



IRISH TIMES

Newsletter of the
Irish-American Society of New Mexico
www.irishamericansociety-nm.com

December 2024

Note: Irish-American Society meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, **except during July and August** (and for special events), at the **Ramada Plaza** (2020 Menaul Blvd NE).

Next Event
December 14, 2024
11 AM to 2 PM

at the Taylor Ranch Community Center
4900 Kachina St NW, Albuquerque
The Annual IAS Christmas Party!



It's time again for our annual Christmas Party, this year at the Taylor Ranch Community Center on the Westside. Come wearing your Christmas garlands, bring the kids, bring some food to share, participate in the Silent Raffle, and enjoy fine music and Irish dancing with your fellow IAS members! (We will provide coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and soft drinks. Please bring a dish to share and be sure to mark your utensils.) **And please let us know if you have any items to donate to the Raffle by emailing Caren Garcia (careng225@msn.com).**

Christmas Party schedule:

- 11:00: Start time
- 11:30: Performance by the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance Irish Step Dancers
- 12:15: Performance by the Duke City Ceili Band and the Duke City Ceili Dancers
- 12:45: Announcement of Raffle winners

Ongoing: Mrs. O'Halloran's Irish Money-Making Scheme Raffle!

Instructions for the Raffle at the Christmas Party:

1. Buy as many raffle tickets as you like (\$1.00 each; 6 for \$5) and put your name on the part you will use to enter the raffle.
2. Wander over to the raffle area and peruse which items you'd like to win in the raffle.
3. Put one of your raffle tickets with your name on it in the bag in front of the item you choose. (Or put 50 raffle tickets in there if you really want to win!)
4. At 12:45, we will draw a ticket from each bag and paper clip it to the bag. Check to see if your raffle ticket was drawn.
5. Collect your winnings! (And thanks for supporting the IAS!)

2024 Board Members and Committee Chairs

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Frankie's Irish Tours

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frankiesirish tours@yahoo.com
www.frankiesirish tours.com

Would you like to place a sponsorship in the *Irish Times* newsletter?

Business-card-sized ads are a mere \$5 a month. Larger-sized ads can be negotiated with the editor, Ellen Dowling (edowling@standuptrainer.com 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.

President's Message

By Caren Garcia

Merry December!

Well, we finally got some chilly weather. Thanks to those who braved the cold to attend our November meeting with entertainment by the Irish Setters. We had a great turnout and



a wonderful time singing along and enjoying treats and drinks.



Our **Christmas Party** will be at the Taylor Ranch Community Center on Saturday, December 14, from 11 AM to 2 PM featuring the Duke City Ceili Band, the Duke City Ceili Dancers, and the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance as well as a silent raffle, so

don't forget to put us on your holiday event calendar and bring along a friend to enjoy the special occasion. [See p.1 for details.]

Sponsorship to Promote Irish Pride!

As a statewide organization, the IASNM is pleased to have been asked by Father Mitchell Brown of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Gallup to donate funds to allow needy students at the parish school to attend a fund-raiser for their school featuring Emmet Cahill, an Irish tenor. The performance will be in February 2025, and we have agreed to provide some sponsorship for this event. As a fan of Irish music, Fr. Brown became a fan of the Celtic Thunder performers and contacted Emmet Cahill about performing at a benefit for the school, which he agreed to do, so if you expect to be in that area of the state on February 7, you should grab a ticket too. [You can hear Emmet sing *Danny Boy* [here](#).]

Proposed Board of Directors Roster for 2025

President: Caren Nicholson Garcia

Vice President: Tracee Edwards

Treasurer: Kathy Wimmer

Secretary: Belinda Martorelli

Membership and Hospitality: Molly Martin

Members-at-Large: Don Hardy; Maureen Riley; Ellen Dowling; Lynne Anderson (new this year)

This is the member comment period, so if there are concerns or comments regarding the roster, now is the time to voice them. Please notify either Caren Garcia or Ellen Dowling via text or email. Barring any objections, the above volunteer Board will begin working for you in January 2025.

