



Has the monarchy become an outdated standard? Aoife Coughlan discusses on page 6.



Are you up on all things sex? Turn to page 18 for our SHAG Week Special.

Charity Week Details Announced



Popular Galway band, The Kanyu Tree, are set to headline Wednesday's all day, all night festival.

Sharon Whelton

THE acts and events for next week's eagerly awaited Charity Week have been announced, with organisers hopeful that it will be the best yet.

The main acts of the week are Bressie, former Blizzards frontman, popular Galway trio The Kanyu Tree and Storyfold, up-and-coming alt. rock band. Details were still to be confirmed at time of print, but it is thought that The Kanyu Tree and Storyfold will headline the all day festival on Wednesday of Charity Week, while Bressie will headline the main event on the Thursday. See page 20 for more info. Though everyone's focus seems to be on the big names of the week, we shouldn't forget the main focus of Charity Week, as the events help

raise much needed funds for local and national charities. This year's chosen charities are Pieta House, Tipperary Limerick Care for Cystic Fibrosis (TLC4CF), Brothers of Charity, and The Mid-West Rape Crisis Centre. More on these charities and their aims can be found on page 21.

A fantastic line-up of events and entertainment throughout the week has been secured and confirmed through the hard work of Events and Promotions Manager Keith Quinlan and his team. Please turn to pages 20 and 21 for full listings. The week will kick off in style with the annual Great Race, with participants beginning their country-wide challenge this Friday, February 24, and will culminate on the midnight of Sunday, February 26.

This year also sees the introduction of the Nearly Naked Mile, which will see students strip to their undies and run over the Living Bridge! Sponsorship is necessary for this event, so be sure to

pick up your card on campus. The Raft Race is again taking place this year, which has proven to be a huge success in recent times. Sunday night sees the pre-Charity Week Warm-Up, with a Club Night in the SinBin.

Another new event this year includes the King (and Queen) of the Campus, which sees participants sign up for a small fee, and will then design their own ballot boxes. A donation of one euro qualifies as one vote, and the winning pair will win free entry into EVERY SU event for themselves and two friends for the remainder of their college years!

Other interesting events include Shave or Dye, the Duck Race, the Lovely Girls Competition, a Vow of Silence, a Slave Auction, Mock Weddings, a Mankini Challenge, a Campus Waterfight and a Campus

However, with only one week left before Charity Week descends on the campus, students have been urged to

be on their best behaviour throughout the week. President of the University of Limerick Student's Union, Derek Daly, stated that the behaviour that led to the cancellation of College Week in NUI Galway would cause a situation on the UL campus.

"We are already under pressure from residents," Derek said. "The residents have begun building a portfolio and will use any excuse to call and work for the cancellation of Charity Week."

"Best behaviour throughout the year is necessary, that means shutting up when passing through the estates and not leaving cans and bottles lying around."

Daly added that other authorities have offered the Student's Union significantly more than what has been raised in the last two years combined, to give to a charity of the Union's choice if they will cancel the event.

"Students have an obligation to use Charity Week to give back, as well as take time to enjoy," the SU President

stated. "In the last number of year the average donation per student has been about 50 cent - that's pitiful - and that alone plays into the hands of those who want the week cancelled."

Campaigns and Services Officer in the university, Paddy Rockett stated that the one of the biggest things is that we highlight the effect students of UL can have on the outside world, just by being students.

"Charity Week paints a negative picture from a resident's point of view, due to the actions of few," Paddy added. "What's worse is that so many great students are involved in raising money for charity and getting involved with the fun events."

"What I will say to students is that Charity Week is yours. Jump in and be seen, jump in and help out, and see your true worth by doing what students do (enjoy themselves) and see the great effect it has on these great charities."

News

Raising and Giving Society Ratified

Sophie McDermott

UL students are being given an exciting new opportunity to do their bit for charity with the establishment of UL's very own Raising and Giving Society.

The idea for this society, originally created in DCU, is hoped to be a national movement to get students all over the country involved and show them what they can do to help their local community.

Chairperson, Kevin Bolger, realised the scope for such a society in UL after seeing the success experienced by the original society in DCU. Speaking of his reasons for introducing such a concept here in UL, Mr Bolger said: 'We were so impressed by the progress and success of DCU RAG, that we felt it was a necessity to do the same here. They've gone on to do fantastic things and we aim to do the same and even better.'

The society's primary aim is to focus on social projects and encourage students to get involved. Through implementing social projects, students can gain a better understanding of how they can make their community a better place and the differences that

they alone can make. The society also hopes to equip students with the skills and initiative necessary to carry on the good work throughout their lives.

The society has already attracted huge interests from students with their Facebook page being 'liked' by over 1,300 people in the previous week as well as initial meetings and canvassing peaking an interest from over 30 students. However, PRO for the RAG society, Thomas Feehan, stated that: "Our official members do not reflect the interest in this society. Us here at UL RAG society consider all of the 13,000 students to be members of the society."

Despite only being ratified for their 15 week trial last week, the UL RAG society is already getting a head start on their goals for the semester. These goals include raising €6,000 to create the first social project to be carried out by students of UL and launch their initial campaign.

The society already have several, exciting events in the pipeline. In Week 5, they will help a girl, Katie Griffin to raise €3,000 euro to go to Africa for the summer with a 3 day event called 50 by 50. They are also liaising with Rebecca O'Hare of Neighbourhood Talks to help improve relations between residents and students living in Elm Park as well as top secret events for Charity Week.



UL RAG Soc members recruiting in the SU Courtyard

"Despite only being ratified for their 15 week trial last week, the UL RAG society is already getting a head start on their goals for the semester."

RTE's Charlie Bird visits UL

Aisling Hussey

A MORAL compass is the most important tool for any reporter, RTE's Charlie Bird told journalism students from the University of Limerick this week.

Mr Bird visited UL last Monday as a guest speaker for the Issues in Irish Journalism seminar series. He spoke to students about ethics in reporting and his own experiences working as a journalist for RTE.

He told the trainee reporters that they have to be determined to succeed to work in the journalism industry.

"You should be thinking of ideas all the time, and pitching them," he said.

"It's all about getting in the door. I'm like a lotto winner. I should never have been a journalist with my background, but I worked my fingernails off to get into RTE."

"Even if you don't want to be a journalist, if you want to be anything, just do it. Work has its own rewards. You just have to think outside the box," he said.

He also spoke on the importance of fact checking and the impact that reporting can have on people.

"If there's one motto I want to leave with you today it's this - you've got to check your facts."

"When you get something wrong, the best thing to do is put your hand up and admit it," he said. "Your moral compass is the most important thing of all. You have to be able to say to yourself that you've done the right thing."

"You can destroy someone with the pen or a news camera. It can have a huge impact and should not be treated lightly," he said. "You will have that power."

Mr Bird added that graduates need to create new standards in reporting.

"Journalism is going through a difficult time, but it's hanging in. We need good quality journalism," he said.

"I am not certain that we are working to the highest common denominator any more. You students have the opportunity to build these standards."

Speaking after the seminar, Mr Bird said that he was more than happy to pay a visit to UL to speak to the students.

"It's good to give back, and I was glad to accept an invitation to a place like this," he said. "The journalism programme here looks great. Everyone here is articulate and had lots of questions for me."

However, he had an ominous prediction for budding journalists.

"Journalism is a lot like politics. All political careers end in failure, and most journalism careers end in a certain failure."

Mr Bird was the second speaker of the 'Issues in Irish Journalism' seminar series, after Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn's visit last week. Other guests set to visit UL as part of the series include aid worker Sharon Commins, and MEP Mairead McGuinness.

DCU Student, Paul Bunbury, missing

Colm Fitzgerald, Deputy Editor

A DCU student is the latest in a recent spate of missing people. Paul Bunbury, a 19 year old computing student at DCU was last seen on Thursday, February 2.

His last observed movements were observed on CCTV at a Eurospar shop on the Ballymun Road, Dublin on Thursday, February 2, where he made a small purchase shortly after 4pm.

Extensive search of CCTV across the city revealed he may have been present near the 02 Arena in the Docklands Area at around 6.30pm. This has led to speculation he may have boarded a ferry at Dublin Port. There have been no sightings of Mr Bunbury since. He is described as being 5 foot 10 inches in height, blue eyes, long black hair, of thin build and has a beard and notable facial hair. When last seen, he was wearing a grey casual jacket, blue jeans and a blue t-shirt. Mr Bunbury is a regular user of popular message forum boards. ie, where his username is Pygmalion.

He is also an active member of the DCU Programming Society, Redbrick.

Sources suggest he has not been online since his disappearance, which is extremely out of character. His phone has not been turned on since. Individuals with any information, regardless of how trivial, should contact Whitehall Garda Station on 01-6664500.

MISSING



Paul Bunbury
Height 5' 10"
Slim Build

Last seen near Ballymun Road entrance of DCU on Thursday 2nd February 2012 at around 4:00 PM.

Wearing a grey casual jacket, blue t-shirt, blue jeans and runners

ANY INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE WHITEHALL GARDA STATION AT 01 666 4500

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All submissions to An Focal are greatly valued. If you have submitted an article which has not been published in this issue, it is very likely that your piece has been retained for publication in future issues. If you are concerned that your article has not been published, please say so.

2. Editing:

If you are unhappy with how your article appeared in An Focal, please discuss this with the Editor. A number of strict guidelines are followed in the production of An Focal, which means some articles may be altered to allow them to fit on the page and to improve readability.

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EDITORIAL



Kelly O'Brien, Editor

Hello and welcome to issue nine of An Focal. We have a very special edition ahead for you, with the inclusion of four extra special pages.

On pages 18 and 19, you'll find the first of these: our 'SHAG Week Special'. On these pages you'll find lots of useful information about sexual health: explanations and guidelines on contraceptives, STD's and pregnancy.

Though SHAG Week was last week (you may have seen a sex bear handing out condoms), you can never have enough info about your sexual health. It's important to remember that everyone does it, and it's nothing to be ashamed of. If you have a query, you can always come to the Students' Union and see our Welfare Officer,

Tara Feeney, or you can visit one of the GP's in the castletroy area. On pages 20 and 21, you'll find our 'Charity Week Special': everything you need to know about the week and the charities involved. The main events of the week are ULFest, featuring Bressie,

The Kanyu Tree and Storyfold, the UV Party and the Farmers Night. This year's charities are Rape Crisis Midwest, TLC4CF, Brothers of Charity and Pieta House.

While it's great to go out and have fun during Charity Week, it's important to keep the main focus, raising money for charity, in the forefront of your mind. A little from a lot goes a long way, so even if it's only a few euros, if you have it to spare, please do donate it.

The ULSU has a great line-up of acts and events for your pleasure, so spending your Charity Week on campus is definitely the best way to go.

Having house parties is all well and good, but it leads to trouble later down the line should you or your guests upset the neighbours or be arrested

for drinking in public (on lawns etc). Coming on campus and partaking in the regulated events set out by the SU will not only get you more involved in student life, but will ensure you are safe while you're busy having a good time. The SU Ents will look after you, so you can put your full attention to the week's events.

Finally, just have a good time. These years truly are the best of your life, so enjoy them while you can. All too soon you'll be worrying about mortgages and pensions, so life it up now before it's too late!

Kelly O'Brien
 Editor



Last week at UL RAG Soc's Lantern Release.

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Harry Potter actor, Daniel Radcliff, in action.

Magic of Harry Potter to come to UL

Jason Kennedy, News Editor

IRELAND'S first ever academic conference based on the world of Harry Potter will be held in the University of Limerick this summer.

The conference, which is being organised by recent graduate Grainne O'Brien and Lecturer Luigina Ciolfi, is called Magic's Might 2012 and has already attracted a high level of international interest. The conference will be held on the July 23 and 24 and

will include a variety of talks, including food in Harry Potter, Hermione and feminism, Pottermore and various talks on a number of individual characters. The first day will include a mock trial of one of the characters in the mock courtroom in the Main Building. During the trial, attendees will get to decide if the character is innocent of guilty of the crime. Ms O'Brien stated that the conference took a lot of time or organise, but that she is very excited about it. "It was around last June when we started talking about it. They take

place in America, but it's too expensive to go, so I wanted to bring conferences like it to UL. "Luigina and I are big Harry Potter fans. I even did my thesis on Harry Potter, so it was great to share my interest with someone. We're delighted that UL have really embraced the idea as well. Registration Fee for the conference will cost €130 per person, which includes lunch and a banquet in the Hunt Museum. However, Magic's Might are looking for volunteers who will be allowed sit in at any talk they want to. Ms O'Brien said that there

is still a big of organisation left, but that there has been some very positive responses to the conference and that it will help boost UL's name abroad.

"It will be a lot of fun and I hope it's something that UL can be proud of and I hope that it will put us in the map.

"Hopefully a lot of people come and it will be something really positive for the university." For more information on the conference, visit www.magicismight2012.blogspot.com.

Munster Technological University on the cards

Rachel Dargan

LIMERICK Institute of Technology (LIT) is hoping to amalgamate with Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and Institute of Technology Tralee (IT Tralee) to create a Munster Technological University that could accommodate up to 24,000 students.

Not only would this proposed university bring Limerick's tally of universities to two, but will also mean that Limerick will hold the largest University in Ireland.

The three institutes involved have been working with international experts who have experience in establishing and managing multi campus universities and believe they will "meet the criteria for technological university status".

The three institutes have also said that the new university would provide "world class education and research, and support the development of enterprise across the region".

It is claimed the venture would "be worthwhile if approved and

completed" and will provide high quality qualifications to students across numerous counties.

The application has been sent for consideration to the HEA and Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn. It is expected the application process will be rigorous and it is thought that it may take up to two years for

The venture would not only provide more college places for the region, but will also be able to make a major contribution nationally and its activities will assist in economic growth, innovation and job creation.

MTU would aim to offer courses up to PhD level in a broad range of disciplines including business, humanities, health

sciences, visual and performing arts and science and engineering.

Maria Hinfelaar, president of LIT, said that the institution already had a "track record of collaboration" with both Tralee and CIT, with whom it already has a number of research projects in train. A spokesman for MTU said that "The creation of this university will help to reinforce Ireland's attractiveness and suitability as a location for establishing enterprises, indigenous and multinational, large and small, across a range of sectors".

There are currently three other joint applications around the country seeking similar technological university status.

Important decisions for upcoming AGM

Aisling Hussey

STUDENTS are being invited to chair motions for the Student's Union's AGM, which is set to take place in week 8.

After the abolition of Campaigns and Services Officer (CSO) and Communications Officer (CO) at the EGM in week 2, the main focus of the meeting will be on whether or not any motions will be brought forward to reintroduce both roles.

SU President Derek Daly said he is encouraging students to chair motions at the AGM, however he asks that they put thought into whatever they wish to put forward.

"I ask the students to be mindful when making a motion. It shouldn't be based on operational issues, as this would be problems for management," he said.

Mr Daly added that he does not expect any motions to reinstate the position of CSO and CO.

"I wouldn't expect people to chair any motions to bring back these offices. I think at the EGM we gave valid and reasonable reasons why they had to be removed," he said.

Comment Editor for An Focal Darragh Roche said that students should attend the AGM to voice their opinions on how their Student's Union is operated.

"It is important to have an alternative to whatever the student's union is proposing," he said.

"I'm thinking about forwarding a motion. We feel that there was no notice given with regards to the motions put forward at the EGM. They were not submitted in the required five days beforehand."

"The wordings in the motions were not sent out to students," he said.

The motion to get rid of CO was amended at the EGM to include a plan to discuss how the role would be carried out in the future. Mr Roche said that students should be vocal if they are not in favour of the new plans.

"The amendment to the second motion says that it will be decided what is to be done with the role of Communication Officer at the AGM," he said.

"If people aren't happy with the suggestions put forward by the sabbatical officers, they can oppose it."

He concluded it is important that students attend the meeting for quorum to be reached in order for voting to take place.

"I'll definitely attend, but I don't think there will be a quorum. If they get a quorum, we'll be able to change things, if not, we won't be able to.

Students who are planning to chair a motion at the AGM need at least 15 signatures for approval. They can introduce any motion as long as it fulfils this criteria.

Rise of the Canadian Irish



Niamh Masterson

More and more Irish graduates may be looking towards a Canadian skyline for the future.

It is almost certain that everyone in Ireland will have a family member, a significant other or a friend who has, or will, immigrate.

It is the convention to think that Irish people are either heading off to England, America or Australia just like in previous generations but it seems that Canada is becoming the new destination for Irish emigrants. But what does Canada have to offer our Irish immigrants? Well mainly they

can be offered jobs. Plenty of young, qualified Irish people are moving to Canada because they can fill the space in an unskilled workforce. When property development was booming in Ireland many people felt that training in construction was the way to go. However, when that all stopped they were left with no work. Canada can offer these people jobs. Engineers, builders, kitchen fitters all have opportunities in Canada. Irish immigrants are helping to build Canada just like the Irish of the 1800s who built America. The Irish of this time took jobs as farmers and on railway and canal construction sites

hence building up the infrastructure of the country. The Irish took the lowest paid but yet the most integral jobs of the time and getting America into a very strong position economically. Canada has much to offer Irish students as they can obtain student visas as well as work visas. Further study in Canada will not allow give them an edge on the job market at home but also everywhere else. The young Irish have much to offer Canada. We have a young work force that is skilled, eager to work and to start making some money. The Irish are bringing skills to Canada to fill the skills deficit. The 2006 census by

Statistics Canada, Canada's Official Statistical office revealed that the Irish were the 4th largest ethnic group with 4,354,000 Canadians with full or partial Irish descent or 14% of the country's total population. This is a very significant number proving that the Irish are constantly drawn to Canada.

Here in Ireland however we are left with sad results. Our skilled workforce is being shipped out because we cannot give them anything here. Parents have to sit by and watch as their children and even their grand children are leaving home and they don't know when they'll return. There is an air of sadness around

Ireland. Pubs are getting emptier, towns are getting quieter and the country in general is not progressing.

