

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

SEPTEMBER 2025

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

Next Event: IAS/SASS Annual Picnic Saturday, September 20, Noon to 4 PM Elena Gallegos Picnic Area



The IAS will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie options, buns, plates, plastic ware, cups, napkins, condiments, and charcoal. BYO coolers with ice and beverages of your choice (sodas and water will be provided).

PLEASE: NO GLASS CONTAINERS!

Potluck: Please bring a casserole, salad (potato, pasta, fruit, green, etc.) or dessert.

Please remember to bring serving implements and PUT YOUR NAME ON ALL IMPLEMENTS AND DISHES!

So we will have an approximate count for meat and bun purchases:

PLEASE RSVP TO Caren Garcia by September 10 (careng225@msn.com 505-908-0786) and tell her how many in your party and what dish you will bring.

The Kiwanis Reservation Area is nestled in the picturesque Elena Gallegos Picnic Area (located east of Tramway, south of Paseo del Norte and just a little north of Academy). It is an outdoor facility with a sheltered picnic area that can accommodate up to 250 people. It is outfitted with three large coal grills; a recreation area with a volleyball net and a horseshoe pit; running water; electricity; restrooms; and access to the Elena Gallegos trails. Note: The IAS has already paid for the facility, so just tell the ranger at the gate that you're with the IAS.

2025 Board Members and Committee Chairs

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	careng225@msn.com	908-	Welfare	dbhardy725@gmail.com	259-
		0786			3016
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Past President

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Lic. #416173 GB98 www.jacksnm.com john@jacksnm.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 at no extra charge.

President's Message

By Caren Garcia

This year your IAS is looking to add more value and social activities to our schedule without adding a lot to our costs. We hope you will help by bringing along your children, whether teens or adults, grandchildren, friends, or neighbors to one of our meetings or activities. On August 29th, we are showing a film that is both entertaining and informative, starring the now famous Irishman Cillian Murphy in a historical dramatization of the Irish War for Independence and the Civil War that followed. I hope some of you will make time in your schedules to come and see it. (Details on p. 4.)



The 29th must be an auspicious date for us, as on July 29th, VP Tracee Edwards and I met with the new Deputy Consul General for Ireland, Dominic Berkeley, for a wonderful conversation about how we can develop a relationship with our consulate based in Los Angeles and the government in Dublin to hopefully further our mission here in New Mexico.

Don't forget about the Annual Joint Picnic IAS is hosting with the Scottish Society at the Kiwanis Pavilion at Elena Gallegos picnic area. We'll be getting started at noon; bring a side dish or dessert and be prepared to sing along with whoever wants to take the mic.

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: We have no new members this month. We have a grand total of 126 members: 1 student, 37 singles, and 90 families.



Flowers of the Forest

It is with great sadness that I (Ellen) report the passing of long-time IAS member, Emmett O'Sullivan on August 11, 2025. He was 89 years old.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, to Irish emigrant parents (Co. Donegal and Co. Leitrim), Emmett served in the Navy and then worked for TWA for many years, finally ending up in Albuquerque with his wife (born in Scotland), who passed in 1993. (Sadly, when I visited him for the last time in hospice, Emmett couldn't remember her name. (2) He was a frequent participant in IAS activities, a member of the IAS Board, and an active helper with the Children's Friendship Project for Northern Ireland.



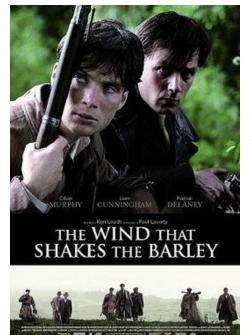
No news yet about a memorial service. I will keep you all posted.

A lovely and likable curmudgeonly guy, Emmett cherished his Irish heritage. (I sang "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra" to him; he knew all the words.) Many IAS members who knew him, especially his dear friend, Don Hardy, will miss him very much. May he rest in peace.

Treasurer's Report July 1-31, 2025*

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

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Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Membership—cash/checks	\$30.00	Square fees (membership)	-\$2.49
		Ck#407: Emily Snell, Irish step	
Membership—electronic/Square (less		dancer, towards cost of attending	
fees; see expenses)	\$65.00	Irish dance competition	-\$100.00
		Ck#408: Ellen Dowling	
		(reimburse for GoDaddy domain	
		name renewal)	-\$22.17
		Ck#409: Caren Garcia	
		(reimburse for gift for Regional	
		Deputy Counsel General of	
		Ireland)	-\$32.37
Total Income	\$95.00	Total Expenses	-\$157.03
		IAS Account prior month's	
		ENDING balance	\$4,528.57
		Plus Income (current month)	\$95.00
		Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$154.03)
	Loss/Gain	-\$62.03	
_		*Ending Balance as of date of	
		report	\$4,446.54



IAS Movie Afternoon!

