

Irish Night to be held this month

HOLYOKE - The Ancient Order of Hibernians has begun early as they make preparation for their Annual Irish Night to be held Feb. 25, at the Warehouse? in Holyoke. The famous ribs are now marinating. Bob Cameron of CMS Landscaping will cook the meal and Dan Curran's daughter Patty Meon has agreed to chair the event. The event is named after Patty's father the late Daniel P. Curran who organized and cooked for many Irish Nights.

The highest award will be given that night by the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians which will be given to the members who best live by the AOH motto of "Friendship, Unity, and True Christian Charity. This year's recipients respectively are Joe O'Connor "Mr. Hibernian 2012" and Barbara Twohig, "Ms. Hibernian, 2012" both from Holyoke.

Entertainment for the night will be provided by Matt O'Connor and members of the Springfield Kiltie Band, Maureen Ziskowski and the McDermott Academy of Irish Dance, and music by the Irish Folk Music Band with Brian Conway and Ben Lavelle. A corned beef and cabbage dinner will be served-the proceeds of the event will benefit the Maurice A. Donahue Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship was established in 1980 named after the Late Massachusetts State Senate President Maurice A. Donahue-over \$60,000 has been distributed since its inception.

Bagpipe Major Matt O'Connor and members of the Springfield Kiltie Band will begin the Festivities for the seventh annual Daniel P. Curran Irish Night. O'Connor relates that as a young child

watching the Holyoke Parade, his favorite part was seeing the different Pipe and Drum Bands: "Listening to the crisp melody of the Chanter, the rich tone of the Drones, and the crack of the drums filled my soul with Celtic pride. I started as a student learning on a chanter, I then become a piper, and then became the pipe major for the Springfield Kiltie Band."

The McDermott Academy of Irish Dance was founded by its Director Maureen McDermott Ziskowski in Holyoke in 1970. Over the years the school has expanded to include classes in the cities of Springfield, Westfield, and South Hadley. The goal of the school is to share Irish dance through fun, hard work, and dedication. Many of the dancers compete locally, nationally and internationally. Maureen has always stressed the fact that that "we are family." Because of this many of her students return for adult classes or brought their own children to learn Irish Dance at the Academy.

Brian Conway and Ben Lavelle of the Ireland Parish Band were born and raised in Holyoke-a city originally called Ireland Parish. As a tribute to this great city, Brian and Ben call their musical duo "Ireland Parish". Together they have set out to bring Irish Traditional Music and rowdy Irish Pub Music back into the mainstream of entertainment in Western Massachusetts. Brian relates: "Performing great Irish tunes is a real thrill for us. When we look into a crowd and everyone is singing along with us, there is nothing quite like it." Ben sums it all up: "It's all about having fun."

Reservations for the gala can be made by calling CMS Landscaping at 413 533 3300.