I'm sure many would find over Christmas there wasn't as much of a buzz or an atmosphere around at your local towns and this is because most of the people of the ages of about 25-30+ have probably immigrated. Although Canada and immigration opportunities in general are a shining light and saving grace for our misfortunate young people, it leads to Ireland becoming a less populated, lonely island.

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Comment

Monarchy is still a viable national symbol



Britain's current ruling monarch, Queen Elizabeth.

Aoife Coughlan

MONARCHY is an ambivalent term. To some it conjures up the images of turreted castles, princes, princesses and honour and dignity. To others, notably Ireland and former dominions, a vision of imperial arrogance, oppressive and opulent is created. The world's most recognised royal family is only separated from us by the moat of the Irish Sea, so it is understandable why the British royals should provide a curious diversion for us, if not exactly commanding our allegiance. But in this day and age of supposed democracies is there any need for a Royal family in Britain anymore?

Taxes and finance aside there is always a valid argument for the removal of the Royal family. The Queen has little more substance than as a symbol, her powers as the head on the Sterling are probably greater than those of her position as figure head of the nation. As a constitutional monarch the Queen holds no real authority in legislative matters. Keeping the Monarchy in the idea of the British nation is more to do with concept than control.

I am not a royalist as such but I like the notion of maintaining the Royal family in Britain. As symbols of England they provide an iconic image with which people all over the world recognise. This, as one can argue on is good for tourism and the overall economy. Moreover the idea that the monarchy is recognisable is of greater importance to the native Britons. If a nation can

relate to some kind of institution that represents mainly positive images and connotations then it surely must be a good thing. It is better that national pride is found in a Royal family, corgis, and tea than in beer swilling, "chav" culture and the second rate Tikka Masala. Albeit tedious and conventional as polo and crumpets may seem, it is the impression that they give that is critical. I do not advocate a nation built on royalist jingoism but a certain pride in nostalgia and tradition is preferable to some alternatives.

From where I stand I can see that if it is not a specific need that exists then at least a desire for the Royals certainly should see their continuance. One must only look at the flourish of excitement the Royal wedding last year created to prove the still great support the British have for their monarchy. A fairy-tale affair grabbed the nation's imagination and rightly or wrongly it created a sense of momentum that budgets, the EU and international relations just cannot compete with. Those who site Scotland's attempt for independence and the similar growing feelings in Australia and Canada as signs of waning favour for the Royals have clearly misjudged the effects of a fairy tale Bride and an almost royal derriere can have! Clearing out old rubbish is one thing, but getting rid of antiques is another story.

Decisions on Sabbats stupid and abrupt

Keith Beegan

THE current state of the Students' Union is unfortunate to say the least, which makes me relieved that it is my final year at UL. However, I cannot but feel pity for incoming students who hopefully will not have to suffer consequently.

Week Two saw the Union host an EGM which went about as smoothly as a dirt bike competition in an en suite.

The motions to remove the positions of Campaigns & Services Officer and Communications Officer were passed, the latter of which caused upheaval in the John Monnet. In my opinion, these decisions were stupid and abrupt.

I feel that the majority of students do not take the Union seriously and do not recognise the immense work that the sabbatical offers do in order to

upkeep the student lifestyle to which we are accustomed. We sometimes take Union events and Charity week festivities for granted and do not acknowledge the organisation and implementation of such activities that is required in order for them to be a success.

Furthermore, An Focal acts as a mascot for the University and its future could be in jeopardy next semester if important decisions are not made soon.

It upsets me that ULFM could be under threat, even though it is in its infantile stage. These sabbatical roles may not seem as 'pressing' as welfare and education but they are very important to a student's life and make the duration of one's stay at UL all the more memorable.

The elimination of these positions will contribute to less expenditure but only by a small fraction and the negative consequences that could result may outweigh the financial benefits.

The Union representatives seemed confident that all duties would be reallocated, which begs the question why the positions were created in the first place, obviously the duties required an independent figure to cover the workload.

Suggestions to employ co-op students on a voluntary basis are questionable

as there is no guarantee these students will possess the dedication and work ethic that is necessary.

And as we all know money is the highest form of motivation, thus, unpaid employees may not contribute 100%. Certainly, before the next important meeting, it is imperative that stricter rules are put in place so the passing of motions and interaction between audience members and the Union's spokespeople runs more steadily. The constant arrival and departure of students served as a distraction as well as it interfering with the quorum.

Also, it is difficult to judge what the students want when there is only such a small proportion in attendance, and the majority of those are more concerned with a Facebook quarrel between two of the sabbatical officers. Perhaps if a system of pre-registration and role-signing was brought in, only students with a genuine interest would attend. Also, poll voting would achieve a better result and students who could not attend would have the chance to be heard.

We must guarantee the future of ULFM and An Focal

Colm Fitzgerald, Deputy Editor

MAJOR changes in how the ULSU Communications Office operates are afoot.

Traditionally, the CO is elected as a sabbatical officer, and with that they've been the editor of this newspaper and organised and run the activities of the office themselves. The outcome of the recent EGM means that a CO will no longer be elected. A popularity contest is not appropriate in deciding who could best look after this particular aspect of the Union.

There needs to be somebody to be the string that holds it all together. For the last two years a subeditorial team has liaised with writers to compile content. These subeditors are all current students, and the workload for them is reasonably low. Subeditors will be able to source images and decide placement of their articles, a time consuming task which currently burdens the CO.

The idea of a full time student becoming editor is somewhat worrying. The editor must read and possibly make amendments to an average of 40,000 words per fortnight.

The high standard to which this newspaper is currently produced would surely stand to suffer. I speak for many others when I say I would be greatly disappointed should this newspaper become absolute rag just because of short-sighted and meaningless management decisions. The idea of a co-op student is not the worst. However there runs the risk that

a student who is suitably skilled may not be found every year. They would need supervision and assistance for the first couple of issues. It would be somewhat short-sighted not to provide a communications manager in some form, whether this be a CO in the traditional format, a CM working a part-time week, or similar.

When it comes to ULFM, the current management structure there needs some realignment. There has been a board of nine student volunteers (myself included), plus the CO running the station since its conception.

For new development boards, current positions such as production manager and technical manager should remain. Positions including head of news, marketing and promotion, training and standards and a development manager need to be inaugurated, leaving defined and concise job roles and an easier job for all.

These are somewhat grave issues which need to be addressed with urgency. I have not addressed the numerous other functions the CO currently fulfils.

If we go into the summer recess with no plan as to how the functions of the communications office will operate, the security of its undertakings are far from guaranteed. In the run up to the AGM where motions for CO will be chaired, I urge you to put your preconceptions aside and educate yourself to making an informed decision for the best.

FOCAL Sport

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Is Kidney building a new, dynamic, Irish team? Turn to page 31 for Gareth Morrow's analysis on the new Rugby cycle.



Garry Irwin takes us through the Patriots/Giants rivalry on page 32's analysis of the recent Superbowl event.

Eagles soar high as national champions

Robert McNamara, Sports Editor

UL Eagles came from behind to claim the 2012 men's SuperLeague National Cup. UL outscored UCC Demons 72-65, in a sold out thriller at the National Basketball Arena.

Despite being on the back foot for the majority of the game, UL stayed in touch with the Cork side and edged in front in the latter stages of the fourth quarter with a superb performance from MVP Robert Taylor.

The game started at a frantic pace with each side looking to set their stall out by notching up impressive scores.

The standard of basketball on offer was high and Robert Taylor and Jason Killeen in particular were stamping their authority on the game. It was as close as it can get at the end of the first quarter, with UCC holding a slender lead of 21-20.

Kyle Hosford and Ciaran O' Sullivan helped Demons to increase their lead to six points in the second, and UL were now looking to make sure that the Cork side were not out of sight by half-time. They succeeded and at the interval the cup was still up for grabs.

The teams left the court with Demons leading 39-34. Scott Kinevane and Neil Campbell helped UL back to parity but that was not enough to stop UCC from going into the final quarter with a two point lead, after Shaun Atupem converted for Demons and UL's Matt Hall hit a brilliant three pointer right on the buzzer.

The game was finely balanced going into the last ten minutes and it was now going to be a psychological as well as physical effort to take the cup home to Leaside or Shannonside. Daniel

O'Sullivan increased Demons lead to five, and when Jason Killeen was fouled out of the game for UL, it seemed like the game was up for the Eagles.

Hall and Kinevane were determined not to give in, and they both notched up baskets to ensure UL still had a chance. Demons were starting to tire at this stage and some excellent positional work and calm possession from Robert Taylor helped UL as they went into the lead. Matt Hall got the last basket for UL as the buzzer went and the Eagles rounded off a superb night in Dublin for Limerick basketball. Taylor was by far and away the best player on court and he picked up a well served MVP for his efforts.



The Eagles completed the double for UL at the National Basketball Arena.

UL Ladies claim national title in Dublin

Robert McNamara, Sports Editor

UL claimed the 2012 women's SuperLeague National Cup with a comprehensive 64-27 victory over reigning champions DCU Mercy.

It was the first of an unprecedented double for Limerick, as the Eagles later went on to defeat UCC Demons in the men's final.

UL ladies went for the jugular in this game and at times they had DCU looking as spectators rather than opponents, such was their domination.

DCU initially started well and managed to reserve UL's potent attacking threat to just two baskets from Louise Galvin and Rachel Vanderwal in the opening exchanges. The first quarter saw UL go the bench with a slender 10-7 lead.

Galvin and Vanderwal were at the centre of all the action in the second

quarter. Miriam Liston then hit a sweet three pointer with just seconds remaining on the shot clock to increase the Limerick side's lead to 23-13 at half-time.

DCU coach Mark Ingle would have had some work to do at the break to ensure his team stayed in touch with UL, but James Wheldon would have been happy with the way his team were going about their business.

DCU did briefly threaten to re-enter proceedings in the third quarter but UL's superior tactical game, defensive nous and attacking threat, meant the every basket missed by DCU was a further nail in the coffin in their attempt to retain Ireland's most prestigious basketball silverware.

As the game drifted away from the Dublin team they were increasingly met with superb defensive work and numerous possession turnovers from UL.

By the fourth quarter the game was up for DCU and despite Lindsay

Peat rallying her team in a customary leader's performance, they could not live with the superior quality in the UL line up. DCU were forced to commit fouls to return UL to the free throw line in an effort to regain the ball.

The victory confirmed UL's place as the top team in Ireland and added silverware to prove it. They have not been defeated since December 2010 in a run that saw them notch up 28 victory's enroute to becoming national champions.

Coach Wheldon told RTE Sport "Those girls deserve every bit of praise you could give them. The effort and commitment they have shown over the last few years has been incredible.

"We were a little insulted that some people said we were not a good team because we hadn't won a cup. It's great to have done it now."



UL ladies showed no mercy to DCU in the SuperLeague final.

Sport

SPORTS
QUIZ

Billy Meredith

- Q1. Which F1 Team made their Debut in Australia on March 3rd 2002?
 Q2. Who defeated Oliver McCall in 1995 to become WBC Heavyweight champion?
 Q3. What is written in big letters on the back of a cricket test umpire's shirt?
 Q4. Which small Norwegian town hosted the 1994 Winter Olympics?
 Q5. In golf what name is given to the number 10 Iron?
 Q6. Theoretically, what is the minimum number of strokes a player needs to make to win a set at tennis?
 Q7. Which club did Alex Ferguson leave to go to Manchester United?
 Q8. What's the name of the game played by Harry Potter and his team mates on broomsticks?
 Q9. Who Bills himself as the 'Worlds greatest Boxing Promoter'?
 Q10. The first Test match was played at Melbourne in March 1877 between England and Australia. The first Test in England was against Australia in September 1880 at the Oval. Which was the next country to play test cricket?

Answers
 1. Toyota
 2. Frank Bruno
 3. Fly Emirates
 4. Lillehammer
 5. Pitching Wedge
 6. 12
 7. Aberdeen (in
 November 1986)
 8. Quiditch
 9. Don King
 10. South Africa in
 Zimbabwe (1992),
 Lanka (1982), and
 Pakistan (1952), Sri
 Lanka (1930), India (1932),
 (1928), New Zealand
 1889 then West Indies

Editorial

Robert McNamara, Sport Editor

"Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more serious than that." The great Bill Shankly couldn't have got it more wrong. Liverpool faced criticism for the way they handled their corner on the Luis Suarez racism affair, and rightly so.

This was about the behaviour of professionals on the pitch, professionals whose conduct did not meet the standards of a club which is a cornerstone of life on Merseyside and beyond. Punishment was handed out and Liverpool's reputation temporarily hurt.

We'd been fooled into thinking racism and hatred had long gone away because of all-seater stadiums and the franchising of the Premier League.

A vein of unintelligible bile still persists on the terraces. For clubs, moral high ground does not exist when it comes to supporters and each are responsible for their own.

The constant booing of Rio Ferdinand at Stamford Bridge recently, served to copper fasten the suspicion that racism and tribal hatred are as strong as ever.

Anfield, March 2007, John O' Shea scored in the closing minutes to virtually ensure the league title for Manchester United.

I was sat in the Kop stand at Anfield, those who know me will note here that I am a red of the Manchester

persuasion. I got a last minute ticket and took my seat quietly.

Around me, in a small group, sat a bunch of idiots bellowing sickening chants about the Munich air crash of 1958 where 23 people, including 8 Manchester United players lost their lives.

After the game the police marched the Manchester United fans around Stanley Park, back to the city centre and towards the train station.

A United "fan" began a disgusting chant about the Hillsborough tragedy. His son, a child of no more than six years of age at the time was walking beside him.

A police woman reprimanded the man but no arrest was made. All the while drunken louts were emerging from behind foliage in Stanley Park,



flinging glass bottles at the away supporters. These people exist in the minority but the one-up-manship between clubs provides them with fuel. Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United... it doesn't matter.

The clubs need to lead the way in dealing with these people. Ban them for life.

Rivalry is healthy, but hatred is misplaced in a game so enshrined in the soul of society. Twenty-two men chasing a ball around a pitch isn't a good base on which to build and display cultural and political beliefs.

What can be done about Gaelic Football?

Garry Irwin

With the National Football League kicking off at the start of February to countless half-empty stadiums up and down the country, and the latest in a long line of violent melees happening a few weeks before in January; in an All-Ireland Junior club semi-final between Derrytresk of Tyrone and Dromid Pearses of Kerry.

It seems all the talk of reform in disciplinary measures and rule changes within the game itself have done nothing to alleviate the air of despondency felt from supporters of the sport, or have proven to increase the competence of the players.

The brawl in the Derrytresk and Dromid Pearses game resulted in fines of €7000 and a total of eleven players being suspended. But has anything been learned from this latest episode? Both teams felt hard done by, by the GAA's Central Competitions Control Committee and will more than likely take their individual cases to the Central Hearings Committee. And with the Committees record of overturning red cards and suspensions over the last couple of years, who is to say their appeals won't bear fruit?

Respect and discipline has broken down to such an extent that these kinds of incidents seem to flare up every couple of months at various levels of the game. With supporters, coaches and players fighting on the touchlines, in scenes that you can easily see for yourself on YouTube (typing Gaa into YouTube will show you that the next suggested word is fight!), do you think that any parent would encourage their child to take up the game?

If you can look past the indiscipline, what about the state of the game being played on the pitch? The first round of league fixtures saw some extremely unequal games, are Kilkenny that bad? Along with games, where if a team got to double figures they had a good chance of winning the game. In Division 1 the league champs Cork travelled up to Armagh for a game that the Gaa's own website described as 'dour'. It had everything that Gaelic football has to offer these days, low scores, a sending off, some comical defending, in a half full venue.

Maybe if the GAA was less interested in payments to managers and worried more about what they were coaching their players, we would see an improvement in the game.

At the moment it seems to be populated by players not big and strong enough to play rugby, nor fast or skilful enough to play soccer.



Respect and discipline has broken down to such an extent that these kinds of incidents seem to flare up every couple of months.

Sport

New cycle begins in Irish rugby

Gareth Morrow

THE Six Nations signals the beginning of a new four year cycle towards world cup 2015.

Where Ireland fell short in the last world cup was well identified by Jerry Flannery in a recent interview with the Irish Independent.

Flannery said that Ireland did not have enough strings to their bow, therefore did not adapt amply to achieve the desirable result against Wales in that quarter final. As Bruce Lee once quoted, "keep that which is useful, disregard the rest".

It is my own opinion that these wise words from a man who reached the pinnacle of his sport would be best obeyed by Declan Kidney. In this regard

I cannot understand the selections which Kidney has made. During the Heineken Cup campaign since October there have been numerous stand-out performances on the Irish provincial teams. This has manifested itself with three of the four now in the quarter finals of the Heineken cup.

These stand-out performers have included Dan Tuohy from Ulster in the second row. We have learned last week that he can cope at a higher level as he was outstanding for the Irish Wolfhounds against the England Saxons, both in the tight and more particularly with ball in hand. Meanwhile, Donnacha O'Callaghan who had an abysmal world cup is in the starting fifteen.

Furthermore, players such as Eoin Griffin of Connacht have been ignored for a midfield selection of Keith Earls and Gordan d'Arcy. Earls and d'Arcy too were hugely disappointing against

the Welsh. It is strange that despite being completely outplayed by O'Halloran and Griffin when Connacht played Munster in the Rabo Direct Pro 12, that Earls still gets the nod to start at outside centre. Earls, no doubt, was incredible from full back when Ireland beat England to deny them the grand slam in the 2011 Six Nations, but an outside centre at this level he is not, as evidenced by Manu Tuilagi in the world Cup warm up against England.

Why Kidney persists in this vein, I do not know. A better solution, one would think, would have been to play Tommy Bowe in the centre and O'Halloran/Earls on the wing.

Time will tell if Kidney is building a more dynamic Ireland capable of winning the next world cup in the face of difficulty or is flogging a dead horse and keeping that which is useless while disregarding the rest.



Declan Kidney has found some of his selections open to scrutiny as Ireland did not start the Six Nations with a home win.

