol



We organized a Paperback Book and Magazine Drive. One of our member's friends is building a patient library for the inpatient psychiatric unit that she works in.

We decided to help her out with new books and gently used ones that are classically wonderful!

If you would like to contribute to this great idea, check it out here.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2R0DQH4G3LG?ref=wl_share

p.s. We are looking to get an address to order the books and ship them directly, which we will post on the State Facebook page.



Division #1 ~ Berks

We are so thrilled to be able to get-together for in-person meetings once again. And, of course celebrating through the Our Lady of Knock Mass!



Hanging out before a meeting!

B. Collins, M. Caherly, B. Weckel, M.A. Welch await dinner following Our Lady of Knock Mass.



Division #4 ~ Delaware County

Over the last couple of months, we were finally able to celebrate Mass together. It was a glorious Mass commemorating the Feast of Our Lady of Knock on August 14th, celebrated by our Chaplain Fr. Gillen at Our Lady of Fatima Chapel. A luncheon at the Erin Pub followed.



We are collecting socks for a service project through November. In addition, we look forward to our Christmas dinner on Wednesday, December 1st.

Wishing everyone a happy & blessed holiday season!



Division #2 ~ John F. Kennedy ~ Pottsville, Schuylkill County Happy 50th Anniversary LAOH Sisters!





Division #23 ~ Lawrenceville ~ Pittsburgh County

In September, we proudly marched in the Pittsburgh ½ way to St Patrick's Day Parade, what a fabulous day!



Division #87 ~ Our Lady of Knock~ Philadelphia (Port Richmond)

Oh, what a summer we had... We are so excited to be back!

We are thrilled that one of our very own, Maria Gallagher now serves as our State President. Maria is an amazing Sister whose dedication, loyalty, and spirit can only make our State even better. Congratulations Maria ~ you make us proud!



*Also, we are thrilled again that one of our own Sisters,
Donna Donnelly Kearney
was chosen for National Lifetime Membership.
Those who know her, know this is a well-deserved honor!*



Division #25~ Brigid McCrory~ Philadelphia County

We were thrilled to have our first all in person meeting on September 17th since February 2020! The Ladies were excited and happy to be back and are looking forward to many in person events that have been planned.



This past summer, nine members of our Division were part of the AOH-LAOH PA State Convention Welcome Committee. They spent many hours planning and preparing the welcome swag bags for the convention. All nine members attended the convention, had a wonderful time and are looking forward to the next convention in Johnstown.



Our Division is hosting a charity event called Socks for the Street!

This charity was founded three years ago by a young man, 12-year-old Philadelphia resident Declan Cassidy. He runs the drive every year from September through December. So far, he has raised more than 9,000 total pairs of socks to donate to those who are homeless.

In the first year, he collected 1,005 pairs. Last year, 9,223.

From left: Kathy Cantz, Declan Cassidy, Margie Keams, Jerry Keams, Marianne McFarland, Kathy Brooks.



We hosted an event at our Division meeting place. Declan and his family attended. In a very short period, over 500 pairs of socks were collected.

Give the gift of "Happy Feet" this Holiday Season and donate socks to the homeless. All sizes are needed: men, women, and children (NEW SOCKS ONLY, PLEASE). The collection of socks runs from September to December 20th. You can drop them off or mail them

directly to Declan Cassidy 2841 Norcom Court Philadelphia, PA 19154

Check out Declan's Facebook page ~ **Declan's Socks For The Streets**

We were thrilled that our event was featured in the Northeast Times

https://northeasttimes.com/2021/09/22/46360/?fbclid=IwAR0naQePlybIWfWu_wVOw1nj6saaF9Y-GqxHvFKD_3eQZ3prwGUJETIBkf4



On October 16th we volunteered at the annual Appelfest at Fox Chase Farm. We had a great time in the pumpkin painting area.

Also, on the 26th, some Ladies helped our brothers of AOH Division 25 with their annual Half Ball tournament which raises money for various local charities.



October 23rd the Ladies gathered in our meeting room to make and assemble about 265 bagged lunches for the homeless.

Due to Covid restrictions, we are still unable to prepare our usual hot meal for those in need at St. Mark's Church on Frankford Avenue in Philadelphia.

Twice a year we prepare hot meals as well as bagged lunches for the needy to take with them. The pandemic has caused us to regroup and come up with new ways to continue to help those in need.

