



New York State Board Empire State Hibernian



SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESIDENT

THOMAS M. O'DONNELL

Thank you to all who attended the NYS AOH Convention this past July in Binghamton. And a special thanks to those who worked to make the convention a success.

I would like to thank my AOH Brothers for placing their trust in me by electing me President of the NYS AOH for the next two years. Please be advised that the entire NYS AOH Board, both elected and appointed, is already hard at work! Please reach out to me at tmodonnell@roadrunner.com or 716-622-5185 with any questions or concerns.

Commodore John Barry Day, September 13th, is a National Holiday in our Order. According to our Constitution, it is to be "celebrated in an appropriate manner". Commodore Barry is the Father of the American Navy, an American Revolutionary War Hero and the First Commissioned Naval Officer, having received his commission from President George Washington. Please remember Commodore Barry at your September meetings.

We are planning to hold our New York State Semi-Annual Board Meeting in Pearl River at Hibernian House on Saturday, October 21. We will not have a designated hotel. There are a number of hotels and motels in the vicinity and I encourage you to make your reservation early.

VICE PRESIDENT

THOMAS BEIRNE

I hope all of the Brothers and their families had an enjoyable, relaxing summer. It was great seeing many Brother Hibernians at the NY State AOH Convention in Binghamton, in July. The Convention was enjoyable, productive and a chance to share ideas with Brothers from across NY State. Hopefully, we will return to joint NY AOH and LAOH Conventions in the future.

I look forward to working with State President Tom O'Donnell, the new Directors, and other officers. Hopefully many Hibernian Brothers will be able to attend The Fall State Board Meeting at Hibernian House in Pearl River on Saturday 10/21/23 at 10:00 AM. As the Fall Season ramps up, I look forward to seeing many Brothers at upcoming Hibernian events.

We all need to work on recruitment and retainage of members. Please continue to ask your sons, nephews, friends, coworkers, and neighbors to join the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Advise them about the many great programs that the AOH have in place and to display their pride in their Irish Heritage by joining the Hibernians. We are the largest Irish Catholic Organization in the United States and the voice of Irish America. If there is a festival, or outdoor event occurring in your area, please contact NYS Organizer Tim Weklar, timwek@gmail.com to see about getting one of the Hibernian tents. The tents are beautiful and increase the visibility for your recruiting efforts.

We all should bring in new members and exemplify our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

One of the duties of the Vice President is to promote the Major Degrees of the Order. Please consider hosting a Major Degree in your area. The Major Degree gives members a chance to grow in our Order and participate in the Rituals of The Ancient Order of Hibernians. If your jurisdiction is hosting a Major Degree, please contact one of the Degree Teams listed below and also let me know.

New York County AOH is hosting a **Major Degree on Saturday October 28th at the historic Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral in lower Manhattan at 12:00 Noon; candidates should arrive at 11:00 AM.**

Location: Archbishop Hughes Center, BSPOC
32 Prince Street
New York, NY 10012

There are currently (3) Major Degree Teams based in New York State, their contact information is below:

1) Cu Chulainn Celtic Warriors Major Degree Team (Richmond County)
Point of Contact: Brother Michael McGroarty
253 Malvine Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10309
(646) 533-1495
E-Mail: mikemcgrty@gmail.com

2) Schenectady Major Degree Team (Schenectady County)
Point of Contact: Brother Owen Cole
738 Swaggertown Road
Scotia, NY 12302
(518) 399-1269
E-Mail: omcole54@gmail.com

3) Tara Court Major Degree Team (Suffolk County)
Point of Contact: Brother Jeff Nisler
33 Corlett Place
Huntington Station, NY 11746
(631) 385-2425

E-Mail: jeff.aoh@nisler.com

As our summer is winding down and we are heading into the fall we observe Labor Day. **Monday, September 4, 2023 – Labor Day.** - Irish men and women have made and continue to make tremendous contributions to all aspects of the American Labor movement. Since the earliest days of organized labor, the Irish have been leaders in the labor movement. Mary Harris Jones “Mother Jones” was born in Cork and was a feared Union Organizer; P.J. McGuire “Father of Labor Day” founded the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and the AFL. James Connolly, Irish Patriot was a Union Organizer in Troy, NY, and other parts of the US before returning to Ireland. Michael Quill, legendary founder, and President of the Transport Workers Union was born in Kerry. George Meany, Bronx born descendant of Irish immigrants was President of the AFL and subsequently the first President of the AFL-CIO. The Molly Maguires were Hibernians, involved in the labor struggles in the Pennsylvania coal mines and were executed for it. Numerous Irish Americans have risen through the ranks of their unions to be the President of International Unions including: Teddy Gleeson (ILA), John Lawe (TWU), Terry O’Sullivan (Laborer’s International Union), John Samuelson (TWU) Mary Kay Henry (SEIU), John Sweeney (AFL-CIO President). As we observe Labor Day Weekend, we can be proud of the contributions of Irish Americans to the Labor movement.

