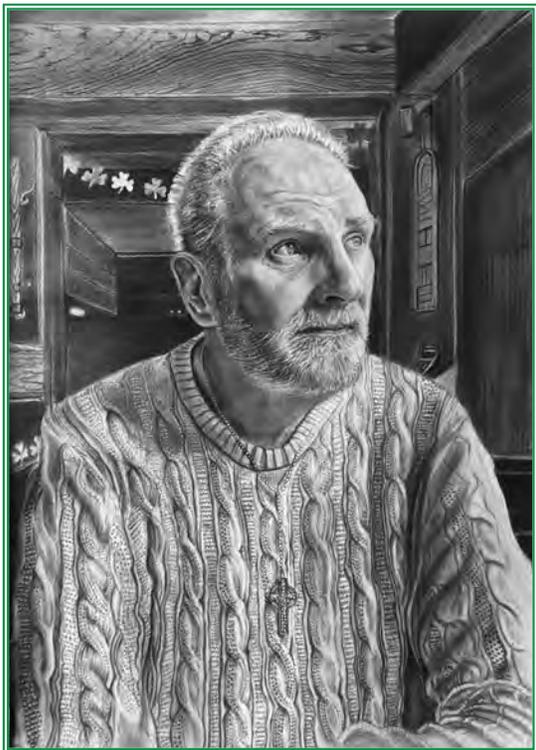




Morris County
St. Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday March 14, 2026 • 12pm • Morristown, New Jersey



Michael G. Bannon
Grand Marshal





Congratulations

to

**2026 Grand Marshal
Michael G. Bannon!**

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Michael G. Bannon
Grand Marshal
of the
2026
St. Patrick's Day Parade
of Morris County

Irish roots run deep in Morris County.

They run through Jockey Hollow, where Gen. George Washington declared an army holiday on St. Patrick's Day to thank his Irish soldiers.

They extend to Hibernia (Latin for Ireland) in Rockaway, so named because the region's iron mines attracted countless Irish immigrants fleeing the Great Hunger.

They outline the boundaries of Morristown's Dublin neighborhood, an Irish community that thrived throughout the Second World War.

They are evident in Wharton, where the county's first St. Patrick's Day parade stepped off in 1979.

And they flourish today in many locations and associations, from shops to pubs and eateries' to arts and cultural groups.

The fullness of Morris County's Irish experience is not lost on Michael Bannon, this year's Grand Marshal of the county's St. Patrick's Day parade.

A native of Rockway Township, Bannon grew up exploring the abandoned iron mines of Hibernia. As a young man, he attended some of the first St. Patrick's Day parades in Wharton. And he has helped strengthen ties to Ireland as a member of local Irish organizations.

Bannon's decades of engagement will culminate at noon on Saturday, March 14, when he leads more than 3,000

marchers down South Street to the cheers of between 50,000 and 70,000 spectators.

For Bannon, this year's march will be a family affair. He will be joined on the parade route by his son Ryan, daughter Danielle Kraus and her husband Charlie; brother Richard and his wife Kristen; brother Bruce; sister Patricia; and sister Mary and her husband Matthias Steiner. Nieces, nephews, and other extended family will round out the coterie.

Flight from Famine

Bannon's Irish American story begins with his great-grandfather William, who was born on a steamship fleeing the Great Hunger. The family made its home in Jersey City for generations, with grandfather George serving as a motorcycle police officer in the famous "Boulevard Squad" of the 1910s.

Bannon's parents, Edward and Emma, served in World War II before settling in Rockaway, where Edward ran a home remodeling company.

Emma, in addition to her primary family duties, worked as a store detective at Bamberger's on the Green in Morristown. Bannon remembers riding with his father at night to pick up his mother from work, as she turned off the lights and locked the building.

Original cover artwork: Charcoal on paper by Marco Cutrone
 Marcocutrone7@yahoo.com • Marcocutrone.com





The future Grand Marshal grew up as the fourth of five children in a house where aunts, uncles, and cousins were frequent visitors.

Yet it was the birth of his own children that prompted Bannon to seek greater meaning in his Irish American identity.

“As a new father, I began to think about what I wanted to pass on to my children,” he said. “I started asking myself some questions: Where did I come from and who are the people whose blood runs through my veins?”

Around that time, his father-in-law introduced him to a new club called the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Morris County. Nearly four decades later, the Friendly Sons have been the source of “some of the best friends I’ve made in my life,” Bannon said.

In addition to serving as president of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick from 2000 to 2002, he is a member of the Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey. He also is a former Parade Trustee and has been a parade volunteer for 35 years.

Epiphany in Ireland

Bannon’s volunteer spirit was sparked during a trip to Ireland more than 30 years ago. He and his brother visited Glendalough, a sixth-century monastic site in County Wicklow, which is home to one of the oldest cemeteries in Ireland.

Taking in the names of people who died centuries ago, Bannon was struck by a deep and abiding feeling of continuity – a sense of the eternal – that has remained with him ever since.

“When I looked at the surnames on the gravestones, there was not one I didn’t recognize,” he said. “And I realized that these people had children. They worked and they prayed. They had good times and bad times, and now they’re gone.

We know nothing about them, but they lived the same life, in many ways, as we do today.