Bagged lunches was the answer and we doubled what we normally make!





Once all the lunches are made, they were delivered to St. Mark's and the staff distributes to those in need.

Our final big event of 2021 was our annual Designer Bag Bingo on Saturday, November 6th

This event was live and in person.

at St. Martha's Church Hall.

Doors open at 6:00pm. Games begin at 7:00p.m.

We were thrilled and honored that our National President, Karen Keane, was our bingo caller!



Division # 2 ~ Notre Dame ~ Montgomery County

This year we hosted our Lady of Knock Mass in the downstairs hall of St. Patrick's Church as the beautiful upstairs church is closed for repairs.

The Mass included the AOH Color Guard and Irish Thunder.

Lunch and entertainment back at the AOH hall completed a wonderful day!



We wish Congratulations to Lynne Marie McArthur, Carol Smith, and Holly Smith, who earned their Degree at the Convention this summer.

Additionally, we were so proud to be able to participate along with The Irish Thunder and the AOH Color Guard at the 911 Commemoration Ceremony in King of Prussia.



Division #1 ~ Tir Na'N Og'~ Lehigh Valley

Our Ladies had a brilliant time at the Convention, and we proudly added four more members to the distinction of Degreed.

Congratulations! Maryclare Plucinsky, Mary Eileen Rommeney, Adele Fagan, Jane Rosati, and Laura Weidman(missing from picture)

For the remainder of the summer, we continued to collect and assemble purses to donate to abused, homeless, and needy women. We are now up to 1,205 donated!

This year, we collected school supplies for Catholic elementary schools that could use a helping hand. We were delighted with how much we collected and even brought a tear to the eye of the Catholic Charities administrator.

Our Vice-President, Lorraine Clarke, dropped off our most recent Soda Pop tabs at the Ronald McDonald House in September. It was a significant drop-off!

It was wonderful to come together at Mass to celebrate Our Lady of Knock. We were once again surprised at the amazing donations of non-perishable food items for our Hibernian Hunger Initiative.

For this Mass, we donated the items to our Diocese's Food Bank.

Heading into Fall, we look forward to our Annual Witches Tea. Our Witches Hat and our Halloween Trivia Contests highlight this membership recruitment/day of good fun. Each year our Ladies outdo themselves with their creativity, and they genuinely love to learn new ~ old traditions of Samhain!

We will also spend an evening of Pizza & Pumpkin Painting with the Cay Galgon Life House.

This event we have hosted over the last several years is so wonderful ~ spending time-sharing "mom stuff" with these young ladies who have chosen to keep their unexpected babies.

Lastly, we have a new project ~ our busy Apron ~ these homemade aprons encourage calming activities for elderly ladies with dementia and other aging mental issues.

We are just getting started and look to compile the items to "fidget with"!



News & Updates from the State & National Board

This portion of the Newsletter, we wish to inform of happenings and reminders at both the State and National levels.

In this Newsletter edition, we will be introducing the Pennsylvania Board and the Appointees.

Chaplain

We thank Sister Kathleen Mary Smith RSM for her inspiring time and wish well to Sister Lisa Breslin SSJ.

From a large Irish Catholic family, Sister Lisa was born and raised in Philadelphia, as a second-generation Irish-American. She credits her vocation and love of Irish history and music to her Mother.

A few years after high school, Sister entered the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. Over the years, she has ministered primarily in education and social services in Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Sister Lisa taught grammar school Language Arts, high school English, and college-level Psychology. She earned a Bachelor's degree in English Literature, a Master of Arts in English Literature, and a Master of Science in Clinical Counseling and Psychology.

Along with teaching, her first love, Sister served as Dean of Student Affairs at Chestnut Hill College for nine years, as an intern/ therapist at Norristown State Hospital, and as a Dementia Unit coordinator at Saint Joseph Villa. She currently ministers as Assistant director in the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Catholic Housing and Community Services Division at St. Mary's Residence, a home for low-income older women in Philadelphia.

Sister Lisa was introduced to the LAOH in the 1990s, when her sister, Maureen Daly (deceased), founded Division 22 in Philadelphia. Sister served Division 22 as chaplain and is now Chaplain of Division 87. In addition, Sister has held retreats for LAOH members on Celtic Spirituality, Christian leadership, and practical ways to encounter God every day. She lives in the Kensington section of Philadelphia with another Sister of Saint Joseph.