Please contact me if there is anything that you need or if I can be of assistance to you. I can be reached at tbeirneEire1916@gmail.com or by text or calling (646) 584-1918.

“May Saint Patrick Bless and Protect You!”

SECRETARY
KEVIN O'REILLY

It was good to see many of you at the recent State Convention and I want to thank you all for allowing me to serve your as Secretary for the next two years.

I continue to advocate all Division's and Board's to support our Brother's events and participate in the events. If your Division or Board cannot participate then send a donation of any amount to those hosting the event and it will be appreciated. We all know that every little bit helps.

Have a great remainder of the Summer and see you at the Fall State Board Meeting.

TREASURER
A.J. SMITH

This is my first report as the newly elected treasurer of the New York State Ancient Order of Hibernians. I'd like to start out by thanking all those brothers that have supported me over the years and encouraged me to step up and run for treasurer. It's an important responsibility and I am both happy and honored to take on this role for our organization.

I would like to say congratulations to our immediate past president, John Manning, on successfully completing his climb through the chairs of the New York State Board and on his last two years as President of New York State. A lot was accomplished in the last two years, and he should be commended for all of the hard work he put in. I also would like to congratulate our new President, Tom O'Donnell, on his deserved election, as well as Tom Burn and Kevin O'Reilly, who also "moved up the chairs." I look forward to working with these fine gentlemen and brothers in the next two years.

I made comments at the State convention that I believe are worth repeating. Anyone who attended

the State convention in Binghamton and listened to the reports given by the appointed officers has to be impressed with the amount of work that was done by the both the elected and appointed officers in the last two years. It is obvious that the group that was selected took their role seriously and worked very hard for our organization. It would not be right to single out any individual officer because it would necessarily leave out another fully deserving brother. It was a pleasure serving with you and I look forward to continuing to serve with all of you who remain as appointed officers to our New York State Board.

Those of you who have been following the activities I have been most involved in are aware that our efforts to have New York State law amended to create a presumption that many crimes that may be committed in or around a house of worship would automatically be deemed hate crimes did not pass this year's legislative session. The good news is we have learned much along the way, and have made friends in Albany, so that when session returns, we can start far ahead of where we started last year. As a result of the timing of our efforts, it was extremely difficult to rush anything through the Assembly and the Senate. Lots of brothers did hard work and I believe there is a full commitment by the Ad-Hoc Committee created by President Manning to continue their work under President O'Donnell to get this legislation passed. As previously reported, the key to passage includes engaging key members of other religions and faiths so that this bill can enjoy widespread support as we push it forward. While we fell short towards the late Spring of last year, we are using this time to create a strategy moving forward so that we can have this extremely important legislation passed. Stay tuned for future reports about these efforts.

Finally, as of the writing of this digest piece, the transition of office is still ongoing. I am hoping in the next digest to provide a true treasurer's report to give the order an idea as to where we stand and to how we are doing financially.

I hope that the members all had a wonderful summer in 2023 and I look forward to seeing many of you at various Division, County, State and National events.

DISTRICT 1

MARK W. SCULLY

For those of you in District 1 who may not know me, I am Mark Scully, District 1 Director and President of Division 1, Albany (Watervliet). I can be reached at the following:

Email: markwscully11@gmail.com
Phone or text: 518-390-1677

I am looking forward to serving the Divisions of District 1 for the next two years. Anything I can do to help you out, please call or email me.

All of our Divisions are working hard to recruit new members. Thanks to the efforts of Organizer, Tim Weklar, we had tickets to the Valley Cat's Game on Tuesday August 1, which was dedicated Irish Heritage Night. The District's Hibernian canopy was put up and had several people sign up as interested in joining the AOH. Members from all six divisions were present at the game. All of our Divisions have reported an increase in membership, and we plan to continue our efforts in this area.