“It really gave me a different outlook on life. I realized that life is a cycle that occurs over and over again, and now it’s our turn. We go about our daily lives and we’re just lucky to be here,” he explained.

That singular moment at Glendalough provided a jumping off point for decades of service to many volunteer organizations and charities. A former Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus Council 359, Bannon has served as the council’s ambassador to ArcMorris and as Vice Board Chairman for the DAWN Center for Independent Living.

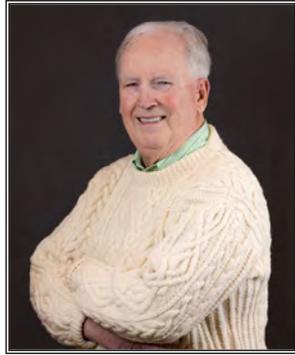
Honoring the Past

Of Bannon’s many volunteer accomplishments, especially meaningful is the annual cleanup of St. Patrick’s Cemetery, an abandoned burial place deep in the Hibernia forest. Once the graveyard for a Catholic church that burned a century ago, the cemetery marks the final resting place for generations of Hibernia’s miners and their families – including some of Bannon’s relatives.

He established the annual cleanup in 2017, relying on friends and fellow volunteers to blow leaves, cut back vegetation, and upright fallen headstones to give the deceased a semblance of dignity. This spring will mark 10 years of care for St. Patrick’s Cemetery, a milestone Bannon is proud to have helped establish.

“You can’t be selfish and make life all about you,” he said. “You have to remember where you came from, share yourself with other people, and give back to society. Doing that helps everybody – especially you.”





Peter Ecklund 2026 Parade Starter

Hopatcong resident Peter Ecklund has been named Parade Starter for the 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County. The role is both an honor and a key component of the parade, which steps off at noon on Saturday, March 14 in Morristown.

As the Starter, Ecklund will open the event by cutting a green ribbon at the head of the parade route. This will clear the way for more than 110 groups to march down South Street, delighting an expected crowd of between 50,000 and 70,000 spectators.

"I feel privileged to be this year's Starter," Ecklund said. "I couldn't believe it when I got the call. I was shocked. And then I told my wife and she couldn't believe it, either. It's a great honor for me."

Ecklund was chosen in recognition of his engagement with the Irish American community and other volunteer activities. He served the parade in various roles from 2006 to 2020, including six years as trustee; eight as treasurer; and three as chair of the Grand Marshal Selection Committee.

As treasurer, Ecklund applied decades of financial experience as a bank examiner and case manager for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in New York. His specialties included anti-fraud and money-laundering investigations in a career that spanned 34 years.

"Pete's dedication to the parade – and particularly his contributions as treasurer – made him an obvious choice to be the Starter," said Artie Flinn, president of the parade's Board of Trustees. "His expert bookkeeping and financial controls played a crucial part in the parade's success for many years."

Ecklund's Irish roots run deep. He was born Peter Anthony O'Neil in Dorchester, Mass. and was subsequently adopted by the Ecklund family. Years later, he learned from his birth mother that his grandparents emigrated from County Galway.

He married Margaret Mary O'Shea, an immigrant from County Kerry, less than a year after they met. Five decades later, they've welcomed three sons and six grandchildren, one of whom, Jack, is a competitive dancer with Heritage Irish Dance Company.

"Jack's parents took him to the Morristown parade when he was young," Ecklund recalled. "When he saw the Irish dancers going by, he said, 'I want to do that.' Now he's danced at several world championships."

In addition to volunteering with the parade, Ecklund is a member of the Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey, Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Morris County, and Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Yet his community engagement extends far beyond Irish America. He was a member of the Hopatcong school board from 1981 to 1990, when he standardized the accounting system and worked to introduce computers into the district. And he served on the Hopatcong planning board from 2004 to 2007, including roles as Vice Chairperson and Chairperson.

He currently devotes his time to Knights of Columbus Council #9914 – St Jude Hopatcong, where he serves as a trustee.

Ecklund's emphasis on volunteerism complements this year's Grand Marshal, Mike Bannon, who also has a long history of supporting worthy causes. The pair, Bannon said, make a great team.

"At various times in our lives, all of us have been helped by people we didn't even know," Bannon said. "Pete understands that. He's a good man, and he's going to make a great Starter for our parade."

Staying active is key, according to Ecklund, a Vietnam-era veteran of the U.S. Army. "I'm not going to join an organization if I'm not going to do anything," he said. "I'm not going to just sit there and vegetate."

Still, he recognizes that new blood is necessary to secure a successful future for community groups.

"You need younger people taking over these positions," he said. "Most of the people I know are in their 70s and 80s. You have to make room for the next generation to pick up where we left off and move forward with new ideas."