For leisure, Sister enjoys her friends, especially her LAOH friends, babysitting, family gatherings, reading, vacations, eating out, and exercise. She is delighted and honored to be the LAOH Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Chaplain and is looking forward to serving. Like all LAOH members, she is "ready for any good work" to further friendship, unity, and Christian charity. Count on her prayer for all members and their intentions

President†

We thank Mary Ann Amesbury for her dedicated time and wish well to Maria Gallagher.

Vice President†

We thank Maria Gallagher for her dedicated time and wish well to Kathleen Diulus.

As October ends, the media attention on Breast Cancer Awareness has caused me to reflect on my life in the past three years. As some of you know, shortly after attending the National Convention in Louisville, I was diagnosed with triple-positive Breast Cancer.

The medical journey has been extensive (chemo, surgeries, radiation, immunotherapy, setbacks, and more recently, a recurrence scare). However, the support and outreach received from friends and acquaintances in this Organization has been so uplifting.

Without the LAOH, so many of you would not be part of my life, and at this part of my journey, I find that impossible to conceive. But, believe it or not, I believe this experience has enriched my life, and I feel more connected to each of you and our motto.



Secretary

We thank Kathleen Diulus for her dedicated time and wish well to Carolyn Killion.

It was the Fall of 1998, and Gerry Adams came to a nearby town to talk about the Good Friday Agreement. I somehow talked my sister-in-law (who happened to be Maureen Cooper's twin sister) into going with me. I was so moved by his paraphrasing of Bobby Sand's words, that I felt empowered and wanted to do my part

~ "everyone has a part to do – no matter how small" ~

. Another mom at the football field (I have 4 adult sons and spent a decent part of my life at football fields back then) mentioned a new group that had just formed for Irish Catholic Ladies and suggested we join. The rest is history.

I joined LAOH Division 4 in Delaware County in October 1998, and never looked back. Several of the founding members were involved with the Irish Political Prisoners Children Holiday Program, and before I knew it, I was hosting children from Ireland.

The combination of the two groups has changed my life in so many ways. I cannot imagine my life without the friendships that resulted from them, and my children grew up with a truly genuine idea of what it means to be Irish. I hope my 4 grandchildren will as well.

One of the young men that that came as a chaperone several years back formed a close friendship with one of my sons. On a later trip back to visit, he met his wife - a cousin of my daughter in law. When I look at his beautiful young children, I can't help but wonder - what if we had not been part of the program at all. And certainly, one of my closest friends wouldn't live in Belfast or I wouldn't be Godmother to a beautiful three-year-old in the North of Ireland. I have given a significant amount of time to "Irish things" over the years but what I have received in return is immeasurable and I am so extremely grateful the LAOH has been part of my life.



Treasurer

We thank Carolyn Killion for her dedicated time and wish well to Patti Flaus.



Missions & Charities

We thank Bobbie Kelly Liberace for her dedicated time and wish well to Sister Kathleen Smith RSM.

Greetings from your State Missions and Charities Officer!

Given the resiliency of our Irish ancestors, we are fortunate to inherit our determination and strength to carry on. I trust all our Hibernian meetings and fun & funding activities are continuing to return to less hybrid and more interactive sharing slowly.

The easiest way to grow our missions and charities' interest and contributions, I believe, is by each member getting involved with the Columban Missionary experience.

Just the other day, I read about the Subanen women who live in the rugged mountains of Northwest Mindanao in the Philippines. They shared this reflective statement in the Columban literature: "Our families face the same joys and fears that Mary and Joseph experienced that first Christmas. Like the Holy Family, we too struggle daily to protect and care for each other and our habitat."

While living complicated lives and providing for their families, they are very aware of the need to care for their environment at the same time.

"Ahead of the COP26 summit in Glasgow, Columban missionary Father Sean McDonagh explains why the Catholic Church and all Churches have a moral responsibility to care for the earth and support efforts to halt climate change and prevent an ecological disaster."

"The climate is changing...Why aren't we???"

Whenever I read statements like these, I stop what I am doing and reflect on what I can do to make a difference. These statements also find me reflecting on my past missionary opportunities. I am incredibly grateful for each day I have had the privilege of accompanying those who happily live out their lives in meager, substandard conditions. They walk and do their chores in the Presence of Loving God. God blessed me over and over again and spoke to me through their wisdom and simplicity. I encourage everyone to read the monthly newsletter to have similar aha moments come to you through your email. You can sign up at: columban.org



Catholic Action

We thank Carole Cooney Syzdek for her dedicated time and wish well to Brianna Curran.