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: A hundred thousand welcomes to our newest member: Brynn McCabe Kelly and family! We are happy to have you. We now have a grand total of 129 members, which 1 student, 40 singles, and 88 family memberships. Also, Happy Holidays to everyone! May the season be merry and bright!

Treasurer's Report October 1 – 31, 2024*

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Check card credit: Ramada Hotel for Oct. meeting	\$6.08	Square fee: T-shirt	-\$0.62
Membership: cash/checks from our October meeting	\$30.00	Check card (POS): Ramada Hotel, general meeting September	-\$152.11
T-shirt sales: cash/checks from October meeting	\$60.00	Direct payment/card: State Farm Insurance premium	-\$225.00
T-shirt sales: electronic/Square from October meeting (less fees; see expenses)	\$20.00	Ck #385: Ellen Dowling (reimbursement for GoDaddy website renewal)	-\$22.17
		Check card (POS) CABQ Online, rental of Taylor Ranch community center for Christmas party on 12/14/2024	-\$129.38
		Ck#386: Maya Sutton, entertainment for October meeting (\$100) plus copy of her book for door prize (\$15.00)	-\$115.00
Total Income	\$116.08	Total Expenses	-\$514.90
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$5,040.37
		Plus Income (current month)	\$116.08
		Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$514.90)
	Loss/Gain		-\$398.82
		*Ending Balance as of date of report	\$4,641.55



The winner of the November meeting door prize was IAS member Jim Twohig!

Here's himself, resplendent in his Aran sweater! (And just to get a head start on the new year coming up, he also paid his dues for 2025 early. You can, too!)



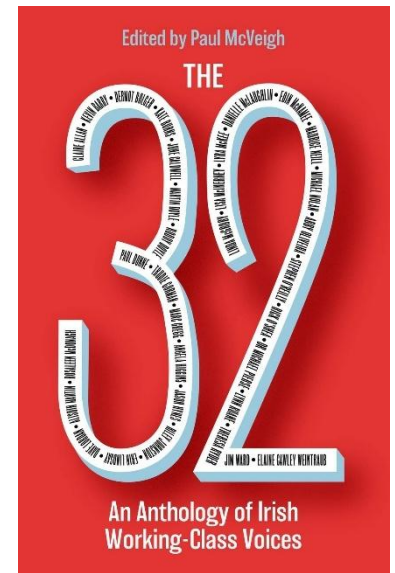
The Irish Book Club

If you are on Facebook, just type The Irish Book Club into the search bar (or click on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2022642747761043/>) and you'll find us. Our book for September was *The Searcher* by Tana French; in October we read *The 32: An Anthology of Irish Working-Class Voices*, by Paul McVeigh; and for November, we are reading *Prophet Song* by Paul Lynch.

The 32: An Anthology of Irish Working-Class Voices, edited by Paul McVeigh

Amazon's description: "Edited by award-winning novelist Paul McVeigh, *The 32* is an intimate and illuminating collection that features memoirs and essays from established and emerging Irish voices, including Kevin Barry, Dermot Bolger, Roddy Doyle, Lisa McInerney, Lyra McKee, and many more.

Too often, working-class writers find that the hurdles they come up against are higher and harder to leap over than those faced by writers from more affluent backgrounds. As in *Common People* (an anthology of working-class writers edited by Kit de Waal and the inspiration behind this collection), *The 32* sees writers who have made that leap reach back to give a helping hand to those coming up behind."



From the Book Club: *The 32: An Anthology of Irish Working Class Voices* is quite a delight. It's essentially a collection of vignettes, many describing the experiences of growing up in Ireland during the Troubles time. We are already familiar with two of the writers collected here: Kevin Barry (we read his *Beatlebone* novel about John Lennon); and Roddy Doyle (we'll read three of his novels in the spring of 2025). Not every vignette is equally arresting, but all offer an interesting look into the lives of authors before they became successful writers. In her vignette, *Once You Solve the Mystery, the Story Ends*, Lisa McInerney reveals a family secret that turns out to be quite common, especially in Ireland: "I was informed early that my older 'sister' was actually my birth mother. I was informed so early, in fact, that it seemed totally normal. In a sense, it was. Plenty of people in Ireland have discovered that their 'sisters' gave birth to them. Plenty of people outside Ireland, too; I share this quirk with Jack Nicholson, Nobel Prizewinner Sir Paul Nurse, and the somewhat less distinguished Ted Bundy."