PARADE CHAIRPERSONS/GRAND MARSHALS

1979	IAANWJ Executive Board	2002	Michael Griffin
1980	Edward D. Hansberry	2003	Catherine M. Broderick
1981	Edward D. Hansberry	2004	James Hennessey
1982	Bob Daley	2005	Patrick Scanlon
1983	Bob Daley	2006	James V. Loughman
1984	Dermot Wood	2007	Bob Nace
1985	Frank Kelly	2008	Kevin Langan
1986	Kevin B. Finnegan	2009	Desmond Lloyd
1987	Kevin B. Finnegan	2010	John Butler
1988	Peg O'Donnell	2011	Willie Quinn
1989	Thomas Beirne	2012	Richard F. Smith, Jr
1990	Thomas Beirne	2013	Sheriff Ed Rochford
1991	Msgr. John Corr	2014	Jeff Rawding
1992	J. Raymond Manahan	2015	Al DeBenedictis
1993	Michael Halpin	2016	John Hyland
1994	Mary Mulholland	2017	T. Michael Quinn
1995	Col. Peter J. O'Hagan	2018	John J. Murphy
1996	James P. Mongey	2019	Father Patrick "Paddy" O'Donovan
1997	James E. Dangler	2020-22	Mary Waller
1998	Kathleen Hyland	2023	Ryan G. Dawson
1999	Eamonn Long	2024	Jack F. Haren
2000	Bishop Frank J. Rodimer	2025	Keith Wood
2001	J. Robert Tracey	2026	Michael Bannon

*Here's Cèad Mile Fàilte to friend and to rover.
That's a greeting that's Irish as Irish can be.
It means you are welcome - a thousand times over.
Wherever you are from, whosoever you be.*

- Irish Blessing





The Trustees of the St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County Inc.

The Trustees of the St. Patrick's Day Parade are pleased to present the forty-sixth St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County and to welcome Michael Bannon as the Grand Marshal. The Trustees organize and hold the St. Patrick's Day Parade each year for two simple reasons. First, we want to celebrate our Irish heritage. This parade provides us with a wonderful opportunity to foster and promote the social, cultural, and educational activities that preserve our traditions and enhance the dignity and reputation of the Irish American community. It also provides a forum for us to recognize and promote the numerous and significant contributions made by Irish Americans that enhance and support the fabric of Morris County. Second, we can use this parade as a vehicle to provide contributions to local charities, particularly to organizations that help children and preserve and promote Irish culture. The Trustees wish to take this opportunity to thank those who support our Souvenir Journal and the many volunteers for their extraordinary commitment and time that make the parade possible.

"May you enjoy the parade with the blessings of St. Patrick today and every day."

The Trustees

Board of Trustees

IAANWJ	Arthur Flinn, Pres.	FSSP
Keith Wood, Pres.	Timothy Brunnock, V. Pres.	Sean O'Grady, Pres.
Elizabeth Hand	Ed Rowe, Treasurer	John Conway
Glen Hickey	Pamela Ryan, Secretary	Brian Carroll
Anne Kostyak	Ed Hansberry, Finance Chair	Al DeBenedictis
Matt Kurtz	Jimmy Dangler (in Memoriam)	Joshua O'Neill
Kerri-Lynn Walsh-Wood		Jeff Rawding





2026 ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND COORDINATORS

<i>Sean O'Grady</i>	<i>Parade Committee Co-Chair</i>
<i>Keith Wood</i>	<i>Parade Committee Co-Chair</i>
<i>Ed Hansberry</i>	<i>Parade Finance Co-Chair</i>
<i>Brian Carroll</i>	<i>Parade Finance Co-Chair</i>
<i>Rick McNulty</i>	<i>Parade Journal Coordinator</i>
<i>Michelle Mongey</i>	<i>Parade Patron Coordinator</i>
<i>Rob Cavanaugh</i>	<i>Parade Pin Coordinator</i>
<i>John Bradley</i>	<i>Parade Mass Coordinator</i>
<i>Pamela Ryan</i>	<i>Parade Line of March Coordinator</i>
<i>Patricia O'Halloran</i>	<i>Parade Line of March Coordinator</i>
<i>Matt Loughman</i>	<i>Parade Marshals Coordinator</i>
<i>Mike Loughman</i>	<i>Parade Marshals Coordinator</i>
<i>Keith Wood</i>	<i>Parade Band Coordinator</i>
<i>Mary Keown</i>	<i>Reviewing Stand Master of Ceremonies</i>
<i>Pam Johnson</i>	<i>Reviewing Stand Master of Ceremonies</i>
<i>Josh O'Neill</i>	<i>Communications Coordinator</i>
<i>John Conway</i>	<i>Website Coordinator</i>
<i>Joe McLaughlin</i>	<i>Publicity Coordinator</i>
<i>Harvey Klein</i>	<i>Parade Photographer</i>
<i>Ellen Sandman</i>	<i>Parade Liaison with State and Town</i>
<i>Jeff Rawding</i>	<i>Parade Liaison with State and Town</i>





And All The Leprechauns That Make It Happen

Michael Bannon John Bradley
Geraldine Briscoe Tim Brunnock Dennis Butler
Anne Cahill Brian Carroll Robert Cavanaugh John P. Conway
Ryan Dawson Al DeBenedictis Artie Flinn
Kathleen Hyland Liz Hand Ed Hansberry
Jack Haren John Hendricks Glen Hickey
Harvey Klein Alan Kudlac Anne Kostyak Matt Kurtz
Kevin Langan Jim Loughman Matt Loughman
Mike Loughman Joe McLaughlin Rick McNulty
Michelle Mongey John Murphy Jay Myer Sean O'Grady Josh O'Neill
Sr. Bernadette Peter Jeff Rawding Ed Rowe Pam Ryan
Ellen Sandman Jim Torney Mary Waller
Keith Wood

In Memoriam:

James E. Dangler
Msgr. John F. Corr
John Butler
T. Michael Quinn
Rowland Lucid
Jimmy Spiniello
Jim Mongey
Brian Conley
John "Jay" DeLaney
Dolly Mabin
Desmond V. Lloyd





Parade Charitable Donation Highlights

The St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that meets the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code. Besides putting on the parade, our objective is to provide charitable contributions to mostly local programs that benefit children with special needs, other special needs organizations, and programs that foster and enhance our Irish culture. Over the last 46 years, the parade committees have donated over \$650,000 to various organizations.