Many events are planned for the rest of the summer and fall. These include golf tournaments and barbecues by several Divisions to raise funds for various charities. Other happenings include Div.2 Greene co. holding a fund raiser to honor Seamus Balfe, first recipient of the Tim O. Sullivan Award, also they had their first Shamrock Degree assisted by Tim McSweeney and Tim Weklar. In June Albany AOH and Troy AOH had a joint Shamrock Degree. Watervliet AOH and Saratoga AOH will each be having golf tournaments. The Hibernian Canopy will be put up at each event to encourage prospective members to join our organizations.

Again, please contact me to help with anything you need. Wishing all safe and happy times for the rest of the summer!

DISTRICT 2

RICHARD LONG

Monroe County Div. 7

Rochester's Hibernians recently hosted "Redwings Irish Night", their hometown AAA Baseball team. Brother Patrick S. Miller threw out the first pitch.



Niagara County Div. 4

Lockport's Hibernians worked lock tending demonstrations at Lockport's Flight of Five on the Erie Canal on Saturday August 5th.



The demonstrations include manually opening and closing the locks for the benefit of visiting tourists, who may be viewing the locks for the first time. Brothers perform these duties annually in honor of the Irish immigrants that helped build and work the Erie Canal.



DISTRICT 3

PATRICK ST. THOMAS

I am delighted to introduce myself as the newly elected District 3 Director. My name is Patrick St. Thomas IV, I am from Westmoreland, NY, and am currently a member and the Treasurer of the John C. Devereux Division #1, in Utica NY. I take great pride in my membership and work hard to ensure that my work in these positions is exemplary. I have enjoyed making friends in my division, and most recently at the NYS Convention. I am looking forward to meeting even more brothers as I perform my new responsibilities as the NYS District 3 Director. I understand from my predecessor that I have a large territory to cover, but have 5 great divisions that all work hard. I intend over the next 2 years, to help our district to continue to grow, and to work on some District wide events and gatherings.

The JFK Division 1, Auburn, is preparing for its Half way St. Patrick's Day Celebration on September 16th. On August 6th, they hosted a successful Shamrock BBQ. Auburn has gained 1

new member since last report. The Msgr. Ruddy Division 1, Watertown, will be hosting an Irish Flag raising on September 13th for Commodore John Berry Day at Watertown City Hall. They will also be hosting a Feed our Vets event on 9/16, and a Chicken BBQ half way to St. Patrick's Day get together on 9/17. John C. Devereux Division #1, in Utica NY, will be hosting the 2nd Annual Best Guinness Pour in Central NY at the Irish Cultural Center on September 12th. In addition the Utica Division will be selling raffle tickets until the Pour Contest for 3 different "Coolers of Cheer" at \$10 each or 3 for \$20.

DISTRICT 5

MICHAEL MCGROARTY

First, I would like to Thank Richmond County Board, Queens County Board, and Kings County Board, for dually electing me District 5 Director. I'm truly humble and grateful for this opportunity to represent all of my brothers. I would also like to Thank the Staten Island Cu Cuhelen Celtic Warriors Major Degree Team for their support up at the State Convention.

My report is as follows. Richmond County reports that Division 4 is having its fundraiser Golf outing on September 12th anyone interested in playing contact me 646-533-1495. Also, Division 1 had its fundraiser Golf outing last month and all Divisions are actively recruiting. Kings County reports Division 12 night @ the races is being planned for October. Queens County reports they attended Irish night @Citifield and Division 14 had it BBQ Fundraiser for Holy Child Jesus Parish food pantry on Sunday the 20th. this is the second leg of their BBQ fundraisers.

All Divisions are actively recruiting.

DISTRICT 6

PETER BEGLEY

First off, I would like to introduce myself, Peter Begley of Division 17 "St. Brendan the Navigator" in Long Beach NY, and a Past Nassau County

President [2017-2019]. I have been a member of our order for some 30 plus years, and I hope to serve the members of District 6 (Nassau and Suffolk Counties) and our glorious State to the best of my ability. I would like to thank all of those brothers that voted in the election at our last State Convention in Binghamton.

Your voice did not go un-noticed. Please feel free to contact me anytime: Pbegley@NassauAOH.com ,516-670-5752, P.O. Box 185, Island Park, NY 11558

During the convention awards night Suffolk County Division 2, Babylon was presented with the 2022 – 2023 New York State Organizers award for their work in growing our Order.



Additionally, the Babylon Division President, Dennis Harty, was presented with the NYS Leadership Award.



Happenings:

On Friday July 16 Division 7 lead a 'Grave Site' ceremony for Commodore George De Kay (who in 1849 petitioned the US Government for two (2) ships to transport food stuffs to Ireland during the Great Hunger) at St. Georges Episcopal Church cemetery (across from Hempstead Town Hall) in Hempstead NY. Food and sundries were also collected for the church's food pantry totaling approximately \$850. A big thanks went out to Division 17 for their contribution to the food drive.