In *Shake the Bottle*, Jason Hynes tells what it was like to be a poor child in rural Ireland in the winter: "But the cold, the cold was a bastard. The snow latched on to the Dunnes Stores socks that we used as mittens and formed little blocks of ice that stuck like Velcro and bit through your fingers like a mousetrap made of blades. It stung, and it burned, and it was a bastard. Your toes were one thing. If you couldn't feel your toes, so what? You didn't need your toes. But anything that was fun? You need hands for that. Eventually, when you couldn't feel your fingers any more, even after you'd had them stuck in your armpits for half an hour, you'd have to give up and go back inside the house, were there might be some heat."

[From Ellen] This excerpt reminded me of being a child myself, in the winter on Long Island, freezing to death but determined to sled down Gafney's Hill for as long as the day was still up. Problem was that my 12-year-old butt got very cold indeed from sitting on the snow-cruled sled, so I stole some cloth diapers from my baby sister's stash and stuffed them down the back of my pants. Problem solved!

Member Spotlight: Jason & Brooke Neely & Family

By Elena Gallegos



Meet the Neely family! Jason, Brooke, Lars (12) and Lukas (10)!

How long have you been a member of the IAS and how did you become interested in the IAS?

We have been members since March of this year but attended our first St. Patrick's Day event with the IAS in March of 2023.

Do you have Irish and/or Celtic ancestry? Have you done a genealogy or genetic test?

Brooke: I very much have Irish/Celtic ancestry. According to 23 and Me, I'm

80.8 % such, with ancestors hailing from Connacht, Leinster, and Munster. I've also got ancestors from Wales and Isle of Wight. Jason also has a good deal of Scottish and Irish ancestry.

Have you travelled to Ireland and/or other Celtic countries?

Not yet.

Are you originally from NM or did you move here from somewhere else? If so, what drew you to NM?

I grew up in El Paso, TX but have been living in Albuquerque for over 20 years (aside from a short time living in Indiana). Jason grew up in the Chicagoland area. We were drawn here for work.

What kind of careers do you both have?

I work as an attorney in the adult guardianship field and Jason is an electrical engineer.

What are some Irish cultural things you like to do, such as Irish music concerts, sports, movies, pubs, etc.?

Though we don't make it there as often as we'd like, we love Two Fools Tavern! I adore Irish and Celtic stories and movies. I'm a big fan of movies like *The Secret of Kells*, *Wolfwalkers*, *Song of the Sea*, and other such gems. I also love learning about the pre-Christian Celtic world and mythologies. I am especially interested in areas like Newgrange in County Meath.

Do you have pets, such as a Celtic dog, or other?

We have a dog named Uma and while she isn't Celtic, she is, we are told, part coyote (and the SWEETEST animal around!!)

Grace O'Malley: Gaelic Pirate Queen of Ireland

From Ireland-information.com



In the annals of Irish history there are many huge figures that dominate the historical landscape. Stories of revolution and political intrigue are often romanticized and survive the passage of time.

Born during the reign of King Henry VIII, Grace O'Malley's exploits have long since become legendary. The Gaelic "Queen of the Irish Seas" was known by a number of names, including Granuaile, Grainne Ni Mhaille, and Graney O'Mally, but perhaps the most startling aspect of her life is the impact she made as a woman, in what was a very male-dominated world.

Born in Connaught in the west of Ireland in 1530, Grace inherited a large shipping business from her father and land from her mother, becoming very wealthy by sixteenth century standards. She married and had three children before commencing on her famous career on the high seas, where she commanded three pirate ships and up to 200 men as she opposed the many English attempts to remove her.