Everyone is invited to a special day-time showing of *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* at the Rudolfo Anaya North Valley Library, at 3 PM on Friday, August 29. This is a free event. The library is located at 7704-B 2nd St NW, about ½ mile south of Paseo del Norte. Only bottled water is permitted in the meeting room where the film will be shown, but afterward, those who want to grab a bite or a drink are invited to cross 2nd Street at Los Ranchos and meet up at the Steel Bender Brewyard.

The Wind that Shakes the Barley is a 2006 war drama film directed by Ken Loach, set during the Irish War of Independence (1919–1921) and the Irish Civil War (1922–1923). Written by long-time Loach collaborator Paul Laverty, the film tells the fictional story of two County Cork brothers, Damien (Cillian Murphy) and Teddy O'Donovan (Pádraic Delaney), who join the Irish Republican Army to fight for Irish independence from the United Kingdom, only for the two brothers to then find themselves on opposite sides during the subsequent Irish Civil War.

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 July, was *That's That* by Colin Broderick; for August, we're reading *As It Is In Heaven* by Niall Williams; and for September, *Twist* by Colm McCann.

As It Is in Heaven by Niall Williams

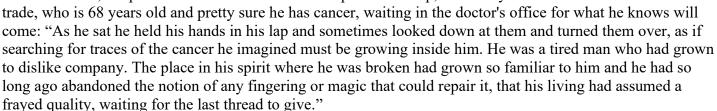
Ellen's take: I read somewhere once that all of the world's literary plots boil down to just two scenarios: 1. A person (or a group) goes on a quest; 2. A stranger comes to town.

Niall Williams' *As It Is in Heaven* is a prime example of #2. It's also a heartbreaking love story with a lovely ending and spectacular prose throughout.

The story centers around a father and son, Philip and Stephen Griffin, who are slowly recovering from the shock of the sudden death (car accident) of his wife and daughter/his mother and sister.

There's not much left for either man to look forward to, except playing chess. And the wild weather on the western coast of Ireland doesn't much help dispel the general despair.

And then, one day, an Italian violinist named Gabriella comes to town. And oh, the prose that ensues! Here's a description of Philip, a tailor by

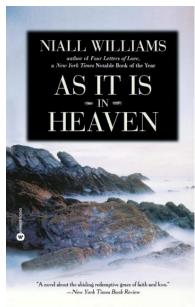


And yet Philip still has magnificent resources of love for his son. "He loved Stephen as a wall loves a garden." (Isn't that a lovely metaphor?)

And a response from IBC member Kathleen Stanton: "Ellen, have to agree 100% with your description of *As It Is in Heaven*. I'm just about to finish it and after a slow start, I am so drawn into the lives of these characters I can hardly wait to find out what happens next. I also read *A Year in an Irish Garden* by Williams and his wife, and I know I'm gonna be reading more of his work. And I can't help but marvel that here is a man who dreamed of being a writer living in a beautiful land, and by golly, somehow made it happen."



Williams was born in Dublin, Ireland on June 8, 1958. He attended Oatlands College, a boys' school in Stillorgan, County Dublin. He studied English and French Literature at University College Dublin, where he met his wife, American writer and editor Christine Breen (and co-author of their many nonfiction books about Ireland). He is the author of 13 novels. He and his wife now live in Co. Clare.





Albuquerque Folk Festival!

Maura Shawn Scanlin and Conor Hearn are the **Celtic duo Rakish** headlining our Albuquerque Folk Festival this year,
September 28, at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. The duo
features award-winning fiddling and guitar playing. We will also
have performances and workshops from our own community's
Irish and Scottish bands, **Wandering the Buren**, **Duke City Ceili Band**, and **Dram Sessions**, and Louis Scuderi will offer a
Celtic mandolin session. We also will have beginner Irish céilí
dance and Scottish country dance sessions with live bands.

The festival is a full, one-day event, 10 AM to 8 PM, with more than 100 hours of activities in musical performances, workshops, Celtic jams, of course, dance, singalongs, and storytelling, and features musicians from international, national and regional locales and traditions.

We emphasize participatory sessions like teaching instruments and play styles, songs, jams, hosted by the artists, a sign-up stage and community music performance.

Annual Spanish Peaks International Celtic Music Festival Features IAS Member Bill Nevins

Bill Nevins will give a presentation on "The Irish Troubles & Peace in Song & Poems" on Friday, September 19th, at 9 AM at the La Veta Colorado Public Library as part of the 20th Annual Spanish Peaks International Celtic Music Festival.

In "History of Ireland Part One," Larry Kirwan of the Black 47 band jokes, "Sit you down, Let's talk about battles lost but never won/That's the history of Ireland, Part One." There are many Irish songs and poems about Ireland's troubled history of war and peace. We'll look at some of them.