On Sunday August 6 the Nassau County Board held a Major Degree at the Irish American Center in Mineola NY by the Tara Court MDT (of Suffolk County NY). 12 Candidates participated, and about 20 Members attended. Congratulations go out to those candidates on becoming Full Hibernian Brothers.

Upcoming Events:

The 51 Nassau County Feis and Festival will be held on Sunday September 18 at Nickerson Beach Park, Lido Beach NY See their website www.nassauaohfeis.com for more information.

The 3 annual Long Island Irish Fest will be held on Sunday October 15 at the Plattduetsche Park, 1132 Hempstead Tpke, Franklin Square NY See their website <http://www.LongIslandIrishFest.com> for more information.

Suffolk County will be hosting a Major Degree on Sunday October 22 at AOH Division 2; located at 27 Locust Ave., Babylon, NY. Candidates are to arrive at 10 am for registration with the Degree starting at 11. The cost is \$20 per candidate. The dress code is business attire (jackets and ties).

Brothers from all areas are urged to attend and fulfill this important requirement of membership in our Order. For information concerning the Major Degree you can contact the team Chairman, Jeff Nisler, at 631-385-2425 or email TaraCourtDegreeTeam@gmail.com.

DISTRICT 7

LAWRENCE STEPHENS

Let me introduce myself. I am a native of Chicago and a graduate of Loyola University – Chicago and The University of Nebraska – Lincoln. My wife Theresa and I and our three children arrived in Elmira 50 years ago this month. I retired in 2008 after 35 years as a chemistry professor at Elmira College. Theresa and I were married for 54 years before she passed away in 2019. I joined the AOH over 40 years ago and have had numerous offices in the Msgr. John J Lee Division over the years. I love to travel and have been to Ireland seven times and hope to visit again next year.

The Elmira Irish Festival will be held on Saturday, September 9th at the Hibernian Center, 701 Kinyon Street, Elmira. Music will be provided by Kilrush, Pat Kane and West O'Clare, Scatter the Knickers and Doolin O'Dey. The Penn York Highlanders Pipe Band will perform, as will the Ring of Chiarraighe Celtic Dancers. There will be food and beverages as well as Kids' Games and Face Painting.

DISTRICT 8

KEVIN HAUGH

On June 21, 2023, the brothers of Dutchess County, NY Msgr. Sheahan Division #1 made a generous donation of \$1,000 to the MHA/Vet2Vet Food Pantry in Pleasant Valley, NY. This donation was part of the division's annual "An Gorta Mor"-Great Hunger- Project. As their President James Smyth wrote in his letter announcing the presentation, the brothers in Dutchess County see themselves as part of a "global community of Irish descendants of the Great Hunger whose collective memory and love for humanity have inspired the establishment of organizations like the AOH that fight for and support the dignity of all human life."



Pictured above left to right: Brother Jack Gensch, President James Smyth, Anthony Kavouras of MHA, Brother CJ Tomaskovic

President James Smyth noted that the funds will be used specifically to assist in funding this food pantry which serves many veterans in communities around Dutchess County. President Smyth reminded all that "when the men and women who have served in our Armed Services come home, they deserve at a minimum, the support of their communities, especially in a time of need. They and their families have endured many difficulties, and MHA's "Veterans One Stop" helps to ease further suffering in many ways." The Dutchess County, NY AOH Msgr. Sheahan Division #1 is proud to help those who help others and is thankful to all our veterans!



Pictured above left to right: Brother Jack Gensch, President James Smyth, Alyssa Carrion of MHA, Brother CJ Tomaskovic

TIM WEKLAR ORGANIZER

First off, I want to thank everyone that came out to Binghamton to our biannual NYS AOH Convention, all the Brothers that are stepping up into new leadership positions and our host Brothers and Sisters in Broome County for the fantastic hospitality. I also want to thank NYS President Tom O'Donnell for reappointing me to State Organizer.

As we reported at the State Convention, the State grew 3% over the past 2 years as we came out of COVID lock downs. The strongest growth in District 1 (Capital District) and District 7 (Long Island). We currently have 8674 members and hope to be on the road back to 9000 plus. To be successful we need to continue to be proactive and deliberate in our recruitment and retention practices.