My name is Brianna Maura Curran. I was born on Groundhog's Day and "Yes" it is one of my favorite movies. I grew up being very active. I played soccer, softball, basketball, track & field, figuring skating, and flag football. You could say I am a little competitive.

I attended Drexel University and graduated in 2011. I enjoy Excel more than most...

I was born and raised in a small town named Bristol Borough. Bristol Borough is about 23 miles from Philadelphia, almost two miles and has less than ten thousand residents. I have always been involved in volunteering and helping where I can. I currently volunteer with the LAOH (Division, State and Nationals), Bristol Cares, Bristol Borough Teen Foundation, No Longer Bound Training and Prevention, coaching 3rd-7th graders in soccer, and was just elected to the Bristol Borough School Board.

When I am not volunteering, I enjoy spending time with my boyfriend Nick, granted we do a lot of the volunteering together! We enjoy eating out, trying new breweries, and traveling. We also enjoy history and Gettysburg has become one of our favorite vacation spots.

In January, we will be traveling to Ireland for the presentation of the Christmas Appeals. The trip will coincide with the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. This will be my third trip to the motherland. We have two dogs that we rescued- Bailey (9 years old) and Tullamore (3 years old). Tullamore enjoys our morning and afternoon walks that are up to 5 miles every day!

Generally, I am not one to be able to sit still but when I am you can find me reading books on Irish History. Recently, I have been reading about the Troubles. A few of my other interests are Philly sports, craft beer, Irish whiskey, and checking out a new restaurant. I LOVE Bulter's Milk Chocolate Truffles.

And my Celtic Sign is Rowan. If you ever need anything, please do not hesitate in reaching out! I want to say "Thank you!" to all of the division Catholic Action Officers for your warm welcome and I look forward to helping in anyway that I can!



Irish Historian

We thank Sharon McGrath & Maura O'Donnell-Roszyk for their dedicated time and wish well to Carole Cooney Syzdek.

As many of you know, I just served as your 2019-2021 PA State Catholic Action Officer, and now I am most excited to step into the Historian position.

My husband and love of my life, Frank, and I celebrated our 38th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Although we have no children, we continue to enjoy a lifetime of our fur babies, cats; however, we remain saddened by the loss of our Brittany Spaniel, the best dog in the world, as we still refer to him.

I have always enjoyed being busy. As a child, I spent much time with our neighborhood cousins and friends swimming, riding bicycles, roller skating, and sports in general.

My siblings were older; thus, they had their friends and interests. During my college days, bowling in a league for six years was a passion, along with photography.

To date, my favorite hobbies include painting on canvas, jewelry making, motorcycling, kayaking, hiking, committed to keeping our birdfeeders filled, and the one I continue to enjoy most, photography.

Our Parish, St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Frackville, comes first and foremost, where we sing on our church choir on Sundays and holy days of obligation. We also help with food preparation for our periodic food sales, work at our yearly Parish festival, and assist in other areas, as needed. In addition to PA Irish Historian, I serve as President for our Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary, Frackville. I will be here for you if you need me; so, never hesitate to contact me by email or phone.

Immediate Past President

We thank Rae DiSpaldo for her dedicated time and wish well to MaryAnn Amesbury.

Past Presidents

**Our state is most blessed to have so many past Presidents
to lend their assistance and guidance to our state.**

Bonnie Collins

As some of you remember, I served as PA State President from 2003-2005, immediately after retiring from teaching 3rd Grade for 35 years. What a wonderful retirement project!

Away from the LAOH world, I've always been interested in sports, especially tennis and skiing. I coached high school tennis for nine years and taught skiing for a local ski club for many years. I was also a member of the National Ski Patrol. Unfortunately, my body began to deteriorate, so I no longer participate in either. However, I still LOVE watching both sports and have many beautiful memories. So, for those of you who don't know me, I'm happy to meet you and hope to see you become active in our marvelous organization. I'll stop here because Publicity Chair Maura may ask me to write again for the next newsletter. Slainte'!

