

Ancient Order of Hibernians



# The Dooley Dispatch

## February 2025

**Celebrating 46 years of Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity**

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**Major Dooley Division  
Richmond, Virginia**

Webpage <http://aohrichmond.org> Check out the web page for better pictures, events, green pages, various reports

### President's Message:

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Chairman of Standing  
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Dave Woychik

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Peter "PJ" George

Historian  
Brian Hegarty 814-3517

Right to Life  
Mike Smith 873-2198

Executive Secretary  
Dan Caffrey 512-6288

Raffle Chairman  
Jim Woods 747-9286

Chair of the Sick  
Scott Nugent 503-9888

*All phone numbers are area*

Next Meeting – Tuesday February 11, 2025 7:00 p.m. St. Michael's Church

Dear Brothers,

Note: We will have a guest speaker, Ann Campbell, Executive Director of the East End Pregnancy Center will give a short presentation at our February meeting starting at 6:45 PM. Please arrive around 6:30 so we can show our continued strong support for the work done by her group.

Note 2: The Lady AOH will have a representative at our meeting from 6:45 PM to 7:15 PM to sell tickets to the LAOH Gala on March 8, 2025. The tickets are \$35 per person and cash or check are the only forms of payment accepted.

4,000 X \$10.00 = \$40,000. In our budget, we estimate Ticket Sales for the Trip for Two to Ireland at \$27,000. We print 4,000 tickets and sell about 2,700 tickets. There is a potential for an additional \$13,000 in proceeds for the AOH to do more good in our community. Kudos to John Condon for his leadership in ticket sales. Consider if you can sell more tickets so we can do more good!

Friendship and Unity - Be Nice! There is turmoil in the world, country, state, and community. We are children of God and all created equally. A kind word, a smile, or a head nod to a stranger costs nothing and gives so much.

Christian Charity – Had the pleasure to attend the St. Michael's Pastoral Services Department Quarterly Meeting in January. There are many parishioners doing great things and supporting similar causes (St. Elizabeth's and East End Pregnancy Center to name two). They have a plethora of volunteers and appreciate the AOH and Lady AOH for their support.

In Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity,

Mike Valacer

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## Upcoming Events:

### Raffle Ticket Sales:

- **Feb. 22-23, 2025 – St. Mary’s; 5:30 pm Sat; 9 am and 11 am Sun.**
- **Mar. 1-2, 2025 – St. Bridget’s; 5:30 pm Sat; 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am Sun.**
- February 9, 2025, Sunday, 10 am Mass at St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Church – Providing and Serving Breakfast to Parishioners (Fr. Jim).
- March 8, 2025, Saturday; Doors open at 6 pm, dinner at 6:30 pm. LAOH Irish Gala at St. Michael’s Catholic Church (Food, Drink, Donnybrooks). [Mary Ryan Division \(laohmaryryandivision.com\)](http://MaryRyanDivision.com) Contact is Terry Duke – [teresa.duke@verizon.net](mailto:teresa.duke@verizon.net)
- March 14, 15 and 16, 2025 – 39th Church Hill Irish Festival – Street Festival in front of St. Patrick’s Church on North 25th Street and on Broad Street and will run from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday. Volunteers needed for Festival set-up, Festival Gate (8-7; 8-6), selling Raffle tickets & recruiting new members at Booth.
- March 14th, Friday – happy hour, local get together
- March 15th, Saturday – St. Patrick’s Day Parade at 10 am – <http://www.churchhillirishfestival.com/>
- March 16th, Sunday – recruit & sell Dooley Raffle tickets– Annual Raffle Drawing at the end of day. (5:00 pm)
- March 17, 2025, Monday – St. Patrick’s Day Mass at 9 am – Mass at St. Patrick’s Church, 213 North 25th Street, Richmond, VA 23223; JP Carroll Memorial Breakfast to follow; Rosie Connolly’s, Rare Olde Times.

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### AOH Dooley Division Prayer List

#### From January 14, 2025 Meeting to February 11, 2025 Meeting

Please contact Fr. Jim Arsenault if you need him to visit and pray for and with someone in the hospital. Contact him at M 804-221-1508 and/or [jarsenault@stelizcc.org](mailto:jarsenault@stelizcc.org)

#### From Previous Meeting and since then:

- **PJ George Jr** – Passed on December 1. Services were held Friday, December 13 at St Anthony’s
- **Karen Nugent** – mother of Scott, passed away over the weekend.
- **Joanne Antenino** – myeloma. Dave Woychik.
- **Courtney McGowan - Pat McGowan’s sister-in-law** – breast cancer surgery, had double

mastectomy. Had another surgery in December of 2024. Surgery went well. Appreciate the prayers.

- **Carolyn Meranda (Aunt of Pat McGowan)** – died before Christmas.
- Marty Schofield – Mike Smith’s uncle in MA. Growth on pituitary gland.
- **Qin Costello** – Matt’s daughter-in-law, blood disease, doing ok now.
- **Bowen Burton** – surgery on 1/16 – by Brian Baker.
- **Brian Kiernan**- in rehab after foot surgery.