Since the convention I have made a spreadsheet of all the division and county organizers with contact information to communicate and disseminate best practices. **Unfortunately, only 51% of all the Boards have Organizers appointed.** I know that there are only a few months before we elect new leadership at the division level, please make appointing an Organizer a priority. Divisions that have full Form 9s are the divisions that are showing growth. Giving a Brother an appointed position like Organizer is giving a Brother a reason to come back to a meeting. Imagine the growth we could have if we had another 20 Brothers across the State dedicated to growing the Order! I plan on contacting Presidents without Organizers to fill their Form 9s and remind incoming Presidents to make the Organizer's appointment a top priority.

As we approach the Fall Board Meeting, I will be looking to appoint Deputy Organizers that can prioritize initiatives and help implement them at the local level. I hope we can start to make more inroads to starting new divisions in the North County region of New York State and offer help to divisions dangerously close to disbanding. I also hope to create a pamphlet that explains the

Organizers position along with best practices and links to resources. We will also look to partner with the webmaster, social media and publicity chairman to promote recruitment (especially to the younger demographic). We will be reevaluating our on-line poster campaign to make it more efficient and make the poster available to download and print in any size.

Newly elected District Directors and County Presidents, please consider doing a needs assessment in your territory about whether your area would benefit from a new recruitment tent. In District 1 two years ago, all the divisions in the district pitched in \$280 and purchased a recruitment tent for \$1400 which included the weights for the legs. Our district director is in charge of usage of the tent for recruitment at division events.

Just recently District 1 had over 100 AOH and LAOH members at a minor league baseball game in Troy, NY that got 4 applications at the recruitment tent. Please consider district wide events with district wide recruitment opportunities.



Please reach out if you are interested in purchasing a recruitment tent at timwek@gmail.com or need any help with recruitment or retention. I am also glad to meet with you or your Organizer through Google Meets.

FREEDOM FOR ALL IRELAND

VINCE TYER

On July 18th – I traveled to Washington DC to meet with Elise Stefanik and the rest of the female Republican Congresswomen at her E-PAC reception.

While I was there, I also bumped into Congressman Wesley Hunt.



That evening I had dinner with Congressman Lawler to follow up on 3 House Resolutions - **HR 33** (Keating) Calling for the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, **HR 43** (Neal) Marking the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement & **HR 596** (Lawler) Calling for the restoration of power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. All 3 are still in committee (Foreign Affairs).

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-resolution/33/text?s=1&r=62>
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-resolution/43/text?s=1&r=70>
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-resolution/596/text?s=1&r=2&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22%22%5D%7D>

July 22-31 – I was in Ireland. On July 24th I met with Ciaran Quinn, Sean Quinn & Bik McFarlane at the James Connolly Center in Belfast for lunch and then stopped over to the Sinn Fein offices to catch up with Gerry Adams & Richard McCauley.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

BARRY GRIFFITH

I am honored that President O'Donnell appointed me as the NYAOH Veteran's Chairman. I have previously served at the Division, County and State level for the AOH. I cherish our Motto and I appreciate all our great organization does to remember and further our Irish Heritage.

I have spent my entire adult life with veterans and working for veterans. My military career encompassed 37 years (13 enlisted and 24 commissioned), with service in the Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard. I served as the New York State President of the Air Force Association, as the Veteran's Chairman for the New York State Elks Association and most recently, as the President of the New York State Elks Association.

It is my intention to provide articles of interest to Veterans, and also articles to all of our members who so enthusiastically support our Veterans. Today I would like to remind everyone the difference between Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Armed Forces Day.

All three days are observances to honor those who have served in the military. Celebrated the last Monday in May, Memorial Day is the holiday set aside to pay tribute to those who died serving in the military. This includes those who died during war, those who died preparing for war, and those who died later because of war. Memorial Day is a solemn remembrance and I would certainly caution the phrase "Happy Memorial Day"!

According to Military.com, Veterans Day began as Armistice Day to honor the end of World War I, which officially took place on November 11, 1918. Veterans Day honors all those who have served. Their service is not dependent on the location they were stationed, the nature of their duties, nor the amount of time they served. This day is for combat veterans and non-combat veterans alike. We honor everyone who honorably served.

Armed Forces Day is celebrated on the third Saturday in May, and it is the day Americans celebrate their military members presently serving, without regard to branch or component.

On both Veterans Day and Armed Forces Day (along with every other day) it is very appropriate to thank our warriors for their service. Sometimes the Veteran may not know exactly how to respond, but they do appreciate it. It is also appropriate to thank the military family members too; many forget the sacrifices they have made while their loved one served!

If you have any questions regarding Veterans, benefits, protocols or anything else, feel free to drop me a line!