Peggy Cooney

I joined the LAOH in 1976. The main reason was my mother, Sara Madigan, who was very active locally in the Pittsburgh Order. My father, Martin Madigan, who was born in County Galway, was also a member. My mother became State President, and passed me the gavel of the State President in 1985. I am the oldest of six, and all of my siblings are members of the Order. My late brother Marty was State President in the early 1990s.

I have been married to my husband, Bob for 48 years. He drove me all over the state during my term as State President, and we were so fortunate to make many great and lifelong friends from Philadelphia, Scranton, and Wilkes Barre. Therefore, the LAOH and the AOH have become an integral part of our life.

I serve as a Board Member of the Irish Society for Education and Charities. This group operates as the governing body of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and was just voted Vice President! In addition, I was the Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2002, a very proud day.

I organized the Claddagh Degree Team in 1985, which is still going strong today. I must mention the Late great Clare McNelis. She was my Vice President for four years. Clare was not only an extremely skilled Vice President, but also her loyalty was never-ending and true, and I do not know what I would have done without her. We enjoyed each other, and I miss her and her wonderfully dry sense of humor.

Dorothy Weldon ~

Dorothy Flaherty Weldon, Mary Ellen O'Neill Division #4 LAOH President, Washington County, Past LAOH Pennsylvania State President and Past LAOH National President.

Daughter of Martin J. Flaherty, County Galway, Ireland and Mary McElligott Flaherty, County Kerry, Ireland. Secretary of the Mon Valley Nurses Association and Secretary of the Ladies of Charity, St.

Andrew the Apostle Parish. Serves as Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Hospital Eucharistic Minister,
CCD Teacher and Altar Server for St. Andrew the Apostle Parish.
Wife of Dr. John F. Weldon, Retired Chief Anesthesiologist - MV Hosp.
Mother of : Dr. John P. Weldon, Dr. Maureen Kamons, Dr. Patrick Weldon, Dr. Sean Weldon
Grandmother of : 9 boys, 4 girls

Catching up with other Committees:

Freedom for All Ireland

We thank Kathleen Varady for her continued dedication to this Committee.

I am Mom to a son and three daughters.

I just welcomed my newest granddaughter Kaitlyn Mary on September 1st during the hurricane!

She makes number 13, of which nine are boys and four girls.

She is our first girl in 14 years, so a welcome change for sure.

I had been present for most of my grandchildren's births, except for my oldest granddaughter and two grandsons in Arizona. Seeing these wonderful little ones come into this world is a thrill that never gets old!

I am retired after working 21 years for a hospital as a Medicare Biller and

12 years as a cashier at our local Walmart!

I am also our St. Columille Division President and serve on our parish St. Vincent DePaul Society.

*Currently, I am helping coordinate a June trip to Ireland celebrating St. Columkill's 100 plus 1 anniversary
- as our last June date was canceled due to COVID.*

*My husband John and I will be married 49 years on January 13th. We have a Boxer Pit, Roxie, three cats -
Lucky, Jack, and Nola and a pond full of Koi and goldfish.*

Just a reminder as we live in a political climate, The LAOH is a 501 (C) 3 and the IRS watches our activities closely. The LAOH members cannot write letters to our Representatives on our letterhead, mention in the letter they are a member of the LAOH or sign the letter as being a LAOH member.

Our members are welcome to send letters to their Representatives expressing their concerns as an Irish American citizen. Encourage them to keep supporting the Good Friday Agreement and let Prime Minister Boris Johnson know that America does not support the UK leaving the EU without a deal or without the "backstop". If Mr. Johnson leaves the EU without a deal it could mean chaos in Ireland and could very well mean a hard border between N. and S. Ireland.

Immigration & Legislation Affairs

We thank Maureen Cooper for her continued dedication to this Committee.

I am proud MomMom of a little girl. My daughter and her husband had a baby girl on June 24, 2019.

I live in Delaware County and am a member of the LAOH Trinity 4 Division. I have held offices in the division as President, Missions and Charities, Recording Secretary, and Sentinel. Currently, I serve a position on the state board as Immigration and Education for the last four years.

I am full of life and full of Energy. I love Ireland. I have been there Nine times.

One of the visits was during the 100th Anniversary, what amazing trip it was!

Publicity

We thank Maura O'Donnell-Roszyk for her continued dedication to this Committee.