Djokovic claims third Grand Slam in a row

Robert McNamara, Sports Editor

THE Australian Open between Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal was decided by who was the strongest, fittest man.

After the longest men's game ever held at the first Grand Slam event of the year, Djokovic became only the fifth man in history to win three Grand Slam tournaments in a row.

Nadal was battling a tendon problem, which he had heavily strapped through the whole tournament, while the ever seemingly super-human Djokovic was dealing with breathing problems for which he had sought medical advice.

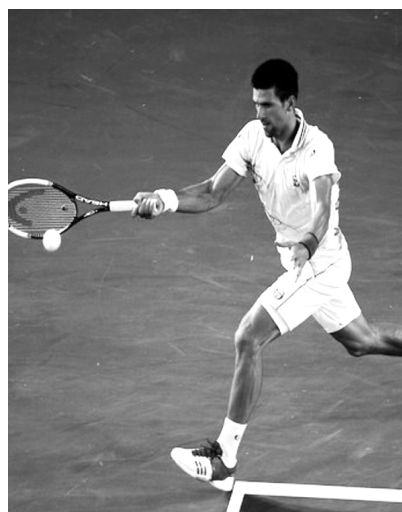
Both players, at the very top of their games will surely provide 2012 with even more superior tennis barring injury.

The wilting powers of Roger Federer were once again exposed in the semi final by Nadal, when the Swiss raced into a commanding lead, and was then cruelly and efficiently pegged back by the Majorcan on Australia day.

As the fireworks began over the Melbourne skyscrapers it was telling to see Federer scurry down the tunnel to his changing room for a break, while Nadal stayed on court busily moving around the surface to keep himself warm and alert.

Nadal was on the up and coming back into the match, Federer knew that he was in danger of being pegged back to another defeat.

Andy Murray again put up a valiant, if futile, effort against Djokovic in the other tie in the last four. Murray must be wondering what he has to do to displace the Serbian and claim the ultimate prize of a Grand Slam



Novak Djokovic became just the fifth man to win three Grand Slams in a row at the Australian Open in Melbourne.

trophy. Even if he does, he then has to deal with Nadal and Federer.

The nearly man tag is starting to wear uncomfortably for the Scot, who is clearly miles better than the last British hopeful Tim Henman in terms of quality.

Unfortunately, a breakthrough is far from imminent and a large dose of luck needs to fall on Murray's side if the current state of play is to be upset. Our own Conor Niland fell at the first hurdle of the qualifying rounds despite high hopes of reaching his third Grand Slam in a row.

The Limerick man was ousted by Stephane Bohli of Switzerland. Niland has never been able to get through the qualifying rounds at the Australian Open and thoughts will now turn to the remaining three Grand Slam tournaments for Ireland's number one.

Politics and Sport

Garry Irwin

POLITICS has often used sport to further its aims and ambitions. Just think of the recent Beijing Olympics in China, where the powers that be wanted to present a certain image to the world, or think of the upcoming World Cup in Qatar and the first thing that might enter your head about that country will probably not involve football.

Most major sporting events take on political significance that shadows the ambitions and opinions of the sports people concerned.

The 1980 Olympics in Moscow was boycotted by the U.S. and other countries in the West because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In retaliation, four years later for the games in Los Angeles, the Soviet Eastern bloc along with others, such as Vietnam, Angola, North Korea, refused to participate. A game of political

point scoring that robbed athletes the chance to compete with their peers at the highest level. More recently, political activity manifested itself in the Egyptian football riots that claimed the lives of over 70 people. What separated these events from football riots of the past were the political undertones involved. Security has been lax in the country since last year's revolution, and with a number of Egyptian teams fan bases being pro-democracy and anti-Mubarak, clashes like this were inevitable.

Mubarak would normally call in the army to quell such unrest. Some of the players involved in the match said they did not necessarily want to play the game, but the authorities would not cancel the league because they only care about the money and not the safety of players or supporters. It was terrible

that it took such a tragedy for Egyptian FA to suspend the league, which they were forced to do anyway as a number of teams had already withdrawn, with some players vowing to never play again. Sometimes sport cannot help but be embroiled with politics, earlier for a World Cup qualifier, Algerian and Egyptian officials had to try and prevent a diplomatic incident in the lead up to a game. It may not have ended up like the Football War of 1969 between El Salvador and Honduras but politicians can't take that chance.

Whether in the benign, the Scottish rugby team seen as embodying dissent against the poll tax of the 80s, or in the extremely violent, 14 killed by the RIC in Croke Park in 1920, It seems sport and politics will always be intertwined whether fans or players wish it or not.



Politics and sport collide once again in Egypt, in a tragedy that owed much to tensions in the country.

Sports

Giants trump Patriots in last gasp Superbowl win

Garry Irwin

FEBRUARY 5th saw the climax of the American Football season with the New York Giants overcoming the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl. For those of you who stayed up late into the night, along with over 100 million other people around the globe, you were witnessing a treat.

Giants quarterback Eli Manning got his hands on the Vince Lombardi trophy after a last minute drive saw Ahmad Bradshaw get into the end zone for a game winning touchdown. This capped a nine play, 88 yard drive orchestrated by Manning.

Manning was going toe-to-toe with the Patriots Tom Brady and coming out on top to earn his second Super Bowl ring. Both quarterbacks were on top of their game, each breaking some long standing Super Bowl records. Manning started the game with nine straight pass completions, while Brady put together a run of sixteen straight pass completions during the game.

Brady, who was going for his fourth Super Bowl win, might well rue some of the decisions that he made in the first and fourth quarters. The opening score of the game was got from a safety, where Brady, under no pressure, threw the ball to no one in the back field while

standing in his own teams end zone. The intentional grounding penalty he received gifted the Giants two points. Then with barely a minute to go in the game the Patriots decided to allow the Giants score a touchdown so as to have time on the clock to mount an attack of their own in an attempt to win the game. The Giants who were trailing by two points were trying to wind down the clock, so would have ideally liked Bradshaw to go down on the one yard line, use up another play, before getting on kicker Lawrence Tynes to try for a game winning field goal and leave no time remaining.

But the calculated risk by the Pats fell flat, as after the resulting punt they were left with only a single time out, before getting to midfield and being reduced to Hail Mary passes to win the game. Brady did not have that pass in him and the Giant defensive coverage held firm. It was an absorbing game of football game to an end. Eli added another chapter to the rich footballing tradition of the Manning family. While the Patriots/Giants rivalry was cranked up another notch, to be resumed sometime next season.



Eli Manning won the battle between him and Tom Brady to claim the Superbowl.

Sports Virgin: Handball

Gerard Flynn

ORIGINATING in northern Europe with some also citing its humble beginnings amongst the Inuit in the Middle Ages, handball has become an Olympic Games staple for the past seventy six years.

It can be compared to indoor soccer or futsal due to the two teams of seven (six outfielders and a goalkeeper as well as seven substitutes) each aiming to get the ball into their opponent's goal.

Like basketball, there's a carrying rule so that no player can hold onto the ball for longer than three seconds without passing, shooting or dribbling.

The game itself is like an amalgamation of futsal and basketball with players being penalised for over carrying and excessive physical contact.

No player is allowed within six metres of the goal line with the exception of the defending keeper. The pitch itself is usually forty metres long and twenty metres wide with goals set up at the sides of the court like indoor soccer.

Games last for thirty minutes a half with a fifteen minute half time break. If a game ends a draw, there are at

maximum two overtimes of five minutes each with a one minute break. Like soccer, if the game remains a draw then the victor is decided by a penalty shootout of five shots each.

Handball is a sport that can only be properly appreciated as a game of great skill and tactical know how by watching highlights and repeated viewings of goals and passes. The gameplay is so fast and the ball is so small that it can be hard to tell what's going on at times and out of nowhere a goal can be scored.

Attacking players must outwit both keepers and defenders by curling and spiking the ball; such is the difficulty in scoring during a game.

The level of technique needed to not only score, but pass the ball at pace can be seen in replays with the play slowed down. This way of watching handball games shows the lightning fast reflexes and thought process of players who are forced to find space around their opponents defences to create goal-scoring opportunities.

Handball is a truly enthralling game that doesn't allow its spectators any time to catch their breath. The tactical plays and fast pace are reminiscent of American football, hurling and soccer. Despite being hugely popular in northern Europe and with those that watch the Olympics, it's only a matter of time before it becomes appreciated on a wider scale.

Forgotten Footballer: David Nugent

Liam Togher

Some players serve their national teams for the best part of a decade (if not more) and never once experience the joy of scoring for their country.

David Nugent's international career with England spans the grand total of 14 minutes as a substitute in a Euro 2008 qualifier against Andorra in Barcelona and he can forever lay claim to the honour of scoring for the Three Lions, getting the third and final goal of the game in stoppage time.

A trainee at Liverpool, Nugent came to prominence in the 2004-05 season for Bury and he moved to Preston for £100,000 during that campaign.

It was during his two and a half years at Deepdale that he came to the attention of then England manager Steve McClaren, who included him in the squad for that Andorra game in March 2007. The striker's next change of address took him south to Portsmouth that summer, at a cost of £6million to Pompey.

Things didn't work out smoothly for Nugent at Fratton Park, with rumours

of his departure circulating before he had even completed half a season with the club, but he stayed long enough to play a part in their 2008 FA Cup success and he had a fleeting spell of form in early 2009.

A pre-season scrap with team-mate Marc Wilson prompted a loan switch to Burnley, where he scored in just his second game for the Clarets.

He tasted relegation with Burnley in the 2009-10 season and returned to Portsmouth, who ironically also dropped down from the Premier League that year.

His second spell on the south coast was an improvement on what had gone before as he was Pompey's top scorer last season in the Championship. During the summer he transferred to Leicester, where he is currently enjoying a decent campaign.

Now 26, it is hard to envisage Nugent ever getting the opportunity to add to his solitary England cap, but somehow you get the sense that he doesn't mind. After all, how many of us would cherish the opportunity to play and score for our country, even if the moment of glory lasted for less than a quarter of an hour?



David Nugent has a 100 percent record at international level, one game, one goal.

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Lifestyle

Healing Through Scents

Leonie Holly

If you are looking for a new, weird and wonderful way of healing ailments or simply just to unwind then aromatherapy might be just the treatment for you.

Aromatherapy is used to promote both physical and psychological health through the use of essential oils that are derived from plants. There are many means by which aromatherapy can be administered. Massaging the essential oils into the skin is one of the most popular; massage is used to thoroughly relax the body as well as it aids the essential oil treatment as a whole.

It is thought that aromatherapy through massage improves the patients emotional well being and in turn aids and possibly quickens the healing process.

Other methods include inhalation, which is especially effective for both respiratory problems and skin ailments. Inhalation can be done by simply having a drop of an essential oil on your tissue or by steam aromatherapy, which includes putting a few drops of

an essential oil into a bowl of warm water and letting it evaporate into the room. Alternatively, you could simply add a few drops to your warm bath.

There is a plentiful supply of essential oils available; however, unfortunately it is a case of you get what you pay for as the cheaper essential oils may be watered down and not as effective as the more expensive. On the other hand, if you are just trying aromatherapy out for the first time as a means of relaxation then by all means start cheap!

However, as with all types of therapy precautions must be taken. Certain essential oils may flare up conditions and may be unsuitable for you, so it is always wise to consult a trained aromatherapist or even discuss with a health care shop-worker/professional and do your own appropriate research. There is a plentiful supply of information on the internet but I found www.aromatherapy.com the most informative. So there you have the basic information about the long lived aromatherapy. Go explore the wonders of new scents, relaxation and possibly better health. Enjoy!



Aromatherapy doesn't just smell fantastic, it has several other benefits too!

Sex Facts that Became History

Sophie McDermott

LIKE many other things sexuality has developed immensely over the years.

While no one really knows who started the idea of sex, it obviously happened... a lot! But was it any different a thousand years ago compared to today? Most importantly, did they know anything we don't? Let's look at some of the funniest, weirdest and especially grossest facts from the history of sex, as we know it!

Contraception has definitely come a long way since the 19th century. In the 1800s, women believed that pregnancy could be prevented by applying crocodile dung and honey to their lady parts before sex. Makes you appreciate the long waits to see the

doctor to get the pill, doesn't it? Today, we use sex toys for when us ladies are going through a rare dry spell or just to spice up the 'aul sex life, but in the 19th century, vibrators were actually used to recognise and treat the symptoms of Hysteria in women.

The original condoms were made from animal intestines and linen. I think that would be preferable to crocodile dung.

In the Victorian days, prostitutes wore pubic wigs to conceal STDs such as genital warts or syphilis, kind of like old school vajazzles.

Not a virgin when you got married in 953? Princess Olga of Russia decided to pass a law that allowed men to "return" their wives (by either monetary or material means) if they found out they were more up to date with fornicating than they had anticipated. Oh how the times change! In the 12th century, love and marriage were very different ideals

compared to today. In a book entitled "The art of Courtly Love", it was a rule that true love was nothing to do with marriage; it was merely a business arrangement.

In 1950, the ladies needs were finally recognised when Dr. Ernest Grafenburg founded the G-spot. This was also the founding moment when it was discovered that females could actually ejaculate, as well as men.

So, there you have it, some of the most bizarre and interesting facts of sex from the past. It's pretty safe to say that women these days have it a lot better than our ancestors. One of the biggest developments has definitely got to be that we no longer need to use condoms made of animal intestines. Three cheers for latex!



The original condoms were made from animal intestines and linen...

Why Sally Hanson Is Laughing In The Face Of Danger

Roisin Curran, Beauty Columnist

OUR country is riddled with the disease of paleness but blessed be the bottles of fake tan at our exposure, or I would never wear a dress again.

Those of us who like the bronzed lifestyle buy fake tan by the bucket load, stand naked for spray tans, lie in UV light for hours and pop tanning tablets. We'll go to pretty much any length to stay glowing, but would you go to the lengths of a drug addict?

Tanning injections are the new black market buzz that's peeking interest in Ireland. Illegal, dangerous and not even approved for human use, these injections are the worst extreme Irish lasses have ever turned to for a tan. And I am truly worried. So much is wrong with them that I don't even know where to start. Let me explain what these injections are. They come as sachets of Melanotan powder, which is a chemical hormone that is being developed for skin intolerance to the sun.

It then must be mixed with a "solution" and injected daily with an insulin needle to the stomach area. Sounding a bit dodgy yet? It's bought and sold over the internet and contents can include an already used needle and incorrect dosage. Now I think were past dodgy.

Immediate side effects can range from nausea to increased blood pressure. That might not sound too bad and



Jordan, a serial fake tan offender.

maybe you'd even be ok with the long term side effects, a small thing known as cancer and that tingly feeling you get called organ failure.

Do you really want to stab yourself to the point of sickness to look darker? The only thing I've left to say to this train wreck of dodgy needles, sickness, disease and desperation is thanks, but no thanks. I'll take mine out of a bottle any day.

Plastic Surgery: Vanity vs Insanity

Barbara Ross

COSMETIC surgery is a type of plastic surgery used for the “enhancement” of appearance through surgical and medical techniques. It is specifically associated with enhancing normal appearance beyond the average level toward some aesthetic ideal.

According to figures release by the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) the number of people opting for cosmetic surgery rose by 6% last year. A total of 43,069 people went under the knife in the UK in 2011. Ninety per cent of all cosmetic surgery procedures performed by

BAAPS members were on women, the most popular being breast enlargement, followed by face and neck lifts, breast reduction, nose alterations (rhinoplasty) and tummy tucks (abdominoplasty).

BAAPS are now calling out for cosmetic surgery advertising campaigns to be banned. This action comes after the PIP (Poly Implant Prothèse) breast implant scandal which affected up to 1,500 women in Ireland and up to 400,000 women across 65 countries.

Of course this scandal has sparked heated debates across the world on whether sympathy should be given to people who opt for plastic surgery. Many people think that it is pure vanity that drives people to change their bodies in this drastic way. Those that have had cosmetic procedures have found themselves justifying their actions to complete strangers who have targeted them as some sort of social outcast.

The debate is at most futile and useless, those that have cosmetic surgery have it for personal reasons that others cannot understand. However it was still

shocking to read what one child in the UK got for Christmas this year.

The UK’s self-proclaimed “Human Barbie”, 51-year-old Sarah Burge, gave her 7 year old daughter a £7,000 voucher for liposuction. The holiday gift was a follow up to Poppy’s most recent birthday present from her mum: A £6,000 voucher for breast augmentation.

When mothers are so obviously instilling low self esteem in their children is there any wonder that cosmetic surgery is on the rise. At the age of seven, children should be worried about playing outside not about being too fat and needing a boob job. Young people are constantly bombarded with plastic perfection throughout their lives but the feeling of not looking good enough should not be brought into the home. It is disheartening to think that those of the younger generation are so quick to turn to the knife and undergo the risks of surgery.



Are people giving into society’s creation of “perfection”?



GINGERGIRL'S FOOD UL LOVE...

Helen Keown, Food Columnist

WE'RE very fond of Mexican food in the gingergirl home! Like many countries, Mexican food varies by region. Ingredients synonymous with Mexican cuisine include chilli peppers, corn (used to make tortillas), beans, avocado, tomatoes, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and cocoa. This Mexican inspired stew is a firm favourite of mine!

Spicy Mexican Chicken.

- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 large onion, halved and sliced
- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 (or 2 depending on your love for chilli) medium chilli, deseeded and sliced
- 2 teaspoons of ground cumin
- 2 x 400g cans peeled plum tomatoes
- 1 chicken or vegetable stock cube
- 200g piece of chorizo, skinned and diced
- 8-10 chicken thighs, skinned
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and cut into chunks
- 2 x 300g cans cannellini beans, drained
- A handful of fresh coriander, roughly chopped

Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat and fry the onion and garlic until softened, add the chorizo and peppers and fry for two minutes. Stir in the spices and cook for a further two minutes. Pour in the tomatoes and

½ can of water then crumble in the stock cube. Bring to the boil and add the chicken thighs. Push the chicken under the liquid, cover and simmer for 40-60 mins.