After all parade expenses are paid each year, the Parade Trustees determine the excess funds available for charitable contributions. Both the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Morris County and the Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey, co-sponsors of the parade, designate recipients.

Some charities that have received our support.

Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey

Interfaith Food Pantry
JBWS
Lake Drive School for the Deaf
The Rose House
Market Street Mission
Daltaí Na Gaeilge
The Michael Quill Cultural Center
WFUV
Mid-Atlantic Fleigh Ceoil
Project Graduation
Project Children Veteran's Haven
CASA of New Jersey
DAWN Center for Independent Living
Hope's Table
Irish American Association
of Northwest Jersey Cultural Fund

Friendly Sons of St. Patrick

Employment Horizons
PG Chambers
Wreaths Across America
Police Pipes & Drums Morris County
Rory O'Moore School of Pipes & Drums
The Guard Pipes & Drums
CuChullain Pipeband
Morris County Positive Pathways
Mrs. Wilsons House
Colonial Cancer Foundation
Blood Cancer United - Light the Night Morris County
The Washington Association
Jockey Hollow
American Legion Post 59 Morristown
ArcMorris
VFW Post 3401 Watnong

Trustees of the St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County, Inc.





PUTTING ON A PARADE IS FUN BUT HARD WORK

No, seriously. It is fun! But it is hard work too. One might think: How hard could it be for a bunch of people to walk in a straight line? Well, it may look easy above the water, but beneath the surface, we are paddling our little duck feet like crazy. For starters, it takes over 2,000 volunteer hours from over 75 people to organize and stage the parade. Some volunteers work year-round; some put in their hours for three to four months leading up to the parade, and some, especially the parade marshals, work on Parade Day. The volunteers' sole objective is to provide a fitting tribute to our Irish American culture, and heritage, and Saint Patrick while simultaneously providing Morris County citizens, young and old alike, a memorable, safe, and fun-filled family day.

On Saturday, March 14, 2026, the 46th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County steps off onto South Street at noon in Morristown thanks to the combined effort of the entire Parade Team that includes the Trustees of the St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County, Inc., the Finance Committee, and the Parade Committee.

Trustees

The Trustees oversee the entire operation. They establish the parade guidelines to be followed by the two central committees. The Trustees are also volunteers and primarily consist of members of the parade support organizations, The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick (FSSP) of Morris County and the Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey (IAANJ). They ensure that the parade has the necessary support and structure to succeed. The Trustees also select the Grand Marshal each year with input from FSSP, IAANJ, and all the committees.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is the most visible committee leading up to Parade Day. They are responsible for fundraising before the parade, paying all parade expenses, and distributing charitable contributions to parade beneficiaries. Our beneficiaries include Project Children, Project Graduation, and many organizations promoting Irish culture and preserving Irish heritage. Fundraising is critical since the parade is paid for solely by private contributions and sponsoring companies. Our parade is self-supporting, with no public funding provided by the town, county, or state. This Parade Journal is our primary fundraiser, followed by the annual Grand Marshal Reception, the sale of parade pins, and our Grand Marshals on Tap event. Starting in August, the Finance Committee meets regularly, organizes fundraising efforts, and solicits donations from individual supporters, local corporations, businesses, and community organizations around Morris County.

Parade Committee

Before each parade, the Parade Committee is almost invisible to the public; on Parade Day, though, it's a whole different story. They plan for the logistics needed to put the line-of-march on the street in an orderly fashion on time. Their goal is to assemble a line-of-march that offers something for spectators of all ages. A smoothly running and on-schedule parade is the surest sign that the Parade Committee has done its job. As noted, much work and coordination over many months take place before the parade steps off. This Committee also meets regularly and is jointly run by members of the FSSP, IAANJ, and community members.

Let's take a quick look at what the different parade sub-committees do.





- Line of March Team: the face of the Parade Committee, this team spends many months identifying and inviting groups to march, reviewing and approving applications of participants, responding to inquiries and requests for additional information, positioning groups in the line of march, conducting the parade orientation meeting, and completing all tasks needed to make sure that the parade steps off promptly at Noon. They truly appreciate the great Parade Day spectator turnout.
- Band Team: invites bands to participate. Most of the bands return year after year. We usually have over 20 bands in the parade.
- Other subcommittees include: Police and municipal liaisons; the Publicity Team handles news articles, radio and television coverage, and more; the Digital Media Team coordinates our www.paradeday.com website and other social media outlets; the Parade Starter Selection Team; the Parade Day Communications Team makes sure that all of our personnel have all the information they need to keep the parade running smoothly; the Logistics Team ensures that the parade route is appropriately set up and equipped with comfort stations for the benefit of marchers and spectators alike; and so many other teams that handle everything else, from putting the Shamrocks around the Green, raising American and Irish flags, selecting the stand announcers and our Parade Starter, organizing pre-parade entertainment on the Green, helping with the Parade Mass at Assumption Church at 9:30 AM, to the dreaded, but necessary, parade lot set-up and clean-up.