Her husband was an O'Flaherty who was executed by Queen Elizabeth's colonists, who were trying to completely subjugate the Irish way of life. In 1556 she married again, this time to Iron Richard Burke and had a son named Tibbot. Captured and jailed for two years, she returned to her homeland in Connaught to continue her defiance.

Perhaps it was fate that on the throne of England sat another strong woman. In 1558, Grace petitioned Queen Elizabeth I for the release of her two sons and half-brother, who had been captured by the English governor of Connaught, Sir Richard Bingham. It was famously rumored that she had a concealed weapon on her person when meeting the Queen and that she refused to bow before her, not recognizing English rule over Ireland.

Queen Elizabeth I pardoned her in an attempt to bring peace to the region, but this attempt failed as the local English administrators continued to goad the woman who had been a thorn in their side for years. Realizing that the meeting had no real long-term effect, Grace O'Malley returned to her campaign of harassing the English and supporting the Irish rebels of the time.

Fighting and defiance were her only means of survival and this she did until the Irish defeat at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 checked her dominance. She died in 1603, although the exact place of her death is uncertain. It is only in recent decades that her full influence on Irish history has been acknowledged.

It is an indication of her impact though that her name has been used in poetry to represent Ireland—a worthy honor.



Christmas in Ireland

From [Overland Tours](#)



Christmas is a fantastic time to visit Ireland because the Irish really know how to celebrate the festive season in style! From December right through to January, you'll find festivities all over the country, from Christmas light shows to Christmas markets. While it's true that pubs are always packed out this time of year, it's also true that in Ireland they don't forget their Christmas traditions or the religious reasons behind the season. It might be cold, rainy, and dark in December, but it sure is livened up by the Christmas cheer. You'll appreciate the hearty Irish food and a heavy pint of Guinness, while you'll also realize that there are a lot of unique and sometimes bizarre happenings around Christmas.

Christmas in Ireland Starts on 8 December, Sometimes Earlier!

Christmas in Ireland doesn't start on 25 December. In fact, it can start much earlier than that. The Christmas period in Ireland officially begins on 8 December each year, because this is the start of Advent. This date is supposedly the date when the Immaculate Conception occurred in Roman Catholic teachings, and so 8 December is an important day. This is when people start to put up their Christmas

decorations and when Christmas trees are raised high, and when you can really start to prepare for 25 December by shopping for and buying Christmas gifts and presents. Of course, these days the Christmas period is getting longer and longer, and shops will begin advertising far in advance of 8 December. Many towns and cities will begin their Christmas markets and turn their Christmas lights on in November.

Ireland Has Public Holidays on 25 and 26 December.

In Ireland, both 25 December and 26 December are public holidays. Everyone's off, and you aren't going to find anywhere open, except the local pubs, which do a roaring trade! Many people will take more time off work before and after Christmas, particularly in the run-up to New Year's Eve. In Ireland, 26 December is known as either Boxing Day or St Stephen's Day, and there's plenty of fun to be had on the day after Christmas too.

Christmas in Ireland Doesn't End Until the Epiphany and Women's Little Christmas.

The festive period goes on for much longer, and it doesn't end on Boxing Day. The official festive period actually carries on until Epiphany, which is held on 6 January.

In religious history, this was the day when the three wise men appeared in front of Jesus and presented the baby with their gifts of frankincense, myrrh, and gold. While religious services are held in churches, the day has a much more traditional celebration for the Irish, and in particular for Irish women.

Traditionally, it was the women who were made to do all the hard work over the Christmas period. To recognize their hard work, on Epiphany, it's the men who cook and clean and do all the housework while the women enjoy themselves at the local pub. Known as Little Christmas, 6 January is very much a day for women!

Support Your Local Irish/Scottish/Celtic Musicians/Performers

Bardic Sisters

Storytelling, narratives, readings and poetry with and through musical accompaniment. Gwen Easterday and Kathy Wimmer on Celtic harps, other folk instruments, and vocals. Contact Kathy at kmillewimm@comcast.net (505-249-7012).