Music played a multifaceted role in the North of Ireland "Troubles" (1968-1998) and the subsequent peace process (1998-present), reflecting the conflict's violence and division while also acting as a catalyst for hope, reconciliation, and unity. Bill's talk, with Q &A, will be augmented by both recorded and live in person music.

Tickets can be purchased at the door in La Veta or for the entire festival. Ticket and other information including accommodations is at: https://celticmusicfest.com/

The Festival will be held from September 18 to 21, located in Huerfano County, in the southeastern quadrant of Colorado, approximately three hours south on I-25 from Denver. At 7000 feet about sea level, the Festival is surrounded by the Spanish Peaks to the south, the Sangre de Cristo mountains to the west, and Greenhorn mountain to the north.

My Second Trip to Ireland

By IAS Board VP Tracee Edwards

Ireland was always my number one bucket list item and when my sister and I were finally able to visit in 2023, we both left a piece of our hearts there. We loved it so much that we vowed to try and return every two years. So, in June of this year we headed back and added Scotland to our trip and a day trip into North Wales. We like to base out of one place, like Dublin, then take day-trip small group tours or multiple-day small group tours. We also like to do our own walking tours as we aren't brave enough to try and drive. I will just share some of the highlights of our time in Ireland; although to be honest, every experience was a highlight.

My favorite spot in Dublin on this visit was St. Audoen's Church and Visitor Center. It is the only remaining medieval parish church in Dublin. It was built in 1190, perhaps on the site of an older 7th-century church. The church is still in use, and houses "The Lucky Stone," which is a Celtic gravestone imbued with good luck, built before 1309, and a font of Anglo-Norman origin, dating to the 12th century, which was excavated at the site. It is quite small compared to Christ Church or St. Patrick's, but it is every bit as interesting. The people who work there from Ireland's Office of Public Works (OPW) love their jobs, the church, their history, and sharing all of that with visitors.



My sister and I also went on a five-day small group tour of Northern Ireland. In Belfast we had the option of the Titanic Experience or the Black Cab "The Troubles" tour. All 15 of our tour group chose the Black Cabs. The group was split, with half riding with a Protestant/Unionist guide and the other half with a Catholic guide. The guides worked together and in the Falls Road area, the Catholic cab driver would provide the Catholic side of "The Troubles," and in the Shankill area, the Protestant driver gave the Unionist side. We saw the Peace Wall—but that is perhaps not at all what it is: it is a divide. I was surprised that the gates are still locked every evening at 6:30 PM to keep each side separate. We discussed our experience as a group once the 15 of us were back together, and we all were shocked at how much hatred and

division still exists. The Americans in the group agreed that we were probably so upset because the ICE raids

had started, and America was facing clashes and division in our own country. Although it was not what you would call an amazing and fun experience, it was most definitely an important one.

Visiting the Giant's Causeway was a good way to decompress after the seriousness of learning about "The Troubles." The Causeway is amazing as it really looks man-made but is actually natural formations of hexagonal basalt



columns. The Grianan of Aileach, which is a 6th-century stone ringfort believed to have been built by the Northern Ui Neill, was astounding, and the Creevykeel Tomb knocked my socks off as the tomb dates to the Neolithic period, and is surrounded by fairy trees and an artisanal well! I couldn't

have asked for more, but then there was Cong Abbey in County Mayo with the monk's fishing house and Abbey ruins, and beautiful Kylemore Abbey. I don't want to leave out the many Neolithic dolmen tombs (burial sites with large capstones on standing stones) that are in the middle of cow pastures, or one of my absolute favorite things to see: Irish donkeys!

These are just a few of the many sights my sister and I were able to experience. There are marvels everywhere in Ireland and her greatest treasure is her kind and fun-loving people!



Irish Movie Review: Arracht (Monster)

By Elena Gallegos



International Film Festival.

Next time you watch an Irish film that is dual language or exclusively in Gaelic, pay attention to the beginning credits. You may see Fís Éireann/Screen Ireland, TG4, and Cine4. They are in partnership with Coimisiún na Meán to provide funding for the development of original feature films in the Irish language. One hugely successful film that benefitted from this partnership was *An Cailín Ciúin* (*The Quiet Girl*), which won numerous awards and broke box office records for an Irish language film.

2019's *Arracht* is another such film. It was selected as Ireland's entry for the 93rd Academy Awards for Best International Feature Film. Among its many wins and nominations, it nabbed the Critics' Choice Award at the British & Irish Film Festival in Luxembourg for Best Irish Film, as well as the Audience Award at The Glasgow

Directed by Tom Sullivan, the film is in Gaelic, except when the characters are speaking to the English characters. It stars Dónall Ó Héalaí, Dara Devaney, Michael McElhatton, Siobhán O'Kelly, and, in her film debut, Saise Ní Chuinn (who reminds me of a young Tatum O'Neal). The film is not rated and has violence and smoking.