See? All that effort, commitment, and coordination go into putting on this parade, and its success is the sum of all those parts working together. Nothing is taken for granted. The one thing the Parade Team cannot control is the weather; for that we count on your prayers. Even when it has rained, we have had successful parades, so on Parade Eve, don't forget us as you tuck in for the night. The only reason for postponing the parade is that weather conditions are so bad that safety becomes an issue. Safety first!

Parade Day starts the night before with parade lot set-up and again early in the morning with applying (weather permitting) the Shamrocks at The Green. The morning of the parade is hectic before the parade steps off at Noon. Parade Marshals and Coordinators organize the parade lot for the floats, vehicles, bands, and marchers as they arrive. They also position themselves at gates and around the lot to direct and assist parade participants. Last-minute questions are in no short supply on Parade Day, and this team has all the answers. Sure, it gets hectic, but the team is experienced in keeping things in order and making it look easy.

And then, after twelve long months of planning, meeting, discussing, fundraising, organizing, coordinating, and (of course) praying, the Parade Starter cuts the ribbon at Noon, and the parade steps off immediately afterward. Then, a little after 2:00 PM, this year's parade will be history, and planning for the 2027 parade begins. The St. Patrick's Day Parade is a year-round effort, and we are so thankful for our many dedicated volunteers. We hope you enjoyed Parade Day 2026.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY !!!





BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE OF MORRIS COUNTY

St. Patrick was born in Wales, part of the Roman Empire. He was kidnapped and taken to Ireland as an enslaved person when he was about 16. After six years, he escaped back to Britain, but in his time in Ireland, he had been said to have strengthened his bond with God, and after fifteen years of religious study, he returned to Ireland as a missionary. He became the first Bishop of Ireland around 432. Twenty years later, most of the Irish were Catholic. There is much reverence and honor for St. Patrick as the Patron of Ireland to this day. He is very much a part of true Irish Culture.

- *March 17, 1780 – One of the first St. Patrick's Day celebrations was right here in Morristown. Amid the long, hard winter of 1779-1780 in Jockey Hollow, Morristown, NJ, General George Washington, in recognition of the support of his Irish militiamen (and there were plenty of them!), gave them the day off to build morale. It was the only holiday the Continental Army enjoyed that winter, not even Christmas! In recognition, a relief organization called the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick made General Washington an honorary member in 1782.*
- *Nearly 200 years later, on March 17, 1979, thanks to the Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey (IAANJ), the first official modern-day Morris County St. Patrick's Day in Morris County was held in Wharton, New Jersey. Parade marchers processed down a one-mile stretch of Main Street, Wharton, to the cheers of hundreds of spectators.*
- *In 1981, while on a trip to Ireland, the president of IAANJ commissioned the nuns of the Carmelite Monastery, Tallow, County Waterford, Ireland, to produce a hand-painted banner of St. Patrick and this exquisite work of art has led all Morris County St. Patrick's Day Parades since then.*
- *From 1979 through 1990, the parade became larger and larger as it grew in popularity. More and more groups joined the parade, and more and more spectators came out to enjoy it. By 1983, there were 48 units in the parade; by 1988, there were 56 units with over 1500 marchers and over 4,000 spectators.*
- *In 1990, the parade in Wharton had its largest parade, with the greatest number of spectators ever marching down Main Street. The parade had now outgrown Wharton, a small and gracious community.*
- *In November 1990, IAANJ teamed up with the Friendly Sons of St Patrick (FSSP) of Morris County and began working with the Morristown administration to bring the parade to Morristown.*
- *On January 18, 1991, a Certificate of Incorporation for a Nonprofit Organization was issued for the St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County, Inc. A Board of Trustees was formed for the new non-profit organization. It was created to run the parade, pay parade expenses, and, most importantly, provide charitable contributions to promote Irish culture and support various local children's and other organizations that benefit Morris County.*
- *March 16, 1991, the annual Morris County St. Patrick's Day Parade stepped off in Morristown for the first time with 3,000 marchers and 13 bands, and several floats and fire companies. There were thousands of spectators there to enjoy the day.*
- *From 1991 to 2024, the parade has grown to over 120 diverse groups, including over 20 bands, with over 4,000 marchers with 50,000 to 80,000 spectators enjoying the parade each year, depending on the weather.*





- In 2000, the Morris County Parade history was submitted by Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen to the Library of Congress. It was featured in the Library of Congress Local Legacy Program, a high honor and tribute to the efforts of parade organizers and volunteers. Our parade gained national recognition.
- In 2006, to accommodate the parade's growth in size and popularity, the Parade route was extended three blocks by going around the Green instead of just passing through it.
- Since 1991, the parade has voluntarily donated over \$290,000 to the Town of Morristown as part of the parade's good neighbor policy to keep the parade from costing taxpayers anything.
- Since 1991, the Morris County St. Patrick's Day Parade, Inc. has donated over \$600,000 to local charitable organizations in keeping with the mission of our Non-Profit organization.
- Since 1991, Parade Day has begun with Mass at Assumption Church at 9:30 AM. The Mass is a special celebration of Irish culture in honor of St. Patrick.
- In 2012, the parade added Pre-Parade events to entertain spectators around the Green while waiting for the Parade to start.