Tip in the cannellini beans and warm through to heat the beans. Sprinkle with fresh coriander before serving.

I like to serve this dish with a few side dishes, usually rice, some tortilla chips, avocado salsa (see below), lime wedges and soured cream.

Avocado Salsa: In a bowl mix two tomatoes (deseeded and diced), one avocado (stoned and diced), half a red onion (finely diced), one chilli (deseeded and finely chopped), the juice of one lime, a tablespoon of fresh coriander (roughly chopped) and one tablespoon of olive oil.

Helen's produce is available nationwide from independent food emporiums and at UL Farmer's Market where you can also purchase her range of breads and chocolate brownies.

Helen also writes a weekly food column for the Limerick Leader and the Limerick Chronicle and is Spin Southwest's resident “foodie”.

Want some cooking advice and tips? Email helen@gingergirl.ie

For a chance to win some delicious gingergirl produce and avail of special offers, follow gingergirl on Twitter ([gingergirlfood](https://twitter.com/gingergirlfood)) or on facebook ([gingergirl](https://www.facebook.com/gingergirl)).

Flu Fighting Foods

Sarah O' Dwyer

SO it's here again; flu season. It's that time of year where people think winter is nothing but a snow covered memory when in reality it really isn't.

Plummeting temperatures, excessive central heating and a decreased intake of essential nutrients through dieting or skipping meals means many of us fall prey to the odd nasty bug or two at this time of year.

However, here are five ‘flu busting’ foods which are guaranteed to aid your immune system in fighting the germs we are so often affected by at this time of year. Cinnamon being consumed in addition to your diet could improve

your well being. It has many immune boosting, disease preventing, nutrients and antifungal and antibacterial properties.

Research has also shown that the addition of cinnamon to fruit and vegetables can increase the uptake of antioxidants from foods too. A solitary spoon of cinnamon a day is all you need to boost your immune system.

It has been proven that eating live yoghurt for just 14 days raised people's killer T cell count by almost 30%. This is due to all the friendly bacteria found in live yoghurt, strengthening the body's natural defences.

Both garlic and onions contain a compound called allicin which, thanks to its antiviral properties, is an extremely powerful flu fighter. Garlic and onions can be added to many meals including chicken, beef, salads and fish.

Blueberries are loaded with vitamin C, great for immune boosting and they

also have a very high concentration of antioxidants. In fact, when they were tested, they were found to have (gram for gram) much more antioxidants than over forty other fruits and vegetables.

Add these to your diet by simply eating a cupped handful per day. Alternatively, add them to a smoothie or a dessert.

Mackerel is a fantastic source of omega three fatty acids and vitamin D, both of which play a very important part in keeping your immune system in good condition.

Aiming to eat mackerel twice a week instantly will improve your immune system. Add to savoury rice or hot pasta or build your own dinner around it.



Cinnamon being consumed in addition to your diet could improve your well being.

Fashion

Perez Hilton: downfall of online journalism or blogging mastermind?

Dearbhaile Houston

EVEN IF you've never scrolled through his website, his reputation will certainly have preceded him. I'm talking about Perez Hilton, a man who encapsulates the catty, flaky world of gossip blogging.

Born Mario Armando Lavandeira Jr. in 1978 to Cuban parents, Perez grew up in Florida and initially had aspirations of becoming an actor. After settling in Hollywood and getting a taste for celebrity culture, Hilton set up his eponymous blog in 2004.

Posting content like "Cee-Lo Drops Thousands of Dollars at a Strip Club" and whichever B-List celebrity has recently divorced. Hilton won't be winning a Pulitzer Prize for his journalism skills anytime soon. His blog has grown much bigger than just

celebrity fodder with spin-off blogs covering fashion, fitness and even Hilton's dog, Teddy.

He writes like a thirteen year old girl who has overdosed on sour Skittles: all pink fonts, excessive punctuation and enough doodles on pictures of celebrities to make this MS Paint enthusiast proud.

It may not be highbrow, but Hilton does tend to be the forerunner in reporting (and sometimes misreporting) the biggest celebrity and fashion news.

Primarily being a celebrity blogger, his fashion section is based on who wore what to which event with the occasional coverage of fashion shows or upcoming trends.

It would not exactly be every fashionistas port of call for fashion news but Hilton has become so ubiquitous that it is hard to avoid him or his opinions.

Hilton's writing has not gone by without some controversy. He had an unfortunate habit of outing closeted celebrities but decided to give it up after the death of Rutgers University

student, Tyler Clementi, in 2010 and has since vowed to be less scathing and friendlier in his approach to the content he covers.

Hilton has also been criticised of pandering to certain celebrities and much like every person on the internet changes his mind about who's the next big thing every five minutes.

He has been taken to court numerous times for improper use of copyrighted material.

Despite his controversies and writing ability, there is no doubting Hilton's success. From the fame of his blog, he has gone into other forms of media, both television and radio. Hilton seems keen to cover (and attach his name to) every possible subject going, whether it's animals or Rihanna's newest hair colour.

Even if SOPA is passed or we no longer have an uncontrollable need to watch kittens do cute things, it will not be the last we hear of Perez Hilton.



Perez Hilton, the most feared celebrity blogger in the world

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Fashion

Fashion in the Blogosphere

Emma Norris

IN RECENT years, fashion has moved from the Parisian catwalks and pages of glossy magazines into the blogosphere.

This means that anyone with internet access can post about what they think is in style and be completely wrong.

Lookbook, for example, is inundated every day with “looks” from people across the world, usually working the “alternative” angle. You’d expect to come across a few bum notes since everyone has access to the site.

But because users get to “hype” other people’s looks, it’s usually only the very couture looks you see on the Lookbook home page; very good-looking girls and guys with interesting clothes, worn in ways you can only dream of.

But Lookbook is for everyone. It’s definitely a step in the right direction in terms of making fashion accessible for everyone. Unlike catwalk styles that

are usually completely unachievable, and fashion magazines, which are only trying to sell you products, sites like Lookbook showcase style without the advertising. With very little searching, you’ll find an every-day look to suit your style and take inspiration from ordinary girls or guys who live on the other side of the world. It’s a pretty cool idea! On the blogging side of things, it’s a little sketchier. I have trouble taking any blogger seriously if they can’t write properly, if their spelling and syntax is all over the shop. Blurry photos are a real turn off too. Anyone with internet access can have a blog these days and whether or not they have any talent, fashion-wise or otherwise, they are broadcasting it to the web at large. You often run the risk of being “inspired” by some pretty uninspiring people. If you took half these people seriously, you’d be dressed in beige and brown all day every day. Occasionally though you will stumble across a pretty good style blog and you’ll find that these are the ones which have already garnered a lot of followers. These blogs tend to be unique and stand out from the tens

of thousands of other fashion blogs, because of the way they’re written or because of the unusual style.

The most popular blogs are those which bring something new to the table. If you’re looking to start up your own style blog, think about what you can offer that other people can’t. Is your style unique? Are you funny? Are you high-street high-couture or charity shop chic? Are you dressing a curvier body? Find your niche and, if you’re lucky, you might just make a pretty successful style blog.

These days, it’s impossible not to be involved in the fashion world in one way or another. Blogs and user-generated sites like Lookbook are the way forward, I think, in making fashion for everyone, with inspirational and achievable styles and pieces often found in charity or vintage shops. It’s a refreshing alternative to the pages upon pages of advertising found in your average copy of *Company* or *Stellar*.



Two bloggers with the forum ‘Bloggers Wardrobe’.

“The most popular blogs are those which bring something new to the table.”

The effectiveness of corporation blogging

Sophie McDermott

The blogging world has become so big in the last few years that everyone is involved. With 150 million blogs out there, it’s no wonder that corporations have jumped on board and are using blogging to their advantage.

Blog marketing has many benefits for a company to develop their customer base and to promote their products and services more efficiently. So, why is blog marketing the new way forward for fashion companies worldwide? Blogging enables corporations to develop a more personal dialogue with their customers and to allow the customers to get a feel for the personality of the company.

Companies that blog have 55 per cent more visitor activity on their website, this also results in more online sales than ever before. Blogging is also a good way for companies to gather feedback in relation to their products and services. The blog can act as a focus group for target markets as the comments feature allows the public to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product or service.

It also means that companies can take new ideas and suggestions from consumers and improve their product ranges. But how effective is blogging for corporations and does it actually reach the targeted audience?

This can be difficult to tell as there is no concrete way of measuring the

success that blog marketing can give to corporations. However, a “tagging” feature is available so that companies can tag keywords in their blogs which will then lead people to the blog and company when they search these keywords on the Internet. Blog marketing is absolutely necessary for companies to keep up to date with consumers on the internet and also address any complaints that consumers may have and be blogging about it themselves. The fashion industry has many different types of blogs whereby people voice their opinions and own preferences, this makes it essential for fashion houses and retail shops to get involved in this blogosphere.

Major global companies, Topshop and Urban Outfitters, are examples of retailers that have taken advantage of the blog marketing phenomenon and neither of these successful chains seem to be suffering for it.

As well as improving customer relations, blog marketing creates a buzz about new products that is needed to get the public excited. So does blog marketing do the job? Without a doubt! Not only is the target market reached, but the potential customer market grows significantly and with the right kind of writer, blog marketing can really make a company a global success.

Who is the Sartorialist?

Marie Enright

WHO or what is “The Sartorialist”?

I have recently become an avid follower of this fashion blog, an online revelation that has grown rapidly in popularity in recent years. Nowadays, fashion blogging has become popular.

The Sartorialist is unique in the sense that it aims to incorporate high end fashion into everyday life and that is why it has the reputation of being so respected in the fashion blogging world.

Some people have a particular website they check immediately when they go online.

For some, it is Facebook and for others it may be the Daily Mail. I, however, have become so attached to The Sartorialist and its alluring posts that it is now my new homepage.

One of the most interesting aspects of this blog is that it is written by a male.

Most popular fashion blogs are written by women which makes The Sartorialist stand out from its many competitors. Its focus is mainly on fashion photography which the creator,

Scott Schuman, began as something of a hobby after leaving a fashion sales position to look after his daughter.

The primary aim of The Sartorialist was to create a two way dialogue between the world of fashion and its relationship to daily life.

Some may consider it as the bridge between the clothes and the people. What attracts people to certain fashions? What can someone’s outfit say about them? What styles are popular in different countries?

A simple photo can answer all of these questions because as the saying goes, a picture tells a thousand words.

Schuman has captured fashion in places such as Milan and Paris and with subjects ranging from the legendary Karl Lagerfeld to the ordinary person.

This can be seen daily on his blog along with many other exciting features.

One of my personal favourites is the collection of vintage photographs from different eras.

It is the perfect resource for some style inspiration and also makes for some nice vintage photography around the house. The fashion shows section is also particularly interesting as it showcases both the fashions on the runway and the fashions of the people who attend the shows.

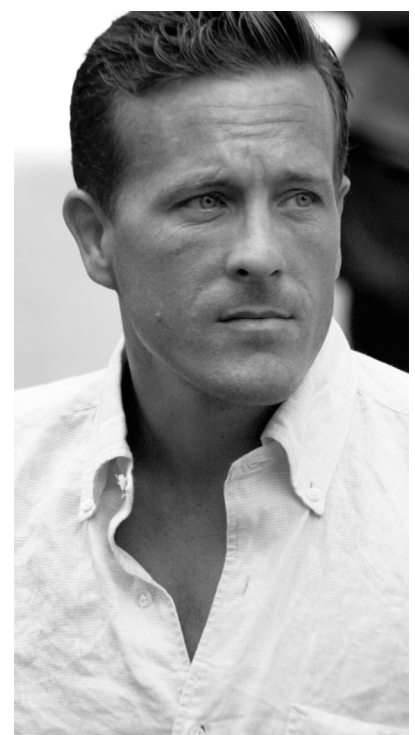
Perhaps this is where designers drew some of their inspiration from. This is a concept which Schuman was keen to explore when he began this blog.

Even though Schuman has had

immense success, it is the origin of his journey that is most compelling.

Schuman’s goal was to capture fashion in a way that designers sought inspiration and I think the Sartorialist has definitely achieved that.

This is not just your average fashion blog as it is almost a window into the origin of where fashion comes from and its relevance in daily life.



Scott Schumann, the creator of the Sartorialist.

Student Speak

STUDENT SPEAK



ULFM Presenters extraordinaire Kevin O'Brien and Jack Deacon braved the SU Courtyard once again.

This time they wanted to know, if there one thing you could change about UL, what would it be?

Paula Coffey, Nevin Kasamtzi and Katie O'Neill.
"Open the shops back up and make the living bridge shorter."



Kirsten McSharry.
"More parking."



Elaine Murphy
"Free Printing."



Niamh Kennedy.
"Nothing! I love UL."



Sean Connolly.
"Chocolate fondu fountain in every lecture theatre."



Olivia Burke.
"No 9am Wednesday lectures."



Dermot Buckley.
"Even more parking and reopen the Dromroe shop."



Daniel Hanlon.
"24 hour library."



Regina Hayes.
"Comfier seats."



Chris Finucane.
"Cheaper Pints and bigger deli."

AN FOCAL

13

Turn to page 17 to read about Liam Neeson:
An Irish hunk of Hollywood by Roisin Burke.

21st February 2012



Issue 9 FREE
Volume XX

Art in The Rare Oul' Times



Aubrey O'Connell

OSCAR Wilde once wrote that "an ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style".

But in today's more sensitive, multicultural world, just how do the musings of the literary legend fare? Aubrey O'Connell takes a look.

I'm not racist but... A line which I'm sure we've all heard from our older (and wiser?) generations, making us instantly slam our heads in our hands as they rattle off once acceptable statements. But is that knee-jerk reaction to close our ears to what they're saying the right thing to do? Political correctness is a nice idea in theory. I mean the majority of us don't want to cause offence to anyone, and racism in general is plain wrong. Communism is a nice idea in theory too (am I allowed say that?).

Art, whether it be music or painting or the likes, has always served to provoke thought and emotion in its audience. If it didn't it wouldn't be much use to anyone, right? Well, sometimes to stir this response it inadvertently steps on a few toes. Until recently this hasn't been a huge problem, but as multiculturalism continues to grow, artists risk offence by creating anything slightly controversial. An example would be the recent protest by an Irish radio listener to the line: "I lost her to a student chap with a skin as black as coal" in the Dubliners' "The Rare Oul' Times". Violin-wielding John Sheahan calmly stated that it was revealing a real time in Ireland when not many black people were seen, and thus they were considered as competition when on the pull for Irish girls. Is this racist and does it deserve to be torn from the song? If we look back to the minstrel shows it is impossible to imagine them being performed in the present day. There is a fine line between art tackling sensitive subjects and art just seeking to be offensive. I have a feeling that should one of these blackface shows return that there would be mass protests taking place. And you couldn't argue against that. They were crude shows that simply centred on the fact that faces had been blacked up which is be construed as racist.

The fact is, in many senses, our own island is becoming more and more of a nanny state, telling its inhabitants when they can consume alcohol, where they can smoke and so on. Record companies hold a tight grasp upon the integrity of many artists' work and publishers control the flow of the written word. The very reason being that they know their audience is becoming more sensitive and conservative and wish to shy away from repercussions. If we continue on this road art forms will become so stifled that their artists' produce will be meaningless grey matter.

We need to learn the difference between art attempting to tackle tricky subjects to make a point and those just spreading hate.

We shouldn't let mindless moaning via Joe Duffy and the likes decide which category art falls into.

What would Oscar Wilde make of today's pernicky political correctness being applied to art?

Arts & Ents

Not quite a new wheel, but a revolution nonetheless



Scottish indie rockers, The Twilight Sad

Josh Lee,
Arts and Entertainment Editor

SINCE the release of 'Fourteen Autumns & Fifteen Winters' in 2007, Scottish band The Twilight Sad has been something of a safe bet. The combination of brooding, hazy guitar walls and lead singer, James Graham's burly, sometimes cryptic, Scottish accent produced two fabulous albums. Their 2009 follow-up, 'Forget the Night Ahead', was concentrated further. Guitars oozed like molasses over pounding drums and Graham provided more husky Scot narration.

But becoming mired in familiarity has been the downfall of many an exciting band. Often times, the hallmark of a truly great act is the ability, and more importantly willingness, to constantly evolve and change, even if not always immediately for the better.

This is something The Twilight Sad seems to have recognised leading up to the release of their third album, 'No One Can Ever Know'. The band's intent was made clear early on; Graham pledging that the wall of sound is "kinda gone", and the album will feature a more extensive use of keyboards, while being "more considered". Andrew Weatherall, who notably helped craft a certain other Scottish band's much-lauded 1991 album *Screamadelica*, was drafted for production duties.

The result is satisfying. Opening track "Alphabets" introduces uncharacteristic swooping synths while the trademark wailing guitars are subdued.

Cleverly, 'No One' isn't an attempt at a complete reinvention of the wheel, ensuring fans comfortable with the band's familiar shtick won't be repelled as the band nobly search for artistic renewal. What made The Twilight Sad such a rewarding band is still very much present, if in a more subtle role. The insatiable forceful melodies, the irresistibly demure Scotch tones of Graham and the haunting intensity packaged into every track.

Trent Reznor and Nine Inch Nails were cited as influences in the production of 'No One', and it's perhaps the industrial influences that excite the most on the new LP. Second track "Dead City"'s clanking percussion and abrasive riffs send a steely message of defiance.

Along with Interpol, The Twilight Sad have been prominent members of the recent post-punk revival. "Nil" evokes this pedigree with its sparse, embattled rhythms not all too far removed from the likes of Bauhaus – or even The Cure during its early '80s Gothic period. Albeit featuring a warm Scottish accent. Much like the record itself, third-from-last track "Another Bed" is an interesting mixture of dark shivering synths, punchy drumlines and not-so-audible lyrics (note the lack of quotes in the review). Not that the particulars matter all that much when 'No One Can Ever Know' is such a compelling package.