#### From Prior Meetings:

- **Oscar Nauman** – recovering from car accident; facial reconstruction surgery.
- **Marty McAuliff** – cancer; brother-in-law of Brian Kiernan.
- **Taylor Ribar** – daughter of Marty; brain cancer surgery; Brian Kiernan.
- **Alesia** – Jim Whelen’s wife – back surgery.
- **Stokes McCune** – update - went to the hospital recently, TIA – mini-stroke, should have been released on Monday. Had Brain surgery, heart issues, lung issues. Stage 4 cancer.
- **Scott Nugent** – Finished initial treatment for his brain tumor. Ongoing treatment now
- **Pat Naughton** – Diagnosed with glioblastoma
- **Ruth McMurtray** – Grandmother of *Colin McMurtray* - has back pain
- **Mark Ambrozy** – Friend of *Tom Nolan* – has cancer
- **Karen Lucas** – sister of **Chad Costello** – breast cancer, Stage 1.
- **Debbie Brokaw** – Wife of *Matt Brokaw* – diagnosed with colon cancer and starting chemo
- **Sean O’Grady** – AOH brother, bone marrow cancer and wife who was in a recent car accident.
- **Theresa** – Sister of *Mike Canning* – Diagnosed with cancerous lesion on her face. In recovery from surgery
- **Barbara O’Connor** – Wife of *Charley O’Connor* – has Multiple System Atrophy. In VCU at home hospice program
- **John Hegarty** – cousin of *Brian Hegarty* – Diagnosed with cancer. In chemo.
- **Debra Fitzgerald** – Wife of Past President *Jim Fitzgerald* – Had a bad fall and recovering.
- **Tom Murphy** – low oxygen levels

- **Jim Donohue** – Meniere’s disease
- **Molly Nugent** – Daughter of Scott Nugent – Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Ongoing treatment.
- **Dick Kemper** – Undergone medical procedure in late September
- **Melissa Atchison** – Daughter of *Mark Atchison* – Stage 3 cancer
- **Jim Calpin** – Recovering from stroke
- **Rita Hastings** – *Tom Hastings*’ mother – Hip operation, gallbladder removed
- **Dover Harper** (Social Member, Good friend of *Jack Cassells*) – Recovering from Triple Bypass Surgery

Contact Scott Nugent at 804-503-9888 or at [swnugent44@yahoo.com](mailto:swnugent44@yahoo.com)

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January 2025

## **Brig St. John - Tragic Cohasset Shipwreck**

Contributed by Brian P. Hegarty Jr.

Irish emigrants escaping famine, persecution, and eviction from their homes in their own country risked everything to cross the sea to America for the hope of a better life. Men, women and children boarded the Brig St. John in the Port of Galway in 1849 for their voyage to a new life.

“They had experienced very bad times,” said Catherine Shannon, Professor of History at Westfield State University, on those who uprooted their lives to sail to America. “This was really their last hope, their last option.”

The ship had a safe passage until it rounded Cape Cod and was hit by a nor’easter. In the early hours of October 7, the ship was smashed on the rocks along the Cohasset coast and 99 people lost their lives.

“The wreck of the Brig St. John is the worst shipwreck in South Shore history,” said John Sullivan, a member of the Father Murphy, Division Nine of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. It is especially tragic because those who drowned died within sight of land; the place where they were going to start a new life.”

One of the ironies of the voyage is that had the ship not stopped over for a night in Connemara to pick up more passengers and retrieve more water, they might have missed the storm and made it safely to Boston. “The need to get fresh water in Connemara was important because the water supply in Galway had been contaminated by cholera. The captain was taking every precaution for a safe voyage. The stop delayed their departure for America for about 24 hours, which could have been the difference between life and death,” Shannon said.

Though there was a terrible loss of life, there were several survivors of the Brig St. John. More women than men survived; but about people twenty lived.

The people of Cohasset responded valiantly to the tragedy, going out in boats to try to save those in the waves. Other Cohasset residents took survivors who came onto the beach at Sandy Cove into their homes. “Only about five or six of those who survived remained in the U.S.,” Shannon said, “most returned to Ireland.”

The remains of 45 people lay at rest in a mass grave in Cohasset Center Cemetery and several bodies washed up in other places, and there are four to six people from the wreck buried in Scituate. Many of the bodies were never recovered.

It took a long time for Irish Americans to come to grip with the hardships of the famine and the tragedy of the Brig St. John voyage, Shannon said. The event was not marked until 1914 when the Ancient Order of Hibernians, as well as the Ladies Auxiliary (today called the Ladies AOH), dedicated a memorial at the mass

grave site in Cohasset to those lost in the shipwreck. This was really the first significant memorial to the Irish victims of famine.

There is an Annual Brig St. John Memorial Mass held in Cohasset which continued this past October 2024 followed by a short speaking program at Saint Anthony's Parish Center. "We will then proceed to the Celtic cross in Cohasset Central Cemetery for a short wreath-laying ceremony followed by a dedication of a granite bench, just recently placed near the final resting place of some of the victims of this tragic shipwreck," Sullivan said.

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To order green jackets and sashes, click on the picture:



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