Barry "Bear" Griffith, bear5770@aol.com

SCHOLARSHIP

DERMOT O'CONNOR MOORE

Congratulations to the incoming board and thanks very much to outgoing President Manning and incoming President O'Donnell for their faith in and support of me and the committee.

We will be updating the scholarship study material which will be available online by the end of this year as will be the applications.

Please enjoy the rest of the summer.
Go raibh mile mhaith agaibh,

COMMODORE BARRY WILLIAM FLYNN

I'm hoping everyone had a grand Summer and family time enjoyed by all. On September 13th we will commemorate a day dedicated to a great Irish-American naval officer. President Ronald Reagan designated September 13, 1981, as "Commodore John Barry Day" as a "**tribute to one of the earliest and greatest American Patriots**, a man of great insight who perceived very early the need for American power on the sea."

Barry was born in Wexford, Ireland, in 1745. Barry received the first commission issued by the Continental Congress to command Lexington on December 7, 1775, becoming a Revolutionary War Commander. He rose from a humble Irish cabin boy to senior commander of the entire United States fleet. He was fearless in battle, but humane to his men as well as adversaries and prisoners.

Barry's war contributions: he was the first to capture a British war vessel on the high seas; he captured two British ships after being severely wounded in a ferocious sea battle; he quelled three mutinies; he fought on land at the Battles of Trenton and Princeton; he captured over 20 ships including an armed British schooner in the lower Delaware; he authored a Signal Book which established a set of signals used for effective communication between ships; he also fought the last naval battle of the American Revolution aboard the frigate *Alliance* in 1783. He was the first US Naval Flag Officer. Barry was Appointed in 1795 by President George Washington to plan the construction of and later to be in command of the first US Navy launched in 1798. Commodore John Barry had such insight and vision of a strong navy to command the high seas.

He died in Philadelphia, PA in 1803. Commodore John Barry is also known as "The Father of the American Navy", a title bestowed on him by his contemporaries, who were in the best position to judge. He shares that moniker with John Paul Jones and John Adams.

Commodore John Barry Day is an AOH National Holiday. Again, this year it is my hope and desire for every Ancient Order of Hibernians Division in the grand State of New York to commemorate, "Commodore John Barry Day" in some way during the month of September. Examples/suggestions: Irish Flag Raising, Facebook posting, newspaper article, website etc.



Please send your photos, brief notation, and a write up of your Division's Program of Commodore John Barry Day. "Father of American Navy". I have enjoyed hearing from you my Brother Hibernians over the past two years and look forward to hearing from more New York AOH Divisions. Email to aoh1@gmail.com

EDITOR ***TOM MCKENNA***

I would like to congratulate NYS President Tom O'Donnell on his election and thank him for reappointing me as State Editor. I look forward to working with our new State Board, it is because of *your* contributions that our State newsletter is a success.

Deadlines for The Empire State Hibernian are: November 15th for the December 2023 issue and February 15th 2024 for the March 2024 issue.

If possible, please send photos as separate attachments. Please submit all information through the appropriate officer, chairman or your district director.

I maintain the list for, and send the content from, the NY AOH State Constant Contact email list. **If a division president would like email addresses added to the New York State AOH mailing list**, please email them to me, editornyaoh@gmail.com, as an Excel spreadsheet, Google Sheets or a comma separated values file (CSV). Please include the first and last name associated with each address and the corresponding AOH membership number of the brother. I will then be able to upload it directly into the contact list. Please make sure you are sending only current AOH members. ***Do not send a cut and paste copy from an email header.***

FUND RAISER CALENDAR ***CY HUGHES***

The AOH/LAOH calendar program is on target for the 2023 year. There are some calendars that are still available for sale. Please contact me at 914-804-7162 or cyhughes8926@gmail.com if you are interested in getting one. The calendars are \$25 each and the number on the calendar can be your winning number. If you have a special number, and you would like that special number, it may still be available. You still have over 100 days that you could win, and you can win more than one time. The winning number is the same as the 3-digit number drawn each evening in the NY lottery.

CHARITIES AND MISSIONS ***TIM TOBIN***

Greetings Brothers! I am honored to continue to serve as the NY State Chair for Charities and Missions. In looking back over the last two years, I can proudly report that our commitment to *Christian Charity* is always at the forefront of the work we do in our communities across the State.

ARNOLD "ARNIE" NAGELHOUT AWARD **2022**

The 2022 Nagelhout Award winner writes in their narrative, "We have remained faithful to our purpose, mission and motto...With that in mind, (we) almost tripled our charitable giving."