Irish acts to contest new category at Meteor Awards

Barbara Ross

A NEW category has been added to the Meteor Choice Awards for the first time in its seven-year history.

Ten of Ireland's favourite songs from last year compete to take home the title of Meteor Choice Music Prize Irish Song of the Year 2011. Voting will be conducted via text and online via Meteor's Facebook page, facebook.com/meteor Bell X1 are well known on the Irish music scene and their song "Velcro" has been taken from the album "Bloodless Coup" which has also been nominated for the Album of the Year Award. The Coronas have played in UL the last couple of years and the nominated "Addicted to Progress" has the classic Corona feel good style that has won them their huge fan base. Lisa Hannigan's husky voice and fresh songs like "Knots" has seen her receive

various award nominations and critical praise both in Ireland and the USA.

Royseven's "We Should Be Lovers" was the most played Irish song on Irish radio in 2011 and the fourth most played song overall. The R&B artist Maverick Sabre is known for his eerie vocals and guitar playing. "Let me go" has over three million views on Youtube and fans are plugging it as the perfect song for a Bond movie.

Snow Patrol have won five Meteor Ireland Music Awards during their career and they have again been nominated with "Called Out In The Dark" which has received nearly six million view on Youtube.

This Club were originally called Hoarsebox but a change in musical direction meant a new name. "I Won't Worry" is the perfect example of an

energetic, feel good song. Cashier No. 9 have an infectious happy sound that is reminiscent of the '60s American sound. "Goldstar" is the result of eclectic, layered, guitar-jangling country-laced pop with cascading melodies.

There are a number of things that stand out about The Kanyu Tree. But above all it comes down to the sound. "Radio" sounds both surprisingly familiar and like little else around today.

Little Green Cars have just recorded their debut and award nominated single 'The John Wayne'. It is a classic love song told in a refreshing way.

This is a mixed bag of nominations that showcases what talent Ireland has and it is nice to see some lesser known bands like Little Green Cars in the same category as bands like Bell X1.



Galway band The Kanyu Tree are up for a Meteor Award this year

Limerick Baritone impresses UCH audience

Louise Harrison

LOCAL Baritone Owen Gilhooly's performance in the University Concert Hall February 2 ended to rapturous applause.

Owen played Papageno in Opera Theatre Company's (OTC) magnificent production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Directed by Annilese Miskimmon, who has been nominated for numerous awards, Gilhooly has created a clever and artistic production which showcases Mozart's music with great stagecraft.

Ingenious use of space and imaginative lighting worked as a perfect frame for the talented soloists who made the most challenging of arias sound easy.

The beautiful voices were enhanced by engaging acting and a fluidity of movement and dance.

Sung in English with translation by Duncan Robertson, Mozart's sense of humour was easily interpreted by the audience who laughed out loud at times.

Music Director Brenda Hurley played piano accompaniment and also conducted the orchestra of six.

Owen, who first trained with Jean Holmes in the Limerick School of



Limerick baritone, Owen Gilhooly

Music, has seen his international career go from strength to strength.

He represented Ireland at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World 2007 and in 2009 he made his Viennese debut singing the title role in Conti's *Don Chisciotte* in Serena Morena.

Even with Owen's busy schedule of performances he manages to find time to teach at the Mid-West Vocal Academy, Lisnagry, his own school which he established last year.

The OTC will stage eight more performances of *The Magic Flute* around Ireland finishing the tour in Carlow on February 18.

Arts & Ents

The Simpsons' Power

Paul O'Sullivan

FOX has announced that Wikileaks founder Julian Assange will take a break from fighting deportation to Sweden to lend his voice to The Simpsons' 500th episode, which aired in the US on February 19.

While we look forward to what should be an interesting and momentous occasion, Paul O'Sullivan takes a look at some of the cartoon's previous

guest stars. I'm sure most would agree that The Simpsons is one of the best written cartoons in history.

The show is nothing short of genius, especially in its heyday all those years ago. Its success resulted in a countless number of guest appearances from the world of celebrity. Most fans would have their favourites depending on each individual's area of interest.

Guest appearances have come from actors, musicians, writers and public figures. One of the most notable guest spots came from actor Kelsey Grammar, star of the hit American TV show Frasier. He has been the voice of Sideshow Bob from the beginning, and his work on these episodes as

the educated convict hell-bent on murdering Bart Simpson has made those particular episodes memorable. Seriously, who could forget that man stepping on all those rakes?

Kiefer Sutherland has been known to make a couple of appearances on the show, most notably when he portrayed Jack Bauer on a special episode which exclusively parodied '24'.

A fan of the hit thriller would have been very happy with all of the references. For example, the Counter Terrorist Unit being downgraded to Counter Truancy Unit, or Jack Bauer's trademark "damn it!" moment. The show has also boasted appearances from some of the biggest names in

music including U2, Johnny Cash (as a coyote), The Who, Aerosmith, Coldplay, Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Smashing Pumpkins and so on. The list is endless.

However, in this particular list, special reference has to be given to the episode where Homer becomes Sanitation Commissioner, which features both U2 and Steve Martin. Bono's contribution is unforgettable, stopping a gig to discuss waste management much to the annoyance of his band mates.

Steve Martin also shines in this episode. It is his contribution, as with most of the other guest stars, that makes these episodes special. For example,

Martin's final moments in the episode where he delivers a speech to the residents of Springfield is hilarious: "Oh gosh, you know, I'm not much on speeches but it is so gratifying to leave you wallowing in the mess you've made, you're screwed, thank you, bye". Other memorable moments include Barney requesting "Chili Willy", Jerry Springer trying to settle a dispute between Homer and Kang the alien, Pierce Brosnan as a murderous, futuristic house and many more.



Controversial figure Julian Assange is set to make a cameo in The Simpsons' 500th episode.

Robert C Kelly Presents

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Directed & Choreographed by Andrew Lynford

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It was the best of times...

Josh Lee,
Arts and Entertainment Editor

BY THE time this article is printed, you've probably had the pleasure of reading a million and one tributes, celebrations, adorations, exaltations and excitations to the great Charles John Huffam Dickens as the world marked his 200th birthday on February 7. You may have noticed that as the amount of attention around Dickens' bicentenary has increased, the amount of meta-articles has risen. One could probably whip up a fancy chart implying all sorts of correlations and causations. Clearly, I've avoided the self-referential pitfalls.

However, back to Dickens. The British Council organised a 24-hour global 'readathon' in his honour, with 24 countries consecutively reading excerpts from Dickens' work. Prince Charles enjoyed a private reading from Gillian Anderson in London, and the author's great-great-grandson laid a wreath at his great-great-grandfather's grave in his birthplace of Portsmouth. Old news by now, of course.

The question is: why? Just what is the literary icon's significance? Is the 200th birthday of a Victorian fossil not simply a distraction from the real trouble which has befallen the globe? As I write this, the Greek government is reeling from a two-day general strike and financial rejection from the unhallowed troika while the Greek people take to the streets (I shudder to think what the situation is

like now). The thing is, while Dickens' novels are quintessentially Victorian; his books stuffed with colourful characters, entwining sub-plots and stomach-churning sentimentality. But, importantly, he manages to be more relevant to the present than most writers who can boast the distinct advantage of living in it. There's biting modern social commentary to be found in his Victorian masterpieces like 'Great Expectations', 'Bleak House' and 'A Tale of Two Cities'. Social commentary that has maintained, if not somehow increased, its modernity. Somewhat like a fine wine, I suppose.

Yet, even if you were to strip away all that you would still be left with a writers whose command and manipulation of the English language ranks among the best the world has ever seen. Dickens' depictions of the bustling life of a London reaping the benefits of the Industrial Revolution have come to define the city in many ways. And while his imagined worlds may be no match for the high-fantasy of J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle Earth, it is just as breath-taking and fantastical because of its roots in the real.

So there you have; yet another article about Dickens. Personally, I'm looking forward to the tricentennial.

Film

The Artist paints quite the picture

Jane O'Faherty

AWARDS season 2012 is in full swing and, as always, one particular film is dominating the pre-Oscar hype. However, something makes this film different. It has no CGI. The dialogue is minimal, limited to a few subtitles. But most notably, the entire film is in black and white.

However, it has been nominated for 12 BAFTAs and 10 Oscars, including the award for best picture in both cases. So why is a silent movie, like *The Artist*, so critically acclaimed in 2012?

The Artist follows the relationship between a silent movie star, George Valentin (Jean Dujardin) and an extra named Peppy Miller (Bérénice Bejo), in 1920's Hollywood. George is at

the top of his game: the typical, well-groomed, well-dressed hero of silent cinema. Peppy is an aspiring actress, dreaming of a future as a leading lady. Through a variety of chance meetings, George gets Peppy a role in his latest film and, crucially, gives her advice that jumpstarts her career. At the same time, he rejects the emergence of movies with audible dialogue, or 'talkies'. Both of these developments lead to a role reversal. George is let go by his film studio and left bankrupt by the Wall Street Crash. On top of that, his self-produced silent movie is a flop. Meanwhile, Peppy rises to the top of the Hollywood career ladder, starring in the now extremely popular 'talkies'.

What is the secret to *The Artist's* appeal? Firstly, the medium of silent cinema is both retrospective and refreshing. It reminds us of the glory days of old Hollywood and those black-and-white movies we see on Sunday afternoons. At the same time, it is something that modern audiences

have never experienced in cinemas before. The story is told through facial expressions and body language, proving that a glance or a smile can say more than pages of script. The musical score (written by Ludovic Bource) also contributes to the narrative, from the highs of George's success to the lows of his breakdown. The entire ensemble of actors (including Uggie, the dog), give brilliant performances.

Can we expect more silent films in today's theatres? I don't think so. *The Artist's* success relies on its originality. It is unlike anything else we can see in modern cinemas. *The Artist* is set to be a classic, but if we were bombarded with more and more silent films, the novelty would be lost. Instead, its triumph should draw attention to the work of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Laurel and Hardy. *The Artist* may continue its winning streak at the Oscars, but perhaps its greatest achievement would be to promote the excellent films that inspired it.



The Artist's success relies on its originality.

Let's go see the Stars

Dhonnchadh Tiernan

I have sufficient knowledge of a subject within me to predict the results of a disgustingly self-important competition between vastly overpaid megastars whom I secretly wish to number amongst.

One must wonder why any serious fan of films would indulge in the Academy Awards, but that is a gross under reading of the true reason we watch.

I, being an equal fan of cynicism and films, find the safest bets I've ever made in my local bookies have been my annual Oscar pools: stake your house, your car, your tie. February 27 is the deadline for thank-you cards.

Best Picture will be won by *The Artist*, but should be won by *Hugo* and all because this being a wildcard kind of year, the Academy will opt safely for the biggest feel good, feel smart factor available (see *Slumdog*, 2008) and no one's ready to dole out the big 'un for 3D, even with *Marty* at the helm.

Best Actor will be won by George Clooney (*The Descendants*), but should be won by Gary Oldman (*Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*) and all because the buzz of hype round Clooney this year's deafening and his depressed widower trying to reconnect with his daughters character is pitch-perfect Oscar fodder.

Best Supporting Actor will be won by Nick Nolte (*Warrior*), and should be won by Nick Nolte. The Supporting categories are where the Academy usually take the opportunity to bow for pure raw talent on show.

Best Actress will be won by Viola Davis (*The Help*), but should be won by Rooney Mara (*Dragon Tattoo*) and all because everyone in Hollywood, having lost their tear-ducts to cosmetic surgery, loves a genuine cry like Davis



Awards season is upon us, but who will win?

gave at the Globes, and Mara is too young. Sorry Mara.

Best Supporting Actress will be won by Bérénice Bejo (*The Artist*), and probably should be too, if only because she lacks a worthier opponent.

Best Director will be won by Alexander Payne (*The Descendants*), but should be won by Martin Scorsese (*Hugo*), and all because they forgot to give Payne one for *Sideways* and have already remembered to give *Marty* one. Sorry *Marty*. For a full list of my Oscar predictions (the more you pool, the hedgier the bet) check out my blog: <http://d-blockd-blog.blogspot.com/>

A film for the hopeless romantic

Niamh Masterson

'*Like Crazy*' is definitely a film for the hopeless romantic.

It centres on a British student, Anna, going to college in America where she falls in love with an American boy, Jacob. We see in the beginning there is a spark of love.

Her visa runs out just before the summer and she decides that she can't leave Jacob just yet. But when she returns to America after her cousins wedding she isn't allowed to enter the country.

From that point on it's a story of lovers that break up and get back together more times than I could

possibly count. Their relationship gets ruined by insecurities and paranoia. Their love goes from passionate to more of an appreciation of each other which makes us question if that's always the outcome of love?

Though it only takes thirteen minutes of the film to pass before they meet the parents, said 'I love you' and move in together, the rest of the film is more realistic.

It shows how hard long distance relationships can be and how relationships in general are never going to be plain sailing.

On the other hand, this film can become very confusing.

The central couple get together and they also get with other people. It is hard to keep track of what relationship

we're following. But overall I think this film gives us great insight.

To be honest I don't think I'd watch '*Like Crazy*' again. Although I did appreciate parts of the film, I was bored watching it and it was depressing most of the time.

Films like '*Knocked Up*' and '*Friends with Benefits*' however I have watched so many times because they are entertaining.

In short, '*Like Crazy*' is a film for a person who wants a good old romantic, soppy film but steer well clear if you're looking for something a bit uplifting.



Like Crazy - steer well clear if you're looking for something uplifting.

Film

Irish hunk of Hollywood

Roisin Burke

HOLLYWOOD and Ireland are worlds apart, but bridging the gap is our very own Liam Neeson; An Irish hunk of Hollywood.

Acting was not his first career choice, professional soccer, amateur boxing, teaching and working for Guinness all trumped his eventual stardom. But over many years our Irish hunk has starred in a wide range of quality films

Shindlers list was one of his first memorable performances as a German businessman who saved almost a thousand refugees during the Holocaust. It is a passionately proud period piece that is loved by all ages. It holds an emotional tenacity that touches even the most impenetrable of hearts.

Neeson displayed talented acting as the Irish patriot Michael Collins in a historic biopic written by Neil Jordan. This film proved extremely popular and is an all-time favourite for Irish people and anyone with interest in the events that formed the Irish nation. Revealing a more romantic side in the film 'Love actually', Liam plays a widowed husband struggling to rear a young boy and dealing with the loneliness of single parenthood. Fiction films also proved successful for the Irish actor

such as Star wars, Batman begins and The Chronicles of Narnia. His versatile acting also saw him take a role in the independent film Breakfast on Pluto starring alongside Cillian Murphy. He has also acted in several action films such as Taken and the A team. His latest acting stint is The Grey, a dark tale about survival against all odds. In this American thriller Neeson is stranded in Alaska with a group of men following a plane crash. Their survival is not only threatened by the uncertainty of food supplies, location, and lack of communication with civilisation, their odds of survival are further reduced by a pack of hunting wolves. Liam Neeson has had a long, varied career since entering the world of Hollywood yet has never managed to grasp an Oscar or Golden Globe award. His efforts and talents are constantly preceded and surpassed by other actors of equal ability. Although he has not managed to achieve trophy success his versatility as an actor is transparent in his film choices. His achievement is his ability to pick films and characters that will be loved, adored and watched forever.

His acting and career will never be forgotten because his work is timeless enjoyable and that is approval that cannot be captured in shiny metal. Not only is Liam Neeson bridging the gap between Hollywood and Ireland, he is solidifying his name in the stars.



Liam Neeson's latest acting stint is *The Grey*, a dark tale about survival against all odds.

Great Savings For You



Hi there! My name is John Vaughan and I am the General Manager of ten restaurant outlets within the UL campus including the Eden Restaurant, Red Raisin, Kemmy Business

School and Café Allegro. We have a local team of 50 people working across the campus dedicated to providing you with quality food and refreshments during the many hours you spend on campus.

We aim to offer the best value to students coupled with great offers and increased variety. With the introduction of our new hot and cold offers coinciding with our current value offers (for example the €3.99 Student Hot Special at lunch time) we will demonstrate that it is as cost effective and nutritious to eat in our student restaurants as it is to go home and cook. Our goal is to continue to provide service excellence to all our customers across the campus and we look forward to welcoming new customers to our restaurant.



In Eden, following the launch of our exciting new food offers - Bleeker Street - New York Deli, Burger Studio, Pizza Pronto and Pan Asian, we have now added a further range of offers and meal deals to fit every student's budget. Here is a snapshot of what we have added - Pizza Slice & Salad only €2.50, Half

Pizza & Salad only €3.95, 'Create Your Own' Quarter Pounder from €2.99, Coffee & Muffin only €2.99 and great value meal deals for under €5! We have also added a build your own mega deal promotion. There are great savings involved with this promotion. Check out our new offers 'Zoca Mexican' and 'Chip Shop' which are coming soon, and don't forget to pick up your loyalty cards at the till for your free meals and tea or coffees.



Come along to Eden and check out our great value offers or why not look us up on Facebook (Eden UL@facebook.com) to win €10 Eden gift vouchers EVERY WEEK!

I joined the team at University Limerick three years ago - I really enjoy my time here - meeting the students and staff, looking to identify and introduce new and innovative ways to provide you with the best possible food offers on campus. Prior to that I worked across the Hotel and Hospitality industry both in Ireland and Continental Europe for over 15 years, managing a number of hotels. Customer satisfaction is our number one priority, so many thanks to all those who took part in the focus groups in 2011, whose feedback has directly led to the introduction of our new value meal deals, menus and great value promotions being launched this term. You asked, we listened!

Helping the Local Economy
At ARAMARK, we pride ourselves on working

PIZZA PRONTO

Pizza Slice & Salad
only €2.50

Half Pizza & Salad
only €3.95

BURGER STUDIO

Create your own burger
from only €2.99

BLEECKER ST.

Check out the new hot chicken baguette counter!