- 2026 marks the 46th year of the parade in Morris County, 32nd in Morristown.

Additional Parade Facts

The parade is funded solely by generous donations from corporate and individual sponsors. No public money is involved, so there is no cost to taxpayers.

The parade has a very strictly enforced non-alcohol policy for parade participants.

The parade is a "rain or shine" event unless extreme weather conditions render it unsafe to hold. That has occurred twice:

1. 1993 -- The parade was postponed a week due to a snow state of emergency in Morristown.
2. 2010 -- The parade was canceled on Parade Day due to severe weather making it unsafe for participants and spectators. The parade was rescheduled for April 10 that year.
3. 2020 and 2021 parades were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

The parade organization takes great pride in providing a safe, fun-filled day for Morris County residents and their families to enjoy each spring at no cost to Morristown.





THE EASTER RISING

In April 2016, the world took note of the Centennial of the Easter Rising, a moment embedded in modern Irish history. The Rising was the opening act in the Irish War of Independence. A singular and desperate act was launched by a band of men who refused to acknowledge the futility of their fight against English rule on Irish soil. The Rising would be Ireland's first major rebellion act since 1798.

The Irish leadership hoped to take advantage of British troops' deployment to World War I's battlefields, leaving fewer to control Ireland. At 11:00 AM on Easter Monday, April 24th, Patrick Pearse, the Irish Volunteers, James Connolly, and the Irish Citizens Army hurried across Dublin City to occupy strategic buildings and control important fields of fire. Less than 1,000 Irishmen were up against the military might of the British Empire. But the dye was cast. The orders had been given.... despite an earlier loss of guns and ammunition that the Volunteers so desperately needed.

The arms shipment lay in 400 feet of water off the coast of County Kerry. Earlier in the week, British Intelligence had intercepted the plot to land armaments from the German freighter, the Aud. The loss was enough to force leaders of the Irish underground to call off the insurrection scheduled for Easter Sunday. Their orders were later countermanded, and a decision to go forward was issued. Unfortunately, however, many units never received the order to organize and proceed. The Plan would now be executed on Easter Monday, April 24th.

What the Irish rebels lacked in materials, they made up for in passion and courage. The yearnings of their forebearers and the spirit of generations before them boiled to the surface. Their sparse ranks, a mere shadow of what they should have been, took up positions at strategic points

within Dublin City. Patrick Pearse and James Connolly replaced the Union Jack with the Irish Tri-Color atop the General Post Office (GPO) on Sackville Street. Scattered units of the Volunteers took control of the Four Courts, the South Dublin Union, and the Mount Street Bridge across the Liffey River. Irish Volunteers in Saint Stephen's Green were led by the Countess Markievicz, a Sinn Fein organizer and suffragette.

The GPO was the nerve center of the rebellion. James Connolly, a former soldier who served with the British army, was their commanding officer. The GPO would become the focus of a heavy field artillery assault later in the week. The rebels' stand would later be compared to the American defense of the Alamo. The rebels held the GPO for the next six days under constant small arms and artillery fire.

Units of the British Army (Sherwood Foresters) were dispatched from Richmond Barracks to crush the rebels. In an epic defense at the Mount Street Bridge, 17 Volunteers pinned down two battalions of British infantry for nine hours. At the day's end, British casualties exceeded 200 officers and men. Sadly, the bloodshed only bought them a few more days. On Saturday, April 29th, at 2:30 PM, Patrick Pearse, the Commander-in-Chief of the Irish forces, wearing a heavy overcoat over his uniform, marched to a British barricade and surrendered his troops. Several women nurses were among the groups that surrendered. At great personal risk, Nurse Elizabeth O'Farrell (Cumann na mBan) delivered the surrender order to the other leaders around Dublin's outskirts. On Sunday morning, April 30th, the last unit under the leadership of Eamonn Ceannt and Cathal Brugha surrendered at the South Dublin Union.





The Volunteers, under a white flag, marched down Mount Street under a heavy British escort. Fifteen of these Irish soldiers would be executed by firing squad in the next week. Beginning on May 3rd, the executions began in the stonecutter's yard at Kilmainham Jail. All seven signers of The Proclamation of the Irish Republic were included in the number of executed men. Pearse's younger brother, William, would be singled out for execution on May 4th. Three other Irish soldiers would be executed that day, another on the 5th, four more on the 8th, one on the 9th, and two more on the 12th of May.

The last Irish soldier to die was James Connolly. Seriously wounded in the defense of the GPO, he was transported by ambulance and brought out on a stretcher into the yard at Kilmainham Jail. An English doctor had indicated that with his wounds, Connolly would live only another day. But the execution order was still given. Connolly was raised from his stretcher. Unable to stand, he was tied to a wooden chair. His absolution and last rites were administered by a Capuchin friar, Father Aloysius, who

only stepped aside as the firing squad raised their weapons to fire. Moments later, James Connolly was shot dead.