The 2022 Arnie Nagelhout Award “winner” was the Commodore John Barry, Division #1, Saratoga Springs. The award was presented at the State Convention in July. The State Board will make a \$500 donation to the Open Door Mission on behalf of the Commodore John Barry Division. Congratulations and Well Done!



Photo of Commodore John Barry Divisions #1, Saratoga Springs check presentation to the Open Door Mission. (Brothers Mark Lyon, Bob Melia (Division President) and Tim McNulty with Open Door representative

CONVENTION REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Based on division reporting for 2022, New York AOH divisions made financial contributions in the amount of \$281,150 and performed over 22,730 hours of charitable work.

The above charitable work includes the following: Food Kitchen Volunteering, CYO and Community Youth Sports Sponsorships, Catholic education/school support, Veterans Support Activities, Flag Day, Operation Comfort Warriors, Guitars for Heroes, Tunnels to Towers, Feeding Veterans Food Pantry, Wounded Warriors, Disabled Veterans, 15K Walk, Run, Bike for Food Banks, Supporting the Emerald Immigration Center, Division Scholarship Programs, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Baskets, Communion Breakfasts, St. Patrick's Day/Senior Luncheons, Right to Life and Camp Esther, Emerald Society Support, Financial Donations to Ukrainian Relief, Gold Star Mothers, Cancer

Research-St. Jude's, Breast Cancer Centers, Josh Palmer Fund, American Cancer Society, Retired Fireman's Cancer Fund, Toys for Tots, and Hibernian Charities- Project St. Patrick, FFAI Appeal, Christmas Appeal.

STATE REPORTING REMINDER:

As we move through 2023, a reminder that reporting on the charitable works of each division is required. Please make it a goal to submit your annual charities and missions report. Division reporting forms can be found on the State website by clicking on membership and scrolling under Forms for New York State Charities and Missions.

My contact information is:

607-742-2723

922 Old Way Drive

Webster, NY 14580

timothyjtobin1@gmail.com

nyaohcharity@gmail.com

“For it is in giving that we receive.” St. Francis of Assisi

PRO-LIFE

EDWARD J. WALLACE

First, I want to thank NYS Pres. Tom O'Donnell for reappointing me Chairman. of the Pro-Life Committee, I will strive to keep members abreast of latest happenings in the fight to end or limit abortion in our country.

U. S. Congressman. Alex Mooney (R-WV) is promoting a Life at Conception Act. The Supreme court itself admitted in Roe v Wade that once Congress establishes the personhood of unborn children, they must be protected by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which explicitly says: “nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property.”

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith and Congressman Robert Latta introduced “Save Babies Act” (S95/H.R. 427) which will immediately end the licensing of abortion pills and stop the abortion

lobby's scheme to deal out abortion pills without oversight (Nat'l Pro-Life Alliance).

A federal appeals court recently ruled that the city of Washington, DC, unevenly enforced the "defacement ordinances" against pro-life groups. The court ruled that city authorities treated pro-life protesters more harshly than Black Lives Matter activists. (Catholic vote).

Catholics in Ohio have been urged by Archbishop Shurr to reject a November ballot that would make abortion a "right" under their state constitution. (CV)

Hibernians need to stay informed and get involved at some level, in some way to help save the lives of unborn babies. I would appreciate your input.

SOCIAL MEDIA

CHAD GHASTIN

Facebook remains our best performing social media platform. Since taking over social media in July 2021, we have significantly increased key audience engagement metrics using month-long themed posts for Veterans Day, Bloody Sunday Memorials, and on key holidays and events. It should be noted that these results were achieved from organic content and not from any paid media content / posts.

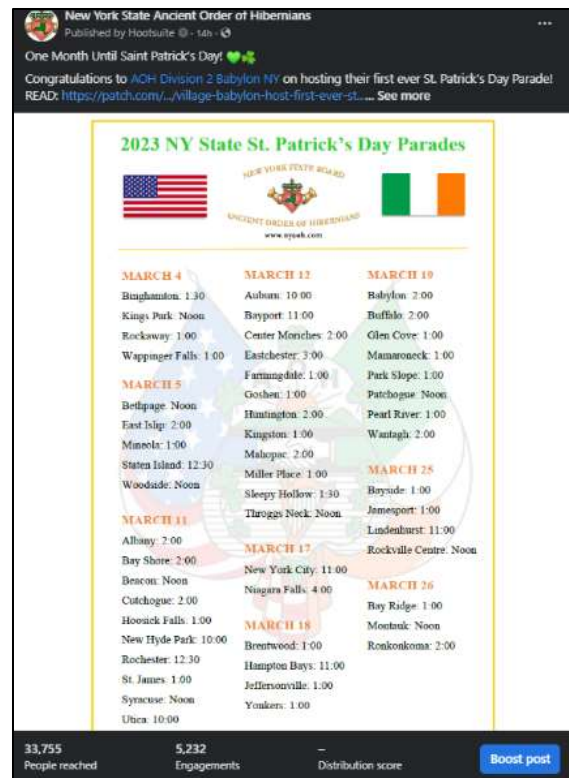
July 2021 vs. July 2023 Facebook Results