Chicken baguette from only €3.49

with local suppliers thus supporting local jobs whilst ensuring that only the best quality produce is sourced and to deliver the highest standards to our customers on campus every day. One of these suppliers is Pallas Foods. Pallas Foods started in 1985 as a small family business when the Geary family began supplying fresh chicken and eggs to the local market in 1985, from their base in Pallasgreen, Co Limerick. As the business developed they hired a small team and purchased their first vans to service an expanding market all the while expanding their product portfolio in response to requests from their customers and from other local Irish suppliers who needed a partner to manage their distribution to the foodservice industry.

Today Pallas Foods is based in Newcastle West, Co Limerick and has 8 distribution centres across the country making over 13,500 deliveries each week across the 32 counties. The product portfolio includes fresh, frozen or ambient food, wine and beverages plus hygiene and disposables to make Pallas Foods a complete solution for the foodservice industry. There are approximately 520 people employed by Pallas Foods with over 250 based in the Limerick head office.

Pallas Foods and ARAMARK

Pallas Foods is established as a long term trusted partner of ARAMARK who provide the food service at Eden UL. This relationship is such that Pallas Foods works closely with their network of suppliers to develop bespoke offerings to ARAMARK to ensure they can provide their customers with superior quality, superb value and a tasty and varied offering to incorporate into their menus.

Pallas Foods have a long term commitment to supporting and working with Irish suppliers to grow their business and to promote a strong and diverse local food offering. Purchasing Manager Eddie Heffernan comments 'We recognise the importance of the food and drink sector to the Irish economy and are proud to support smaller food producers that have the potential to bring new and innovative products to our business'. Two thirds of all products sold by Pallas Foods are sourced from Irish suppliers and the company has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustaining and growing this business.

 Find us on Facebook

Shag Week

Contraceptives Explained

Types of Contraceptives

Contraception is used to prevent pregnancy. There are three types of contraception which can be used to avoid fertilisation and prevent conception:

Hormonal methods. These methods use sex hormones to change fertility by blocking sperm, stopping the release of the egg and changing the lining of the womb. They are very

effective but may have side effects. These methods do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). **Barrier methods.**

These methods of contraception rely on blocking access of sperm to the egg or the egg to the lining of the womb or both.

There are usually less side effects than with hormonal methods as they work locally. Only the condom reduces the risk of STIs.

Timing methods. These methods depend on choosing to have sex at those times of the month when the woman is not fertile. These methods do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are infections that are passed on from an infected partner(s) during unprotected sex (vaginal, anal and oral). They are caused by specific bacteria and viruses. In some cases, you may be at risk even if you don't have full sex. Kissing and touching each other's genitals may pass on some STIs. Some people refer to STIs as STDs or sexually transmitted diseases.

There are many different STIs. Some are more common than others. Most can be cured with medication.

However, some of them can only be treated to reduce symptoms but will stay in your system once you have been infected.

If you are having sex, practice safe sex. If you are sexually active you should have regular STI Checks. Screening is free in the Student Health Centre.

If the screening shows something up, then you can make an appointment for an STI test at a HSE Clinic. They'll have seen it all before, so embarrassment takes a back seat. Your health is more important. There is more information on STIs on the ULSU website.

The Pill (combined oral contraceptive pill)

A pill that is a combination of progestogen and oestrogen, and is taken daily. It may make periods lighter, more regular and less painful. It may cause side effects such as headaches, nausea, breast tenderness and weight gain, although changing the type of Pill may help these problems.

Vaginal ring (NuvaRing)

A soft plastic ring which is self-inserted into the vagina and slowly releases low doses of oestrogen and progestogen into the bloodstream. It is left in place for 3 weeks and taken out for a week. It may cause less side effects than the Pill because it releases lower doses of hormones. The risk of failure associated with diarrhoea and vomiting is avoided as the hormones don't have to go through the stomach.

Emergency contraception (EC)

Progestogen tablet taken after unprotected sex. It should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex for maximum effectiveness. It may still be effective if taken within 5 days of unprotected sex. It is available over the counter at pharmacies.

Progestogen-only pill

A progestogen pill taken every day. It must be taken at a regular time every day. It may cause side effects, including irregular bleeding, weight gain, moodiness and pimples.

Injectable contraception: Depo Ralovera or Provera

A progestogen injection given regularly every 12 weeks. Periods usually stop while using this method. It may cause side effects, including irregular bleeding, weight gain, moodiness and pimples, and these have to be tolerated until the injection wears off. It may temporarily delay a return to normal periods and fertility after stopping the injections.

Contraceptive implant: Implanon

A progestogen implant that is placed in the upper arm and is effective for 3 years. Periods change and bleeding may become lighter, heavier, come when not expected or stop altogether. It may cause side effects, including weight gain, moodiness and pimples. The implant can be removed at any time. When the implant is removed, periods and fertility return to normal immediately. The implant is inserted and removed under local anaesthetic by some GPs and gynaecologists.

Intra-uterine device (IUD): Mirena

This device is placed in the uterus and releases a small amount of progestogen. It is effective for 5 years. Although there may be some irregular bleeding and/or spotting at first, the device makes periods lighter and may stop them altogether. There are minimal side effects because the dose of hormone is small and works within the uterus. It is inserted by some GPs and gynaecologists.

Other methods Intra-uterine devices (IUD): Multiload and Copper T

The device is placed in the uterus. It affects sperm movement and prevents the implantation of the egg. Copper T is effective for 10 years and Multiload is effective for 5 years. Periods may be heavier or more painful. There are no hormones, so no hormonal side effects. It is inserted by some GPs and gynaecologists.

Condom

A thin sheath of rubber that is placed on an erect penis before contact occurs between the penis and the vagina to prevent pregnancy. Condoms also reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections. It is more effective when used with water-based lubricant to prevent friction and breakage. It is available at supermarkets, pharmacies, vending machines in public toilets, and at some health clinics.

Diaphragm

A soft, dome-shaped rubber cap that is placed over the cervix and can be used in conjunction with spermicide. It must be inserted before sex and left in place for at least 6 hours following intercourse. It is initially fitted by a doctor or by some GPs.

Withdrawal (not recommended)

Withdrawal is removing the penis from the vagina before ejaculation (cumming). This is unreliable because sperm can be present in the pre-cum.

mojo[®]

Condoms

Relax, we've got you covered!



got your mojo? get it @ your SU!

Shag Week

Sexual Health Myths Busted

NOBODY can assume that they are exempt from the risk of Sexually Transmitted Infections or AIDS. Safer sex practices are the best way to limit the chances of contracting STIs.

1. MYTH - Contraceptives protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

FACT - Other than total sexual abstinence, only condoms currently provide significant protection against HIV and other STIs

2. MYTH - "I haven't been exposed to sexually transmitted infection because we only did it once."

FACT - Don't deceive yourself. By being sexually active (vaginal, anal or oral sex) even once puts you at risk of developing or transmitting STIs.

3. MYTH - "I don't have any of the signs or symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases, so I can't be infected."

FACT - Not all STIs have signs or symptoms of infection, especially Chlamydia. If you have had unprotected sex you should visit your local STI Clinic and get tested.

4. MYTH - "I have a vaginal discharge and am a little itchy. I don't need to see a doctor when I can just buy one of those vaginal yeast infections that are sold at my pharmacy or grocery store."

FACT - Not all vaginal infections are vaginal yeast infections. The symptoms of STIs are often confused with other conditions, which results in a misdiagnosis and delay in proper treatment.

5. MYTH - "I think I might have some type of sexually transmitted disease. But I'm not too worried, after all I just need to get a prescription and it will be gone."

FACT - This casual attitude of taking a pill won't cure all types of STIs. Antibiotic treatments only cure bacterial STIs, for example. Viral STIs are lifelong diseases and you must constantly remain aware of their continual presence. Viral STIs include HIV, the virus that causes AIDS; the human papilloma virus or HPV, genital herpes.

6. MYTH - You can tell the sort of person who is likely to have an STI by what they look like. You just have to be a good judge of character.

FACT - Don't judge a book by its cover. Anyone who is sexually active can have an STI. You don't have to have had a large number of sexual partners to host an STI.

Talking about Sex

Great sex doesn't depend on you or the other person being an expert, it depends on two people being comfortable to explore and enjoy each other.

It can be difficult and embarrassing, and it isn't always easy to talk to your partner(s) about sex in general and particularly about what is important for you during sex. But the more you talk about sex with your partner(s) the easier it becomes to discuss the sex you really want.

- Think about what you want - think about what you like.

- Don't be afraid to say 'Yes' or 'No' depending on what feels right for you.

- Be prepared to negotiate and agree to practice safer sex.

- Tell your partner what you like as well as being clear about what you don't like.

- It is ok to refuse someone and say no.

- It is ok to say 'stop I've changed my mind, I don't want to take this any further'.

- It is ok to say 'I am not having sex without a condom'.

thinking of Sex?

You have the right to change your mind, no matter how far you have or haven't gone. You may need to say 'No' verbally and non-verbally. The clearest way to say 'No' is to walk away or remove yourself from the situation. Sex against your will is considered sexual assault or rape.

If this happens you can do something about it. Talk to a health worker or contact a rape crisis centre. In Ireland the age of consent is 17 - a person is not legally old enough to agree to have any form of sex until they are at least 17.

Sex Happens

Sex happens for some people and for others it doesn't. It's no biggie either way, once you're happy enough to go with the flow. But either way, always carry a condom. That applies to guys and girls. Always practice safe sex and do not assume your partner has a condom.

Condoms are available from your SU. You don't have to pay, but the SU staff encourages you to give a donation towards our nominated Charities if you're picking up condoms. The SU supplies different types of condom, including extra strong for anal sex and non-latex for the small minority with a latex allergy. Lube is also provided.

Wearing a condom is the safest form of contraception and protection from STIs. Glyde Dams are also available. Always use a condom for sexual activity, even if it's not full on sexual intercourse.



RAPE
DO SOMETHING



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Rape Crisis Apps

www.rcni.ie/apps

know how to help a friend



RCNI



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National Development Plan 2007-2011



The National Office for the Promotion of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence



RAPE CRISIS NETWORK IRELAND

Did you know?

Condom size relates to the width of a penis and not its length? Condoms have room to expand in length much more than width. So next time you're looking for a "snug" or "magnum" condom, make sure it's for the right reason.

Charity Week

Charity Week Highlight: Bressie

Headlining this year's Charity Week is solo artist, and former Blizzards frontman Bressie.

The Blizzards were one of Ireland's biggest rock 'n' roll deals, but that didn't stop their guitarist and singer Niall Breslin deciding in January 2010 that he needed a new challenge. "We had six amazing years together," he reflects. "The gigs, the fans, the other guys in the band... it was all brilliant, but I've always found myself being embraced by all genre directions. Not only as a writer and a performer, but as a producer too; I'm fascinated by every part of the music-making process." He has managed to combine both musical genres to glorious effect

as can be heard on his debut solo single, 'Can't Stay Young (Forever)' released on 27 May 2011.

Breslin's second single from the album "Good Intentions", was released on 6 September 2011, and the album Colourblind Stereo was released on 16 September 2011.

He has allied himself with Simon Fuller's 19 Entertainment, whose managerial stable also includes such household names as Jordin Sparks, Adam Lambert, Carrie Underwood and Kelly Clarkson.

You can catch Bressie in The Stables on the Thursday of Charity Week. Stay glued to anfocal.ie and ULMF as one lucky lady might win the chance to make him a sandwich...



Former Blizzards frontman, Bressie, playing the Thursday of Charity Week.

Charity Week Highlight:



Charity Week Highlight: UL Fest



Up-and-coming Irish act, Storyfold.

This year sees a new feature join the ranks of the Charity Week listings. UL Fest is brand new concept for the campus which sees the Student Centre transformed into four different venues. These venues will be The SU Courtyard, The Scholars Club, The Stables Bar and The Stables Courtyard. Acts will be playing all throughout the day and well into the night in each of these venues. Each venue will have a different theme. Acts will be announced in the run up to the event, but currently confirmed are headliners The Kanyu Tree and Storyfold.

The Kanyu Tree

There are any number of things that stand out about Irish trio The Kanyu Tree. The songs. The name. The harmonies. The fact the three members are siblings. But above all, it comes down to one thing. The sound. Listen to their singles 'Radio' and 'Shelf Life' or delve into their 10-track debut album, 'People Street', and you'll hear it. Ask them to define it, and they'll say: "Pop. Classic pop."

Musically, The Kanyu Tree sound both surprisingly familiar and like little else around today. Ask the band what music they like, what they listen to, they always end up in a particular place: that

loose category that will always have a home on the FM dial. They are a band in pursuit of the perfect pop song. Their single 'Radio' is currently nominated for the Song of the Year in The Meteor Awards. For more on that, see page 14.

Storyfold

Produced by Greg Haver (Manic Street Preachers, Super Furry Friends, Bullet For My Valentine, CODES), 'Rocket Science' confirmed the band's status as one of Ireland's most exciting emerging bands. The Irish Independent described it as 'a sparkling and accomplished debut' and BBC Radio1 perfectly identified their 'crossover sound that's edgy enough to be cool but commercial enough to be radio-friendly'. Since selling out Whelan's venue in Dublin the band have played a succession of barnstorming gigs, rocking festivals nationwide from The Sea Sessions to Independence. An exciting invitation from the GAA to play Croke Park in August arrived and 30,000 punters witnessed Storyfold in action. Their debut single, 'Delphine Wakes', was a massive radio hit in 2010 and the follow up, 'Behind Closed Doors', proved just as popular. Radio airplay led to dozens of gigs, rave-reviews led to more, including an incredible gig supporting Indie icons, Feeder, in Dublin's Academy.

Charity Week Highlight: UV Party

One of the main events this Charity Week is the highly anticipated UV Party.

Following the huge success of last semester's party, this ever popular theme was a must for UL Charity Week 2012. ULSU Events and Promotions Manager, Keith Quinlan, will be working his little butt off to make this night one UL never forget... (see what I did there?!).

UV Paint will be provided at the event so all you have to do is don some clothes you don't mind destroying and bring some friends! Week long passes

are available, which will secure you entry to the UV Party, but single tickets for the event will also be available. There will be spot prizes and drink promos available on the day and there will be An Focal photographers and reporters there to document the debauchery. You may even be lucky enough to be picked for a ULMF shout out! This event is guaranteed to sell out. This event is also guaranteed to be messy. So if you want to be a part of one of the biggest parties this Charity Week, you had better be ready to get your hands dirty!



The Great Race

How it Works:

You get yourself a team, you get yourself wheels, you get yourself a camera and you get going. Travel all across the country (and beyond) to collect points. There will be lots of teams just like yours and you'll all be up against each other. Whoever gets the greatest number of points wins! A full breakdown of points available can be found on www.anfocal.ie

More Stuff You Should Know:

Ensure you have a mode of transport and a digital camera! You need the camera to prove you've accomplished your task by having your picture taken at the scene with the newspaper of that day to secure your points. Then it's a case of putting your heads together to figure out how to accumulate the most points in just 72 hours.

The Rules:

1. All participants must sign safety statement.
2. No one driver may drive for a period of more than 4 hours straight.
3. Car must be road legal / nct certified.
4. At least 3 of your team members must be in each photo, and wearing their Charity Week T-Shirts.
5. You must have the day's newspaper clearly on show in each photo also.

The Prize:

1. Free Admission into The Big Gig on the Thursday of Charity Week for your team.
2. Free Charity Week T-Shirts.
3. Winning Team entered into the ULSU Average Jo'lympics Campus Record Book.

Charity Week

Charity Week Listings

Day	Time	Event	Location	
Sun	22:00	Charity Week Warmup Night in Sinbin (50% of Door Sales to ULSU Charity)	The Sinbin Nightclub	ULSU
	00:00	Great Race Finish	The Sinbin Nightclub	ULSU
Mon	All Day	Bucking Bronco	Stables CY	ULSU
	All Day	Xtreme Bungee Trampoline	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	All Day	Sumo Suits	Stables CY	ULSU
	All Day	Gladiator Podiums	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	11:00	90's Themed Rollerjam UV Party (Buses Depart From Stables Archway)	Rollerjam	ULSU
	11:30	Duck Race	River by Kilmurry	ULSU
	12:30	Red Bull Paper Wings Competition	UCH	
	13:00	Raft Race	River by Kilmurry	ULSU
	13:30	Jelly Wrestling	Stables CY	ULSU
	14:30	Iron Stomach	Stables CY	ULSU
	14:30	Yard of Ale / Coke	Scholars	
	From 15:00	Live DJ, Kissing Competition, Blind Date, More Fun Games	The Stables	
	15:30	Locked In The Stocks	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	16:00	Tug Of War	Back of PESS Building	International Soc
	17:00	Lovely Girl Competition (Followed By Drag Race)	Stables CY	Out in UL
	18:30	Strip Auction	The Stables	ULSU
	19:30	Char-a-oke Competition (Charity Karaoke)	The Stables	
	20:00	Casino Night	Sports Bar	Poker Soc
	21:30	The Druids [TBC]	The Stables	
22:00	Pleasurefest 2: UV Paint Party	The Lodge	ULSU	
Tue	All Day	Bucking Bronco	Stables CY	ULSU
	All Day	Xtreme Bungee Trampoline	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	All Day	Sumo Suits	Stables CY	ULSU
	All Day	Gladiator Podiums	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	All Day	Mountain Dew Brushboarding (Urban Surfing) & DJ	Plaza	
	11:00	5-a-Side Soccer	Astroturf	
	11:30	Delta Karting Trip (Buses Depart From Stables Archway)	Delta Karting	ULSU
	12:00	Mock Weddings	Stables CY	ULSU
	12:30	UL Wide Game of Tag	SU Courtyard	
	13:00	Mud Wrestling	Stables CY	
	14:00	Helium Karaoke	Scholars	
	14:30	Nearly Naked Mile	North Campus	RAG Soc
	From 15:00	Take Me Out, Sock Pint Drinking, Bonny Baby Competition, Banana Hoop Competition	The Stables	
	16:00	Hooters Shooters	Scholars	
	17:00	Fifa '12 Tournament	Common Room	
	18:00	Win A Semester's Worth of Beer	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	21:30	Hermitage Green	Scholars	
	22:00	The Farmer's Ball	The Stables	ULSU
	Wed	All Day	Mountain Dew Brushboarding (Urban Surfing) & DJ	Plaza
12:00		Charity Zumba	SU Courtyard	ULSU
13:00		King Of The Campus Launch	SU Courtyard	ULSU
13:30		Shave of Dye	SU Courtyard	ULSU
14:30		Mankini Challenge	Scholars	Scholars
From 15:00		Pole Dancing Competition, Jive Competition	The Stables	
15:30		UL Waterfight	Back of PESS Building	Parkour Club
16:00		Mankini Challenge Wrap up	Scholars	Scholars
16:00		Beer Pong	SU Courtyard	ULSU
16:30		King Of The Campus Finish	SU Courtyard	ULSU
From 17:00	UL Fest At The Four Venues	Student Centre	ULSU	
	Until Late	Sex Quiz	Scholars	Corman
		Trad Night	Scholars	Corman
Thur	12:30	Tag Rugby	UL Pitches	UL Mens Rugby
	13:00	The Sausage-Fest (Sausage Eating Contest)	Scholars	
	13:30	Bed Push Challenge (Race)	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	14:00	Speedball	Back of PESS Building	ULSU
	14:30	Battleshots	SU Courtyard	ULSU
	15:00	An Focal Vs. Thomond Student Times (5-A-Side Grudge Match)	UL Pitches	ULSU
	From 15:00	Cadbury Crème Egg Competition, Snog Race, Nose Pea Push Competition	The Stables	
	16:00	Boat Race	Scholars	
	20.30	Bressie	The Stables	ULSU
Fri	20:00	T.G.I.F.	The Stables	International Soc

*All Times Subject To Change, All Events Subject to Approval. Keep an Eye on www.anfocal.ie for all Updates.