All the executed men were placed in a mass grave behind the English army barracks at Arbor Hill. There were no coffins, only quick lime. The execution of the Volunteer leaders deeply angered the Irish population. Public opinion in Ireland and America turned hard against the British. Connolly's execution caused the most controversy. The manner of his execution raised public awareness of the Irish cause and the movement that they had died for.

In 1963, President John Kennedy traveled to Dublin with his wife on an official state visit. During his visit, the President asked to lay a wreath at the mass grave of the Irish leaders at Arbor Hill. There, he solemnly read each name aloud and walked over to read the Proclamation. It was a gesture not lost on the Irish people throughout the world.

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*"Until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand"*

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On behalf of the Knights of Columbus George Washington Council 359, we extend our congratulations to Mike Bannon, our Knight of the Year and Grand Marshal of the 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County

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**Congratulates
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2026 Grand Marshal

The Irish American Association of Northwest Jersey was founded in 1974 to promote and preserve Irish culture and to create awareness of the contributions made by the Irish in building Morris County and this great country.

The Association organized the first Morris County St Patrick's Day Parade in Wharton in 1979. It outgrew Wharton and was moved to Morristown in 1991.

The members of the Association would also like to congratulate our member and this year's Parade Starter, Pete Ecklund!



Monsignor John E. Hart
and
Reverend Krzysztof Tyszko
and the
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Happy St. Patrick's Day



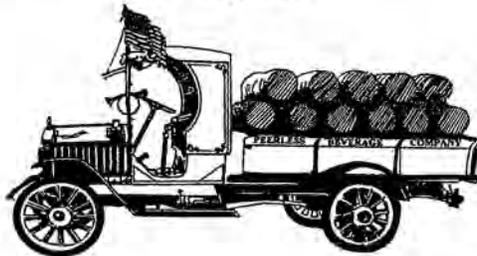
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With half-damp eyes I stared to the room
Where my friends and I spent many an afternoon
Where we together weathered many a storm
Laughin' and singin' till the early hours of the morn

By the old wooden stove where our hats was hung
Our words were told, our songs were sung
Where we longed for nothin' and were quite satisfied
Talkin' and a-jokin' about the world outside

With haunted hearts through the heat and cold
We never thought we could ever get old
We thought we could sit forever in fun
But our chances really was a million to one

As easy it was to tell black from white
It was all that easy to tell wrong from right
And our choices were few and the thought never hit
That the one road we traveled would ever shatter and split

How many a year has passed and gone
And many a gamble has been lost and won
And many a road taken by many a friend
And each one I've never seen again

I wish, I wish, I wish in vain
That we could sit simply in that room again
Ten thousand dollars at the drop of a hat
I'd give it all gladly if our lives could be like that
Bob Dylan

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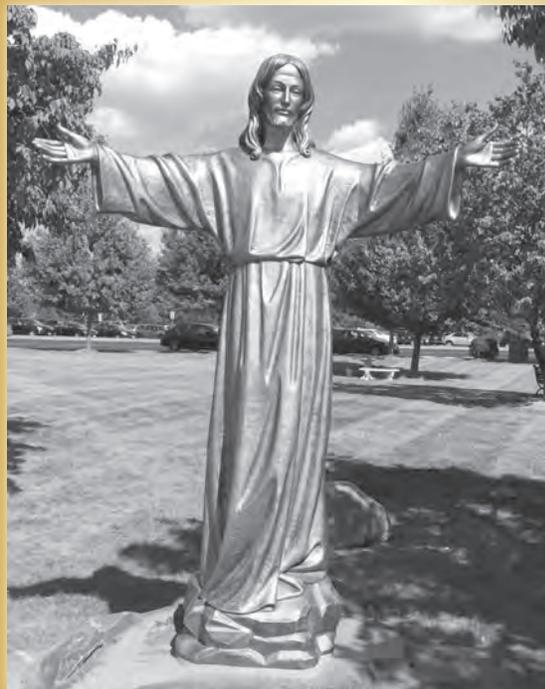
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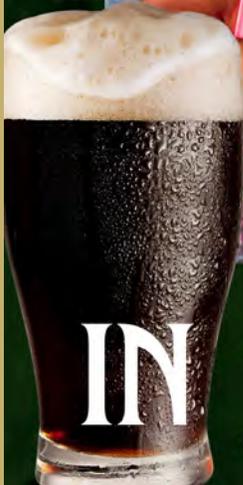


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*William "Bill" Ryan
1945 - 2024*



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Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Very Rev. Canon Owen B. Moran and the parish family of St. Vincent Martyr extend our sincere congratulations to Michael G. Bannon, the 2026 Grand Marshal, and Peter Ecklund, the Parade Starter, of the Saint Patrick's Day Parade of Morris County

May God give you...
with every storm, a rainbow,
with every tear, a smile,
with every care, a promise,
and a blessing in each trial.
With every problem life sends, a faithful friend to share,
with every sigh, a sweet song,
and an answer to each prayer.



Who Was St. Patrick?

St. Patrick was born in Roman Britain in the late 4th century. As a young boy, he was kidnapped by Irish raiders and sold into slavery in Ireland. While in captivity, he turned to God and deepened his faith through prayer. After several years, he escaped and eventually became a Christian missionary. He later returned to Ireland, dedicating his life to converting the Irish people to Christianity.