Colleens and Lassies

Featuring Irish and Scottish songs and tunes with Mary Templeton and Kathy Wimmer on fiddle, Celtic harp, and other instruments. Contact Kathy at kmillewimm@comcast.net (505-249-7012).

Saoirse (“seer shih,” Irish for “freedom”)

Celtic music from Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, and Galicia, spiced with jazz and world beat. Contact: John Brinduse: jbrinduse@swcp.com

A Jug O’Punch

A trio playing Irish music galore! Contact Suzanne Taichert: suzannetaichert@gmail.com

The Duke City Ceili Band will entertain you with fast paced jigs and reels, lilting waltzes, and rousing sea shanties from the Irish traditional repertoire. Find them on Facebook or contact Jim Crowley: jabbas40@yahoo.com.

Michele Buchanan, Harper 765-1288
(tmbuchs@gmail.com)

Rye Creek

Folk, Irish, western and good old mountain music. Contact Terry Ryan Axline, 293-8924 (neomexicana@hotmail.com) or Ron Trellue, 505-362-2551 (trellue@swcp.com) or visit www.myspace.com/ryecreeknm.

Celtic Coyotes

Traditional music from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Brittany. Contact: Doug Cowan celticcoyotes@yahoo.com (710-0583).

Friends Forever

Michael and Donna Coy play Celtic, Folk, Cowboy and Originals. Contact: 296-2017 or 250-4429; mmcoy3@msn.com.

Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute

Eileen Sullivan and Dain Forsyth’s classic combination of fiddle and flute is rare these days, and these two deliver from the heart. Contact: Dain at dleeforsythe@gmail.com.

Irish Setters

A Celtic folk band playing traditional Irish tunes and songs on fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass. Contact: Erika Gerety (erika@unm.edu)



Culture All Around

Dance Classes:

Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance (formerly Celtic Steps Arizona/New Mexico), at the McDermott Athletic Center, 801 Loma Colorado, Rio Rancho. Call 505-415-4390 or visit <https://www.brightburnacademy.com> for further information.

Ceili dance classes are held every Wednesday at the GAC. The **new** time is 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (For info, call Steve Lavery at 505-688-4756.)

Celtic Music on the Radio and the Web:

♣ **Larry Kirwan's Celtic Crush** radio show happens on The Loft station on SIRIUS XM radio according to his schedule (times in ET). Eclectic styles of music from Ireland, Scotland, and the world's "Celtic music" diaspora! Great fun! More info: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNloyz-LHidbztD_eGnKScyMQr-NWxVrq

♣ **Celtic and Beyond**, with co-hosts Ellie Blair and Kelly Clement, 7:00 PM each Wednesday on KTAOS 101.9 FM. (Also broadcast on the Web at www.ktao.com.)



FOR INFORMATION ON CLASSES FOR CHILDREN AGES 4 & UP, AS WELL AS ADULTS,
SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT KATE PADILLA, MSW, AT
(505) 415-4390
OR BRIGHTBURNACADEMY@GMAIL.COM

<https://www.brightburnacademy.com>

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Free Genealogy Research Days!

Interested in learning more about your family history but don't know where to start? Come to THE GENEALOGY CENTER at the ABQ Library (2nd floor), on the corner of 5th and Copper, where volunteers will help you one-on-one in your quest. Celtic Research is held from 1-3 PM on the last Tuesday of the month.

Free parking for two hours at the parking garage on the SE corner from the library, just get your ticket stamped at the library.