Charity Week Charities

Every year, Charity Week raises much needed funds for specific local and national causes. These charities change every year. This year, they are as follows:

TLC4CF

TLC4CF was founded by friends and family of People with Cystic Fibrosis in Tipperary, Limerick and Clare. We are a regional branch of the Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland, dedicated to improving services for people with Cystic Fibrosis living in the Mid West. The aims of TLC4CF are as follows:

- To raise Awareness of Cystic Fibrosis in the Mid-West Region.
- To raise over 4.2 million Euros to build a Cystic Fibrosis Adult Centre at the Mid-West Regional Hospital Limerick.
- To improve Hospital facilities.
- To lobby for the recommended number of staff to care for Cystic Fibrosis Patients.
- To offer general support services to newly diagnosed families/existing families.



Pieta House

Pieta House is a non-profit organisation providing a specialised treatment programme for people who have suicidal ideation or who participate in self-harming behaviours. Their service is free of charge. 80% of their income comes from Fundraising Events and donations such as Charity Week.

Pieta House, set up in 2006, was the first centre in Ireland that specialised in the prevention of self-harm and suicide. It is an alternative way of helping people in crisis, but it is also a way that encourages collaboration with hospitals and doctors. We are all born with an innate desire to survive.

As humans our instinct is to live and avoid pain, and our struggle is mainly about self-preservation. That is why suicide and self-harm seem not only terrifying but also inexplicable.

It is probably why both are rarely spoken about. Suicide is still a taboo subject, while self-harm is normally consigned to sensationalist story lines on melodramas or labelled as being eccentric behaviour of some celebrities. On top of that, there has never been any focused attention paid to it or any focused therapy created for the behaviour. Before Pieta, people who were suicidal would often end up either in hospital, in a psychiatric unit or heavily medicated. Sometimes all three. In many cases, patients were put on 'suicide watch', a procedure that involves the patient being watched by a nurse or carer every moment of every day even while having showers or using the toilet. For more information, you can visit www.pieta.ie, call 01 601 0000 or email mary@pieta.ie.



The Brothers of Charity

The Brothers of Charity Services empower people with intellectual disability / autism to live the lives they choose.

They are currently undergoing a transformation in the way in which they support and serve people with an intellectual disability in line with best practice internationally.

The organisation forms a relationship/partnership with each individual and their family, enabling them to design their own service so that they can enjoy a real life in a real place with a healthy balance of supports.

They aim to create opportunities for people with an intellectual disability to have valued social roles in their communities and to have the chance to form real friendships.

Rape Crisis Midwest

Their vision: For a society where all adults and children are free from sexual violence. Rape/Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment, no matter when it happens can have a serious effect on your life. Rape or Sexual Assault is one of the most devastating of human experiences. The pain, terror, helplessness and humiliation involved result in severe distress, which can have an impact on every aspect of your life.

Counselling is one way to help the healing process. Counselling with Rape Crisis Midwest takes place in a safe and supportive environment where you can begin to make sense of your thoughts, emotions and feelings.

It can also help you to find your own strengths, resources and enable you to find the best way forward.

We offer non directive, non-judgmental support and counselling. At your own pace, you can look at the impact the abuse has had on you and your life.

You have control over what you talk about. RCM offers to support you through counselling within an atmosphere of understanding, respect and trust.

All counsellors in the RCM are specially trained to work with survivors of sexual violence. All counsellors receive supervision from a qualified supervisor. The client's identity is always kept anonymous.

In meeting the needs of survivors, RCM offers a service which is very effective, specialized, experienced, appropriate and accommodating. They operate as a voluntary organization and adhere to the philosophy, ethos, principles and traditions of Rape Crisis Centres.

RAPE CRISIS
M I D W E S T

Golden Week for UL Athletics



UL Athletics Munster University Cross Country Champions 2012 Back Row L to R: Shaun McCormack, Fergal Smithwick, Michael Carmody and Ray McInerney. Front Row L to R Kevin Chesser, Jake O'Regan, and Liam Feely.

Kevin Moore, UL Athletics PRO

IN the space of six days, UL Athletics enjoyed its most successful period in recent memory. It all started in Nenagh Indoor Athletics Stadium at the IUA Indoor Championships and finished in CIT at the Munster University Cross Country.

On Saturday February 6, the IUA Indoor Championships took place in Nenagh with UL Athletics winning a total of 10 medals 7 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze.

In the 1500m walk, Maeve Curley strolled to victory in 6:41. Ailbhe Courtney was unlucky not to make to 400m final running 62.26 in semi-final. The ever consistent and all-round Roisin Howard won two bronze medals, coming third in the 60m hurdles in 9.58 and third in the combined events. While Eimear O'Brien fresh from the states ran 10.03 to comfortably win the 3000m, Alana Fratteroli added to her recent win in the AAI Games by claiming the silver in the shot putt with a throw of 11.22m.

It was a day of debuts for UL Athletics with two in the 60m in the form of Donal Brennan and David Killeen, with David making the final and running an impressive 7.13. In the 200m all

our athletes' progressed through the heats to the semi-finals Gerard O'Shea (OYD) 24.44, David Killeen 23.35 and Shane Fitzgerald 24.07. David won the final with a time of 22.66, running 22.62 in the semi. In the 400m event Thomas Barr progressed with ease through the semi final and eventually winning the final in a time of 49.31, showing his speed on the flat without the obstacles that he so regularly has to clear. Andrew Heffernan ran in the 400m semi final with a time of 56.12 and Andrew also cleared 1.70m in the high jump but was out of the medals. While Denis Finnegan jumped 14.81m in the triple jump to take the gold.

Both Finbar Horgan and Shawn McCormack progressed to the final of the 800m running 2.00 and 2.04 respectively in the final. In the 2000m Walk Cian McManamon showed why he is the IUA defending champion, showing great pace on the last few laps to finish in 8:05. Tomas Hayes and Liam Feely ran 8:47 and 9:00 respectively in the 3000m.

A team comprised of Thomas Barr, Shane Fitzgerald, David Killeen and Gerard O'Shea ran in the 4 x 200m Relay in a time of 93.63 to win the gold

and cap off a very successful day for UL Athletics. UL topped the male gold medal count beating off DCU and WIT and in came second in the overall points table. Well done to all involved.

On Thursday February 9, the Munster University Cross Country was held in CIT. Michael Carmody led the charge for UL by winning the 7000m race with over twenty seconds to spare on the rest of the field. Jake O'Regan ran a great race to finish 4th and was closely followed by Liam Feely in 5th place. Fergal Smithwick and Shaun McCormack finished 9th and 10th respectively, with Kevin Chesser in 16th place and Ray McInerney in 24th place combined to comfortably win the team event from reigning champions WIT on 45 points. For the record UCC and WIT finished on 85 points with the UCC winning on the count back.

This has now set the benchmark for UL Athletics for the upcoming IUA Cross Country which takes place in Waterford on March 10. Check out ulathletics.webs.com or www.facebook.com/ULAthletics for updates, photos and reports.

TaeKwonDo, it's never too late for those New Year's Resolutions!

Megan Forskitt

TaeKwonDo is a Korean martial art, practised by over 130 million people worldwide and one of only 2 martial arts in the Olympic Games. It is traditionally renowned for its kicking techniques and movements. Sound like something you don't think you'd be able for? Think again! Read on for a beginner's take on this great martial art. Week 2: It's my first training session and I am looking at all these super fit people around me. Bouncing about full of energy doing complicated moves and while I'm standing in the corner huffing and puffing. I haven't got a clue what I'm meant to be doing! I'm overweight, I'm unfit and uncoordinated. What the hell was I thinking when I joined the TaeKwonDo Club?

Week 3: It's the second meeting and I'm all kinds of sore but I am here and ready to go. I'm determined to lose the weight this time. No pain, no gain right? Funny thing though, as I start to move about doing the warm up and stretches the aching starts to ease up. Maybe I can stick this out. Still don't know what the heck I'm meant to be doing. Fast forward to... Week 9: I have

been going to TaeKwonDo for almost two months now. I have been losing the weight slowly but surely. I didn't think that exercise could be like this. There is always something different to do, some days we play games, others we learn a bit of self-defence. Not to mention I can stretch in ways that should be inhumanly possible. I'm starting to get the hang of the moves too. This is really fun, who knew!

I'm not the kind of person who you would expect to be doing something like this but TaeKwonDo has somehow turned a couch potato into a fitness junkie. Never in a million years saw that one coming.

The UL TaeKwonDo Club trains on campus in the PESS Building Mondays 6pm-8pm, Wednesdays 9pm-10:30pm and Thursdays 6:50pm to 8:15pm. Most people make 2 training sessions in the week. If you are interested in joining or finding out more about the club, email them at ul.taekwondo@gmail.com or they're on FaceBook as well... simply search for "UL TaeKwonDo Club". Enjoy!



TaeKwonDo, great for some fun exercise!

UL Irish University Chess Champions

Brige Newman

UL's very own chess club took part in the Irish chess intersarsity this weekend, which was hosted in University College Cork.

The competition was stiff this year as the UL was up against Trinity, UCC and NUIG Chess clubs.

It was a five round tournament, which ended in a tie for first between UL and Trinity. Representing both sides were Kevin O'Flaherty for UL and Stephen Moran for Trinity. The tie breaker ended in a draw, leaving both sides

to compete for the prizes in a sudden death match. Trinity won the trophy and cash prize while UL qualified for the 12th World University Chess Championship.

If you are interested in playing chess, the UL chess club meets twice a week; Mondays EGO-10 from 6-10, and Thursdays SU common room 3 from 6-8.

Alternative Miss UL

Emma Norris, Out in UL PR

TUESDAY February 21st sees Out in UL's second annual Alternative Miss UL competition take to the stage in the Scholars' Club. The competition will see amateur drag queens and kings (as well as a couple of faux queens for good measure!) battle it out for the coveted title of Alternative Miss UL.

Watch the drama unfold as the frock is ripped from the grasp of last year's winner, Ms Barb Wyre.

The event will be hosted by Limerick's own sensational drag queen, Celine, with performances from our very own Connie Liebe.

The night kicks off at 9 pm with our amateur kings and queens being put through their paces with an info round, a talent round, and a mystery round.

The competition is UL's own take on Alternative Miss Ireland, the yearly Dublin pageant which aims to "expand definitions of beauty through spectacle and gender augmentation."

Out in UL's version will be an homage to the glorious national pageant and hopes to challenge people's assumptions about gender. All this political correctness and a fabulous night out? And all for €3? Bargain.

21 February.
Unleash your inner disaster.

UL Ladies Rugby Tackle Title Defence

Bronagh O'Doherty

THE autumn season posed greater challenges for the UL ladies Rugby side than had been faced in previous years, yet once again they find themselves reigning supreme in a league more competitive than ever.

Preparation for matches kicked off early September with intensive training sessions. Under the leadership of head coach Gill Bourke, an experienced Irish prop, the team managed to find a perfect combination of talent and enthusiasm amid a huge turnout.

Lorna Barry, conditioning coach introduced the girls to the more physically demanding gym/court sessions with the help of Munster Out-half Laura O'Mahoney. The girls showed true dedication with extensive weight work as well as speed and agility coaching, no mean feat at 7am on a Wednesday morning.

The move to the brand new, state of the art Clare bank pitches offered a professional practice ground to

improve on fitness levels and brush up on technique prior to their first game against Carlow IT, a team recently moved up from division two but simply no match for our ladies skill. The game ended with a final score of 27-7 with a special mention for the efforts of new-comers Maria Eviston and Adele Leogue.

Molly O'Donnell shone in the game against NUIG, alongside a team that for the first time really pulled together to give the most dynamic effort of the season. Both wins were celebrated in style which gave ULLR freshers a glimpse of the unbeatable social aspect of UL club involvement.

Semester two is already under way with the first match scheduled to take place in week two against a tough UCD side on home ground with Intervarsity's to be held in Galway on March 28 and 29. New faces always welcome.



UL ladies squad with coaches Gillian Bourke and Laura O' Mahony .

ULLR defeat arch rivals UCC

Claire Lewis

UL Ladies Rugby took on one of their toughest opponents of the season to date when they faced a well prepared UCC side on February 8 in Annacotty, Limerick.

This was a big step for the ladies in their quest to retain their All Ireland title. They overcame a strong UCC side. After a lot of hard work and training over the past few weeks, UL had a lot to demonstrate.

The match kicked off at 6pm under lights and with what was a wet evening the conditions were less than favourable. In the first half, UL showed their power in defence as they held off their rivals from breaking their try line.

UCC also showed great control in their defence, holding off a very strong UL side in attack, which looked threatening when they had the ball. Both sides ended the first half scoreless.

UL captain Mary-Rose Flanagan showed great leadership skills throughout the game. Points were put on the board shortly after the second half kicked off with a superb try from Ashling Hutchings who touched down in the corner after an outstanding kick and chase from the UL flanker.

Throughout the entire match UCC never gave up. Right up until the full time whistle was blown they threatened UL's defence. Leah Barbour, Oonagh O'Brien, Maria Eviston and Mollie O'Donnell threw themselves again and again into tackles showing no fear.

The match ended with a very low score, 5 - 0 in favour of UL, a well-deserved win for the girls who put their heart and soul into the match. UL are now into the semi-finals of the CUSAI division 1 league which brings them another step closer to retaining their title of All Ireland champions.

Valentine's with the OPC

Katherine Davis, OPC PRO

Last weekend the Outdoor Pursuits Club ventured off to Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, for their annual weekend trip and Valentine's Day ball.

With this being the first weekend trip of the semester for the club, it worked perfectly to introduce to a lot of our members how the OPC works and brings people together.

And with the track record for this weekend trip, who knows what the next one will have in store!

For the full account of the trip, please visit www.anfocal.ie

Fencing off to a good start...

Pierre Bahain, PRO

The Duffy Memorial Team Épée Competition, Ireland's largest team international event, took place in Trinity College Dublin on January 28 and 29, the first competition of the semester. Along with the many Irish teams that participated, there were teams from Germany, England and France.

Putting in four 3-person teams, the UL Fencing Club did their best to gain some prestige. The men did their best on

Saturday against very good teams and strong opposition. Unfortunately, two of our teams were directly eliminated after the pools. The third team fell short of reaching the quarter-finals and finished in 9th position. UL's women, however, did better on Sunday and finished 3rd, having just missed out one of the A German teams. They were not far from reaching the final and because of this, we're proud of them!

The level of the competition was pretty high. It was a good way to gain some experience for all those who started in the first semester and allows us to prepare for next competitions; indeed, the Intervarsities will take place in Trinity College at the end of February. The UL Fencing Club is looking toward this objective for which we've been training hard for!



Some fancy blade and footwork!