Currently, I serve as the President of the Lehigh Valley Division in my third term. I chose to join the LAOH the summer my youngest child graduated from high school, as I felt it was time for me to change my volunteer direction from the children's activities to those of my own interest.

My husband Leon and I are transplants to Pennsylvania ~ he is originally from Chicago, and I am from Buffalo (yes, I will always be a Bills & Sabres fan). A job opportunity brought us to the Lehigh Valley, and we decided this was a great place to start our family.

I am the proud Mom to Collin, a Captain in the Army, currently stationed in Kaiserslautern, Germany with his beautiful wife, Kelsey. Meaghan, a brand new doctor! Meaghan is serving her residency period at Geisinger undertaking two programs, Internal medicine & Pediatrics. Kathleen, a doctoral student in psychology at LaSalle University, concentrating in children and youth anxiety, depression, and suicide she currently works as a remote national crisis counselor.

For fun, I work at Talbots in the operations department. I love opening the boxes to see the new product and being part of making the magic happen on the showroom floor.

I am also an active member of the Blue Star Moms. I found this group when my son was deployed. They helped me when I had scary days and now I am helping others too. This Mom network is like no other, providing more emotions they can be described.

I thank our State President for her confidence in me ~ this is a true honor.

Go raibh maith agat!



Webmaster

We thank MaryAnn Lubinsky for her continued dedication to this Committee and the Commonwealth.



Hibernian Hunger Project

The Hibernian Hunger Project (HHP) of Philadelphia includes all Divisions of LAOH and AOH within Philly. We have a Board consisting of both County Presidents, Immediate Past Presidents and Treasurer it is always a County effort put forth by all Divisions.

In 2020, at the onset of our shutdown in Philadelphia we made a donation to help feed first responders and a donation to assist food service volunteers with the proper PPEs.

We have a yearly fundraiser and march in the North Wildwood Irish Parade collecting monetary donations to feed the needy at Christmas. We deliver food boxes with all the fixings for a Christmas dinner, including a ham or turkey and vegetables.

Our membership meets yearly the

Saturday before Christmas to deliver the food boxes to individual families referred by our membership, churches, organizations, and schools. We have donated bulk vegetables for a few consecutive years to a local church that was in need of food for their annual Christmas dinner that is prepared for the community. Without the support of each LAOH and AOH Division, this yearly effort of serving Philadelphia's needy at Christmas would not be possible.



At the Division level, efforts to feed the needy take place year around. Some have collections of nonperishables for food pantries and others make sandwiches and have clothing & blanket drive for the homeless. Some assist families with food for Thanksgiving. This is just a few examples of the many ways people are served in our community with this most basic need of food.

HHP is very active in Philadelphia. We commemorate the Great Hunger and continue to honor the hardships our ancestors needlessly endured by assisting with this basic need of food in our community.

This picture is from October 2020, when Division 25 President Kathleen Brooks presented Jeanne Hermley, the HHP Treasurer, a check for \$2,500 that went to needy families for food for Christmas.



December 2019, the HHP served 230 needy families from Philadelphia, Bucks, and Delaware Counties, as well as parts of New Jersey. This yearly tradition is a tremendous effort of both the LAOH & the AOH, exemplifying our motto at Christmas for our families in the surrounding area.

Degree Team Information

ALLEGHENY COUNTY CLADDAGH DEGREE TEAM

Busy, Busy, Busy... the Degree Team's submission will be in our next Newsletter.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY TARA DEGREE TEAM

Thank you to the Tara Degree Team for an Amazing Degree experience at the Convention. Your hard work, teamwork, and dedication is apparent and appreciated.



Prayer Requests

The Power of Prayer is so very mighty therefore, we ask you to include the following Special people in yours.



**Sharon McGrath and Helen Morris Kleschick of Division 61
Margaret McAteer, Division 3 ~ Maire Drumm, Montgomery County
Mary Hannin, Division One ~ Tir nan Og, Lehigh Valley
Lois Ann Grace Weiser ~ Division 2 ~ JFK**

Compassionate and Gracious God, we come to you today to thank you for giving us a chance to live with our loved ones who recently left this world to come into your presence. Lord God Almighty, we know that they were not perfect, but they did love you with all their heart and truly repented for their sins. May they find love and peace in your presence. Do not let our loved one to be parted from you, let your faithful servant enjoy your glory forever. In Jesus' powerful name, I believe and pray. Amen.