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Congratulations

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2026 Grand Marshal

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and our Irish Ancestors

James P. Langan (1831-1922) County Donegal

Katherine Gallager Langan (1831-1922) County Donegal

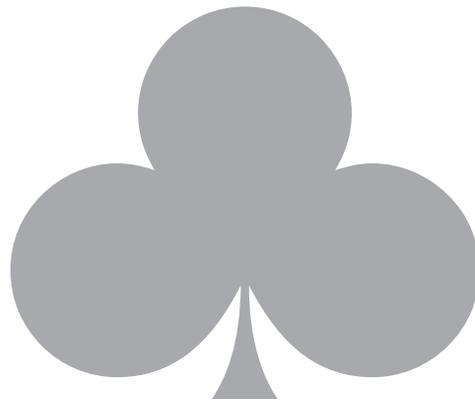
Catherine Devaney Langan (1860-1950) Dublin

James Patrick Redmond Sr. (1896-1971) Arklow, Co. Wicklow

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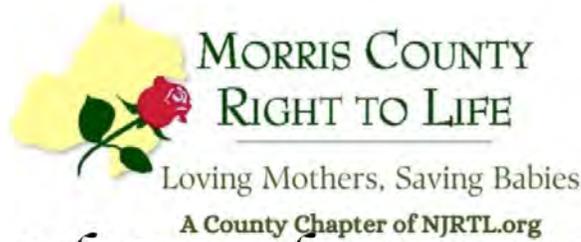


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Grand Marshal Michael Bannon

2026 Morris County Saint Patrick's Day Parade



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Mary Waller and family



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Michael G. Bannon!*



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*SenBucco@njleg.org
(973) 627-9700*



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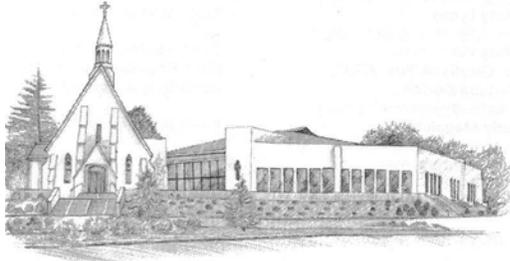
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2026 Grand Marshal

&

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Congratulations
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Mike Bannon



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Congratulations to our
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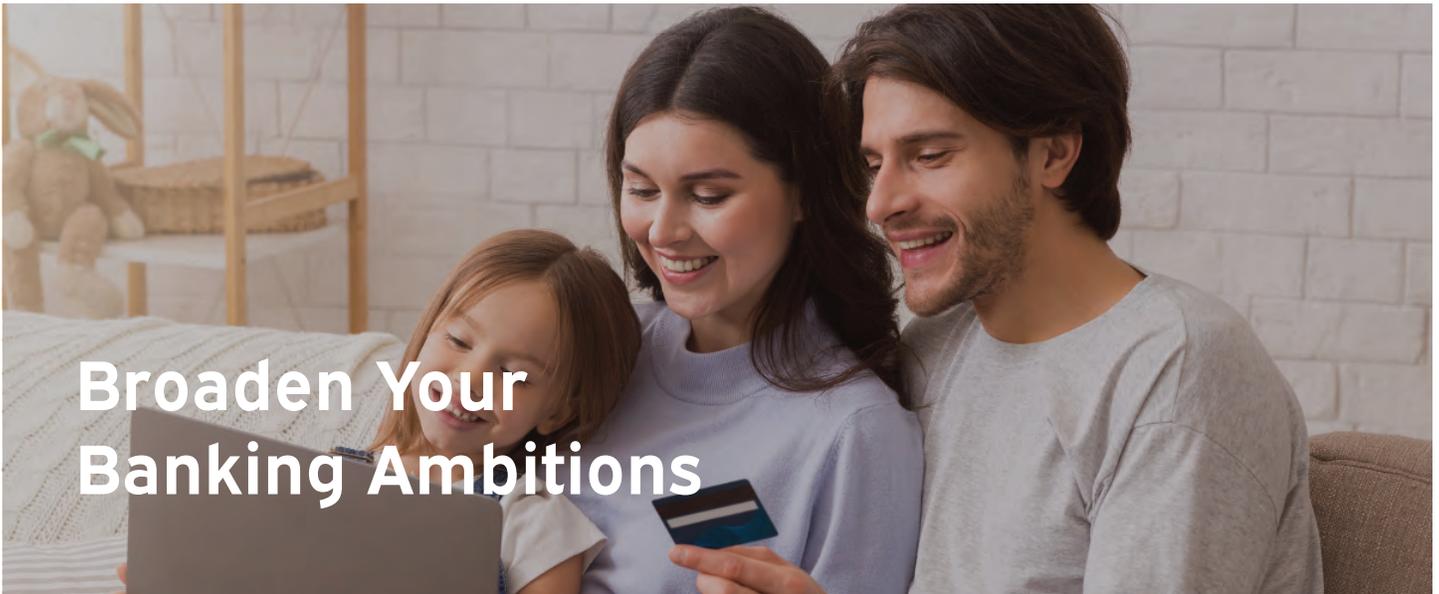
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