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Puzzles

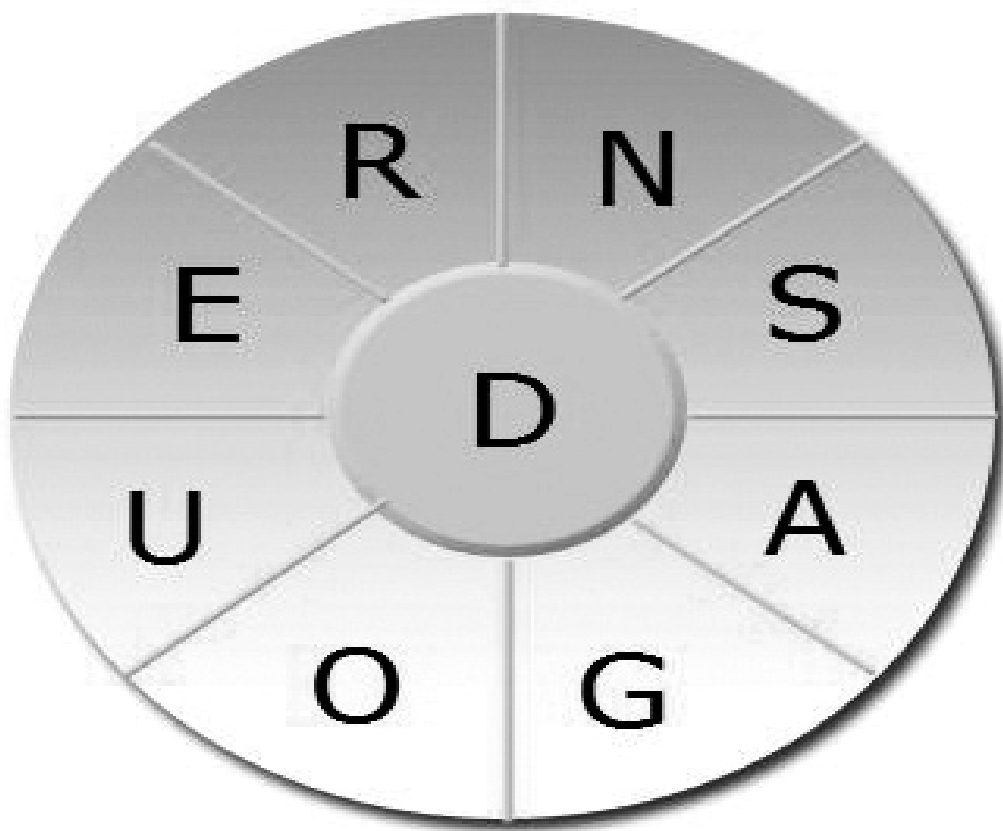
SHAG Week Rage Special

Check for Holes Before You Wrap Your Pole

<p>Dad! I just broke a mirror! I'm gonna have 7 years of bad luck!</p>	<p>Son, that ain't so bad. You know what gives you 18 years of bad luck?</p>
<p>what?</p>	<p>A broken condom.</p>
<p>FFFFFFF FFFFFFF FFFFFFF FFFUU UUUU UUUU UUUU UUUU UUUU-</p>	

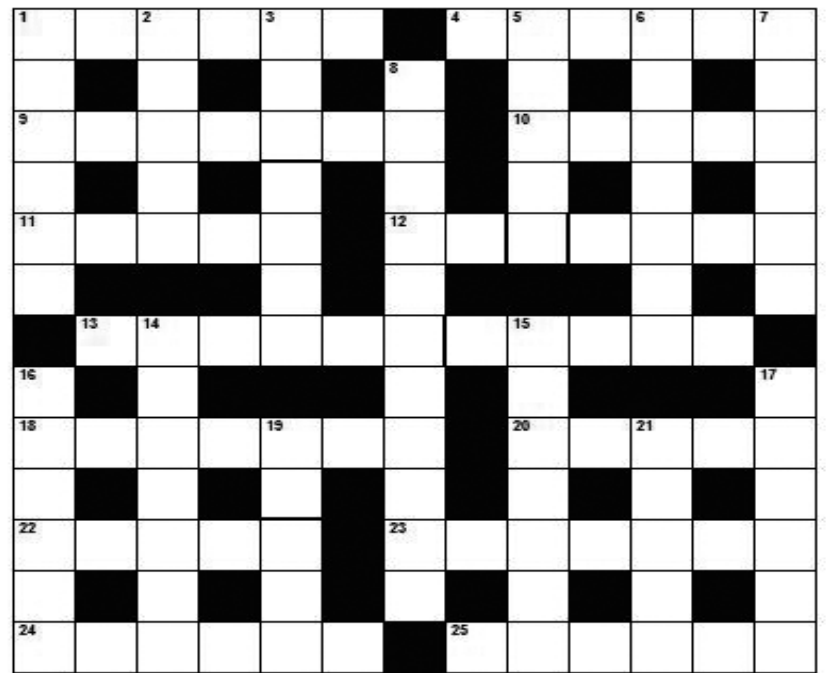
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WORDWHEEL



20 Words - Good
30 Words - Very Good
40 Words - Excellent

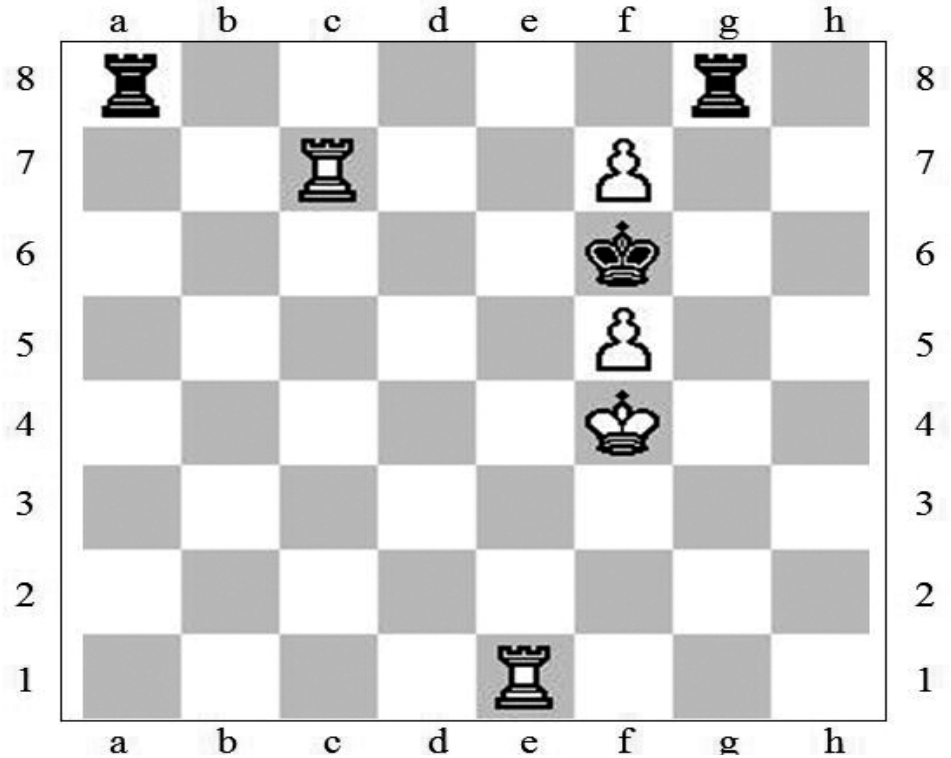
QUICK CROSSWORD



- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Across
 1 Ecclesiastical area (6)
 4 Unpleasantly damp (6)
 9 Apparition (7)
 10 Aristocratic title (5)
 11 Detest (5)
 12 Generally (2,1,4)
 13 Thirteen (6,5)
 18 Giant North American conifer (7)
 20 Grown-up (5)
 22 Funny (5)
 23 Carouse (7)
 24 Hazard (6)
 25 Without danger (6)</p> | <p>Down
 1 Tree — area of London (6)
 2 Fish of the carp family (5)
 3 Released (3,4)
 5 Petroleum-rich African desert country (5)
 6 Large tent (7)
 7 Over there (6)
 8 High-ranking diplomats (11)
 14 Belly (7)
 15 Small wind instrument (7)
 16 Copied by following the lines of a drawing (6)
 17 Tempestuous (6)
 19 When expected (2,3)
 21 Loosen (5)</p> |
|---|--|

CHESS PUZZLE

Here's a game between two local rivals in the UL Chess Club: Kevin O'Flaherty (White) and Chris Murphy (Black). It has been a close match so far, but Chris has made a crucial mistake. Can you figure out how Kevin can get checkmate?



1. f7-Qf8+ RxQ
2. Re6#

EASY SUDOKU

1	4		2	7				
		5			2			
	3	5			6	8		
			5	2				
	6					7		
		4	9					
	5	3			8	9		
		8		5				
			9	1	5		6	

MEDIUM SUDOKU

3		7		9	8	6		
	2							
8	4		1	2				7
		1	5					4
	7						3	
4				1	2			
6			7	5		1	3	
						6		
		5	6	3		7		2

HARD SUDOKU

7	9	3						2
			7		6			5
								8
		6			5			9
	2		4				8	
9		6			4			
3								
6	2		1					
5					8	7		3

Edinburgh: *Historic and Homely*



Róisín Delaney

Edinburgh is a city steeped in powerful history.

ON a recent visit to Scotland's capital I learned some valuable historic points, the value of a penny, and that Scotland and Ireland might be a lot closer than you think. The atmosphere in the heart of the capital city is different to any atmosphere I had experienced prior to this winter break.

You may be in the heart of the capital but there is this feeling that you are in a small, friendly seaside town. Edinburgh is a city steeped in powerful history. The ambience evokes the pride of the people and their surroundings. From speaking with locals, tour guides and taking in the beautiful scenery,

you really do feel like you are in a special place and not just another city. Despite being renowned for the views and history associated with Edinburgh Castle, there are many entertaining sights to see which are still historic.

For example, the city's dungeon tours will take you on an outing you won't forget. Visitors experience the effects of the plague on Edinburgh and listen to haunting ghost stories while on this tour, which begins near the Waverly Train Station and comes with the option of a meal in the Hard Rock Café on George Street. For any rockers, a visit to the Hard Rock Café is a must. The

merchandise available and the colourful selection of famous guitars on show are rare to see in Ireland. Providing a backdrop to the Edinburgh Castle is the Grassmarket. The cobblestoned street boasts numerous newsagents, late night cafés, hotels and bars. If time is not on your side, then a bar called The Last Drop is not to be avoided.

At least then you can see the castle in all its glory, have a drink and a snack and be able to say you were at the location of the last hangings. Also available in the typical Scottish pub is information on the last hangings and famous horror stories.

Unless you have been in hiding for the past 12 months, the British Royal Family is the hot topic of the moment and it is likely to stay that way. So walk downhill from the castle along the Royal Mile, stop off for a whiskey making lesson and a tasting, and finish your mile long walk at the Palace of Holyrood House, the queen's official residence in Scotland.

The nightlife is where everyone mixes together and friends are made. Instead of feeling like you know nobody in the bar or club, there is a warm welcome waiting especially if you are Irish. Spend wisely as food is not

much cheaper than on our own shores. However there is a noticeable difference in the cost of alcohol. Undoubtedly, Edinburgh has many attractions to offer students, couples and families. The month of August sees the Fringe festival take over the streets. This is the busiest and most expensive time to visit the city. However great hotel deals can be found on booking.com. Ryanair fly direct from Dublin T1, while Aer Lingus fly direct from Shannon. Flights may cost between fifty euro and one hundred euro depending on the time of year while hotel rooms average around ninety euro a night.

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Erasmus in Spain: *An Optimistic End*



Image credit: David Brici

Alana Walsh

THIS shall be my last Erasmus diary from Spain as my time here is coming to an end. I mentioned last time that I had yet to book my departure flight but I have now done the deed and hope to fit anything I have left here into one checked bag.

I know I was aware it would all eventually come to a close but it is still such a strange concept that I will no longer be wandering the aesthetically pleasing streets of Granada on a daily basis or heading out for tapas at night or conversing with fellow Erasmus students in Spanish.

I want to imprint it all firmly in my mind, almost every detail so I can draw upon those memories when my head is stuck in the books back in UL (I have great intentions of being a nerd). I am delighted I received the opportunity to live in Granada for five months, it has undoubtedly been the experience of a lifetime and that includes both the ups and the downs.

What stands out the most for me about my Erasmus is the friends that I have made here, the opportunity to travel and see more of Spain and the practice I gained with the Spanish language and culture.

No low point will ever cancel these high points out. I did find university life here quite difficult and for that reason alone, college is an aspect of Erasmus I do not reflect upon with much fondness. My friends in Granada would tell you I adopted a catchphrase that sums up my feelings towards it, "College is getting in the way of my Erasmus". Quite the contradictory statement I know but it expressed my feelings adequately!

I now look forward to the post-Erasmus events such as the reunions back in Ireland when those from the other Irish colleges return in the summer or the possibility of me returning to Granada to visit them in May when I finish exams in UL.

Leaving has to be looked at as a positive thing too; I get to return to life in UL, to all my friends there and to hear about how their time abroad was and more importantly... understand my lectures in their entirety as they will be in English, phew.

Spain, you have been amazing but it is time for this Irish chica to leave because after all, níl aon tinteán mar do thinteán féin.

A Grad Down Under

Sinead Keane

THERE is nothing in the world more exciting than those few minutes when your eyes search the arrivals hall for that familiar face.

For the first few seconds all you can see is a blur of bags and trolleys and faces; then suddenly the fog clears and her face comes into view.

I've never been so excited for anything; after all these months away from my life in Ireland a piece of home is coming to live with me. And who better to join me in my adventure than my bestest bestie from secondary school!

We collect her bags, pay the parking ticket and head back to my home in Coburg. There was so much to talk about; you never really hear the news from home properly over Facebook or by text. Who, what, where. Every detail of every scandal had to be retold over a cuppa and a biscuit.

Melbourne also had to be explored; all those coffee shops, those alleyways and cute bargain shops that I had found and loved were on the to-do list for my friend. It was definitely a case of déjà vu. Wasn't I given this very same to-do list by my cousins when I arrived in Melbourne only a few months ago?

I had been shown the best shops and spots over the last few months by my Australian family, and I was now eager to pass my newfound knowledge on. So, after a few cups of tea, we set out for a tour of the big city. I've grown to love the places

that my cousins have introduced to me as their Melbourne: the indie bars on Sydney Road, the trendy shops on Brunswick Street and the funky cafes of Coburg.

I had also discovered my own places and added them to my own Melbourne, like the Max Brenner chocolate cafe or that super cheap dress shop I found one day in a secret alleyway. I couldn't wait to give my bestie the tour of my new home.

I guess I've grown attached to Melbourne as I've settled and made a new life here. It's a city of many faces; you can walk one street full of skyscrapers and super-urban offices, then turn the corner and find yourself in downtown Tokyo.

Each sector of the city couldn't be more different; but every street still rings with the same vibrancy.

I feel an immense sense of pride as I show my friend around my new favourite places; it's almost as if I've lived here my whole life! Turns out, the one thing I've been aching to do is to show home, my bestie being the representative of home, the Melbourne that I've been discovering and growing to love all this time.

Does this mean that I'm too attached to Melbourne? That I've forgotten about my love for Limerick, Clare, or Ireland? Probably not: I miss home every single day. It does mean, though, that I'm probably not ready to leave Melbourne just yet; there is always another cafe to discover around the corner. And there are plenty more visitors from home to be shown around!

Too Good To Be True

Brige Newman

WELL it had to come to an end, my lucky streak. I suppose it was only a matter of time really wasn't it? Heaven forbid that I should have an easy time of it, travelling to the likes of Boston, spending the weekends in New York, making friends and loving my classes, oh no.. Instead, I get knocked right off cloud nine and into Dante's Inferno amongst the nine rings of hell. Now don't get me wrong, the things I've listed I've done and thoroughly enjoyed, but I was also robbed.

I went out, on my first proper night out on the town, and came back in the wee hours of the morning to discover my wallet was no longer in my bag. At that moment in time there was no immediate panic, as you can imagine some of my senses were a little dulled,

but I did realise I no longer had my electronic key card to let me into my building. So I had to wait for a Room Advisor (RA) to let me in, and then let me into my room, embarrassing to say the least.

In the morning the panic that didn't hit me the night before turned up with tremendous vigour. I called the bar in the hopes that I had just lost the wallet, but no such luck. The dreaded phone call home had to be made. My parents were less than impressed I can tell you, but they did cancel all my cards, as I sobbed down the phone and walked to the American bank to get a new card. There I got an even bigger shock. I was told \$500 had been taken from my account the night before. Great, now I was poor as well.

Thankfully they told me they could get it back, gave me all the details and off I walked to the police station. Here they said they could track down the evil genius who stole my wallet.

I use the term 'evil genius' loosely because the thief had tried to use my card online, and by calling the company where the wretch had spent my money the officer was able to get his address.

So in the end it worked out, and I have learnt to be more careful but it has put such a damper on my time here. My advice to anyone who gets their wallet stolen in the future: Cancel your cards immediately and go straight to the police station.



Advice to anyone who gets their wallet stolen: Cancel your cards immediately and go straight to the police station.

Interview

A Rose, a Tiara, and a Marketing Masters

Jack Brolly

THE Rose of Tralee is one of Ireland's most prestigious events. Every year women from all over the world gather down south, each vying for the Newbridge Silverware Tiara. An Focal caught up with the current winner, Tara Talbot, during her recent visit to UL

We wanted to know what set Tara on the road to becoming a Rose and what perks come with the job.

"The Irish community in Queensland are very close" she begins while sporting her Tiara and a bright blue dress, not something you'd see in a quiet corner of Red Raisons very often.

"I know the Queensland Rose who won in 2006, Kathryn Anne Feeney. I always watched it as a child too. After I was chosen as Queensland Rose, I was looking forward to visiting Ireland and exploring my roots a little more. I had visited a few times beforehand but this time was different."

The Dublin born Rose worked as a secondary school teacher before she entered the competition, how did her students react to the news that she had been chosen for the competition?

"At first I didn't tell them." she laughs. "It was hard to explain to them

what the Rose of Tralee is about. The closest thing I could compare it to was Ms. Australia. All of my students were very supportive of me." Will she go back to teaching when her year-long stint as Rose is up?

"I don't know if I will. Possibly not. I would like to get a Masters in Marketing and possibly begin work in the non profit sector." she says

"Being a Rose is giving me a world of experience for that. I visited India recently and I got to see a lot of the hardship there.

I've got a lot of exposure to charities too and it's great to see all the work they put in to help others."

There must be some perks to being, to put it in the words of Father Ted, Ireland's loveliest lady? "Oh of course there is. I get to travel and really take in Ireland and the world.

I'm going to be in New York's St. Patrick's Day parade and I'm going to the White House to meet Obama. I won a car and €40,000 to spend on traveling around the world."

What are the draw backs of the whole experience? "It can be exhausting.

I travel quite a lot and attend a lot of events so it does take it out of you.

Being away from home almost constantly is quite tough too. The positive side far outweighs the negative side, though."



Current Rose of Tralee, Tara Talbot.

Would you like to write for An Focal?

We'd love to hear from you.

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