Ellen McCrane, PA Past State President, Maria Gallagher, PA State Vice-President, PA State Secretary Kathleen Diulus, and all of our Sisters who are battling Breast Cancer or are survivors. St. Peregrine and St. Agatha, pray for them.



A special prayer for everyone's Special Intentions.



Additionally, we ask for prayers of strength and courage to all of those ailing & their caregivers
Also, to all the Sisters, Priests, and others without loved ones to pray for their soul.
And, a prayer for us all as each one of us faces our daily struggles, fears, and pains.



Be safe ~ BÍ curamach

Please send in your Good News, Committee Updates, or Prayer Requests so together,
we can celebrate & support each other.

Please email them to Maura O'Donnell-Roszyk at maurar9992@aol.com

A WOMAN'S PRAYER ~ SR. PEGGY FLAHERTY, CDP

*Make us, O God, spirit-filled women...women of prayer...women of vitality...women of vision..
women of courage...risk-taking women.*

*Fill us with your love...a love, which affirms...a love, which calls forth...a love, which challenges...a love, which
frees.*

*Grant us your gift of Godliness... a reverence for you. Instill in our hearts the spirit of holy Joy...the joy that
sanctifies...the joy that gives...the joy of one who loves... the joy that imparts to others the spirit born of self-
control.*

*Make us Peace-seeking women...instruments of your peace...directed by your Wisdom,
bridge builders...working with others for justice to bring about true peace.*

*Give us Patience...a strong patience which enables us to trust and to keep heart in the face of disappointments,
frustrations, and failures.*

*Plant deep within our attitudes your kindness...make us women who are open and friendly...women of
hospitality...women who image our people friendly God. Impart to us your spirit of Goodness...Make us women
who believe in the good of the other...who speak the good to each other and about each other...who do good for one
another...Bestow on us your gift of knowledge that we may know you who are the source of all good.*

Root us in your Fidelity...a fidelity that keeps us true to you...walking in integrity in your presence...

Mold us into faithful women...women who are true to ourselves...true to others... true to life and all creation.

Form us into women who follow your Counsel in all things, who uphold true values and the rights of all people.

Make us, O God, Spirit filled Irish women, trusting you and one another as we move into this 21st Century.

Our Late Pennsylvania State Chaplain, Sister Peggy Flaherty, also Dorothy Weldon's sister, wrote this beautiful & inspirational
prayer.

Sister Peggy was a member of the Sisters of Divine Providence in Pittsburgh, PA.

She was the youngest member of the Order to become a Principal of St. Peter and Paul School in Beaver County, PA until her
death.

Sister was also the Chaplain of the LAOH, Allegheny County and loved by all.

She was elected State Chair of Catholic Action before her untimely death and served us well.

She was truly loved by everyone, always available to assist and a genuine Irish Catholic Woman as her Father, Martin Flaherty was
born in County Galway, Ireland, and Mother, Mary McElligott Flaherty, born in County Kerry, Ireland.



The blessing of God on you.~ *Bail ó Dhia ort*
Good health to you. ~ *Sláinte chugat*



PA LAOH State Board Fundraiser

The PA State Board of the LAOH is selling Shamrock Ornaments (picture shown) as a fundraiser.

The ornaments are a custom design from Wendell August Forge. Each piece is hand wrought using an eight-step process with roots in ancient metalworking techniques. Wendell August Forge is the oldest working Forge in America, located in Mercer, PA and is a Union shop.

Please support our fundraiser by purchasing an ornament.

Cost is \$15.00, plus \$5.00 for direct shipping and handling to your home*

*Select State Board members will receive ornaments for distribution. If you arrange to pick-up from a select State Board member, there will not be a fee for shipping & handling (Phila area-Maria/Delco Carolyn/Lehigh Valley Maura/Western PA Kathleen)

To order an ornament(s), please complete either the on-line form by clicking on this link

<https://forms.gle/C13eUHCtw8v9moEM6> or by completing the below information:

Name

Address

City/State/Zip Code

Email

Phone number

Quantity

*S&H or Officer pickup name

Total

Please send completed form (if not completed on-line) and payments to Kathleen Diulus, c/o PA LAOH State Board to 117 Summit Dr, Sewickley PA 15143. Make checks payable to PA LAOH State Board or pay via Venmo at @palaohkd.

Any questions, please email Kathleen at palaohkd@gmail.com