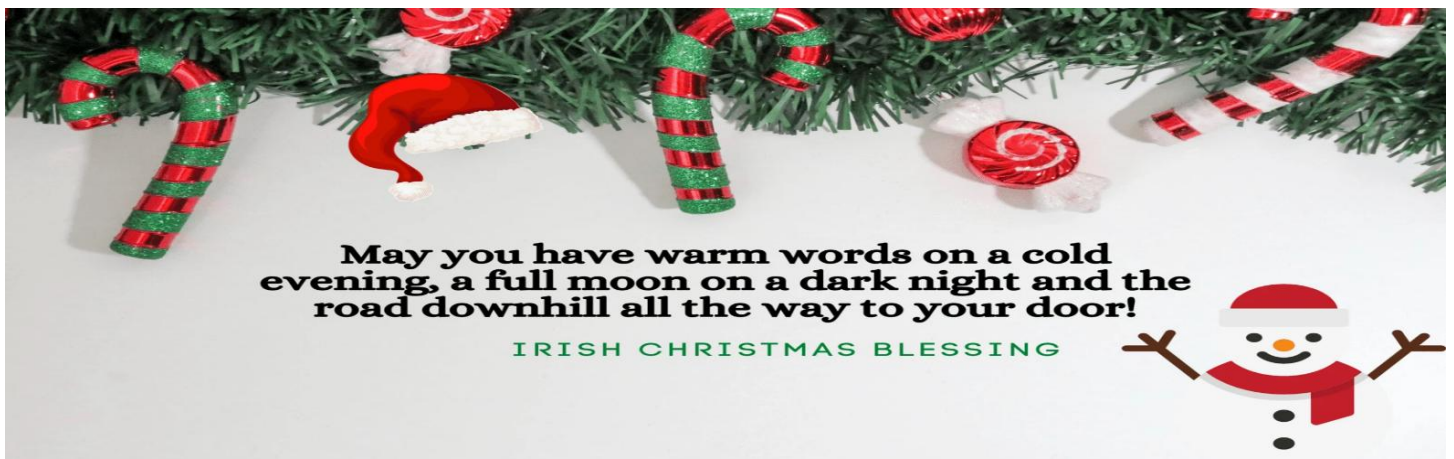
Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What
December 5	Thursday	<i>IAS Board of Directors meeting</i> , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
December 14	Saturday	<i>IAS Annual Family Christmas Party!</i> 11 AM to 2 PM at the Taylor Ranch Community Center. (Details on p.1.)
January 2	Thursday	<i>IAS Board of Directors meeting</i> , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
January 10	Friday	<i>A musical performance by the Rye Creek Band!</i>

Celtic Community Events

December 1 & 15	Sundays	<i>Two Leaf Clover (Nikelle Gessner and David Garcia)</i> play for Sunday Brunch at Two Fools Tavern every 1 st and 3 rd Sunday of the month from 11 AM – 2 PM.
December 3, 10, 17	Tuesdays	<i>The Irish Slow Session</i> meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano Mesa Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact Kip Malone on Facebook .
December 4, 11, 18	Wednesdays	<i>Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC</i> , 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (Call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756 for info.)
December 4, 11, 18	Wednesdays	<i>Celtic Music Session</i> at the Singing Arrow Community Center (13200 Wenonah Ave SE) from 5:45-7:45 PM. This is a sheet-music-discouraged (but not prohibited) format and the music is the High & Dry list. For more info, contact Bob Deaver (bpdeaver@gmail.com).
December 5, 12, 19, 26	Thursdays	<i>Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session</i> from 7-9 PM at Hops Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com .
December 7	Saturday	<i>A Special Ceili Dance at the GAC</i> , 6-10 PM. Door fee: \$10. Please bring a dish to share. For info, contact Steve Laverty (6lavertys@comcast.net)
December 17	Tuesday	<i>Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute</i> perform at Trail Rider Pizza from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Trail Rider Pizza is located at 12165 State Highway 14 N, Suite B2, Cedar Crest, NM 87008.



Irish-American Society of New Mexico

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please Check One: Membership Application Membership Renewal

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

If this is a renewal, has your contact information changed? Yes No

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please choose your membership level:

Student (\$25) Individual (\$30) Family (\$35)

(Optional) If you receive your newsletter by US mail (instead of electronically), please consider adding an extra \$5 to your annual membership to help offset the costs of mailing and postage.

Enclosed is a total of \$_____

Please make checks payable to "The Irish-American Society" and mail to:
P.O. Box 13435, Albuquerque, NM 87192-3435

OR

You can also visit our website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) and pay by credit card.

How did you hear about us? _____

You can also visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/The-Irish-American-Society-of-New-Mexico-175569365825710>