- Grew Total Page Followers from 1,844 to 3,065, an addition of 1,221 or +66%
- Grew Total Page Likes from = 1,853 to 2,511, an addition of 658 or +36%
- Reached 223,000 people by positing 730 total posts or one post per day over two years.

All Time Engagement Record

The February 17, 2023 Facebook post listing NY St. Patrick's State parades reached a record breaking 34,000 total people, generated 985 reactions, 131 comments and 284 shares. This post reached 26,000

more people than our previously highest engaging post.



5 Simple Ways to Increase Member Recruitment and Engagement Using Social Media

1. Appoint a member to own and run your social media. This is the perfect opportunity to appoint a Brother to as your "media and communications chair" and empower them to run your social media program.
2. Share your social media pages with your members and frequently ask them to follow you and share you posts.
3. Increase the frequency of your post to at least once a week. When a member candidate visits your social pages, they want to see that you are active. This is especially true for younger "digital native" generations. If you don't have the time to create content, you can easily share content from the NY State AOH social media pages (i.e., Facebook) on your pages.

4. Create a custom Facebook username. This helps the public find and tag you on Facebook. Custom usernames are part of your public profile that appears on your home / profile Facebook page. For example, the NY State AOH Facebook username is: @new.york.aoh.
5. Add hashtags to your social posts to increase your reach and followers and engagement. Examples include: #AOH, #Irish, #Irishheritage, #Catholic

JUNIOR LIAISON DIRECTOR DENNIS HARTY

I would first like to thank immediate NYS Past President John Manning for considering me for this position and wish John and his family the best moving forward.

I was lucky enough to speak at a breakout meeting at the NYS Convention in Binghamton in July to share many of the activities and accomplishments going on in the Junior Divisions across the State. I also implored many of the Division Officers in attendance to very much consider implementing Junior Divisions. These young men are our future and we need to encourage enrollment if we are to grow our organization for the future. I am always willing to visit and help Divisions in recruiting Member's sons, grandsons, nephews, etc. I can be reached at dennisharty@mail.com. I want to congratulate newly elected President Tom O'Donnell and personally thank him for keeping me on the Board to serve.

LEGAL COUNSEL AND IMMIGRATION TOM LAMBERT

I hope all are enjoying their summer months. I would like to thank President O'Donnell for appointing me to the positions of Legal Counsel and Immigration Chairman. I appreciate the confidence placed in me.

Regarding my position as Legal Counsel, I will be available to offer legal advice to the AOH New York State Board when asked for an opinion.

Regarding Immigration, I am also AOH National Immigration Chairman. I will keep our Brothers apprised of any changes in U.S. Immigration policy, especially if there is any effect on Irish Immigration. In this regard, the calendar moves forward, but there is no progress on Immigration. The bipartisan Immigration bill introduced in the House of Representatives, the "Dignity Act of 2023", has been passed in the House, but not in the Senate. Observers note there is no clear path for approval in the Senate. The bill combines proposals to increase security at our borders with provisions to revise the process for seeking asylum.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians has continued to push very hard for a revision of the current E3 Visa to allow approximately 5,000 unused visas, from the 10,500 visas previously allocated to Australia, to be reallocated to Ireland on an annual basis. While in Washington DC earlier this spring, AOH President O'Connell had occasion to speak to Congressional leadership. He made it clear to the leadership that it has long been the position of the AOH that any Immigration bill should allow for a revised E-3 Visa. Leadership was receptive, but there is still a lack of progress. We will continue to monitor this fluid situation in possible immigration reform. Our work continues!

Lastly, if your Division, County or State has yet to have prepared an updated Form 9, please do so ASAP and submit it to our National Secretary. Please don't forget to include Officers for all positions, including Immigration. As always, I would be happy to work with any local Immigration Chair.

Please contact me at TomLambert12@aol.com with any comments or questions.