From the description on the Cine4 website: "*Arracht* is a haunting tale of overcoming grief and the fight for survival. Set in Ireland,1845, the film centers on fisherman Colmán Sharkey, who takes in a stranger, Patsy, a former soldier, who arrives just ahead of the blight—a crop disease that caused the Great Plague, killing and displacing millions of Irish people. *Arracht* was filmed entirely on the west coast of Ireland in Connemara."

The Famine is a backdrop to the story and the monster comes in many forms: Blight that infects the potato fields; landlords (i.e. British foreign policy), who take every last thing of value from the tenants; Irish people who help the British; the way people change in the face of dire circumstances; someone who does not have a conscience. The lines become blurred. Whichever it is, Sharkey is a survivor, but we feel his desolation and despair. It seeps from the gloomy, closed-in cave he lives in to the surrounding picked-over rocks devoid of any nutrient-rich sea life; the rocks sticking out like bones.

This historical-fiction movie has a lot of value for its authenticity. It begins and ends with a prayer. Sharkey, a devoted family man, has lots of chores, makes poteen, and manufactures medicine out of carrageenan. A character sings *sean-nós* about the legend of Sharkey, the original way stories were passed on.

Arracht is available for streaming on the CABQ's library eResources platform, Hoopla. *Arracht* and some other titles produced by Cine4 are available for streaming at https://www.cine4.ie/en/produced-films.

A Traditional Irish Wake

By Caren Garcia

The Irish have had lots of cause for mourning over the centuries, so perhaps they can give us some insight as to how to put on a traditional wake. I for one want there to be a full-on celebration when it comes my time to pass from this life. It happens to us all, so it's worth considering. I borrowed the gist of the following from a Facebook post from *Twisted Limbs and Broken Branches*, October 3, 2024, and from The Gardens of Boca Raton website.

An Irish wake is a traditional funeral ritual for the person who has died and those who mourn them. The Wake usually refers to the time between death and burial. It was a time to give friends the opportunity to offer their condolences for the deceased to remaining family. And most of all, it was a celebration of life, and to prepare



the deceased for the next life. Often the wake was a happy celebration, where the guests would enjoy food and drink and share happy stories of the deceased. It was not, however, a raucous party, as this would be disrespectful to the family.

Male family members tended to be made responsible for ordering the coffin and providing the food and alcohol for the wake. The women in the family were spared most of work, allowing them to mourn their loss. In the meantime, the female neighbors were tasked with "laying out" and washing the body. In hard times, when no soap was available, oatmeal was used to cleanse the body.

One tradition is for the body of the deceased to be laid out in front of a window in the home of the deceased or a relative so that passersby can see it and pay their respects. In some cases, the body may be in an open casket so that mourners can say their final goodbyes.

It was believed that candles protected the dead and were therefore left lit for the duration of the wake. If the family was very poor, the candles were borrowed and returned shortly after the wake. Clocks were stopped in the home, including the pendulum on the mantle (or standing clock) as soon as a death occurred; mirrors were also covered, as it was believed that death might be seen in them and another family member might die if this task was neglected. At no time was the body of the deceased left unattended in the room. (This is similar to what the Jewish people call sitting shiva, where the family remains with the body for a period of time.)

The following quotation is taken from an article published by the Library of Ireland. It states in part: "The Irish have been always remarkable for their funeral lamentations, and this peculiarity has been noticed by almost every traveller who visited them; it seems derived from their Celtic ancestors, the primeval inhabitants of this isle. Cambrensis, in the twelfth century, says the Irish then musically expressed their grief; that is, they applied the musical art, in which they excelled all others, to the orderly celebration of funeral obsequies, by dividing the mourners into two bodies, each alternately singing their part, and the whole at times, joining in full chorus. The body of the deceased, dressed in grave clothes, and ornamented with flowers, was placed on a bier, or some elevated spot. The relations and keeners (singing mourners) then ranged themselves in two divisions, one at the head, the other at the foot of the corpse."

A funerary procession followed the wake. In times past, this was undertaken on foot and the coffin was carried to the burial site, led by the immediate family and followed by the community.

To bring this up to date, the tradition of sitting with the body is no longer common. But still today, many modern Irish wakes involve telling stories about the deceased and gathering for one final party in their honor. In this way, the Irish wake has come to be seen as a celebration of life, as well as a time of mourning.

This article was not intended to be depressing, but to share some facts and information about how Irish life has evolved from earlier times to today. I hope you found it interesting.

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.
- ♣ The McTeggart School of Irish Dance, Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Founded in Cork, Ireland, in 1939, and in New Mexico in 1997, they offer classes to children and adults ages 4 and up, from beginner to championship. For more info, visit https://irishdancenewmexico.com/



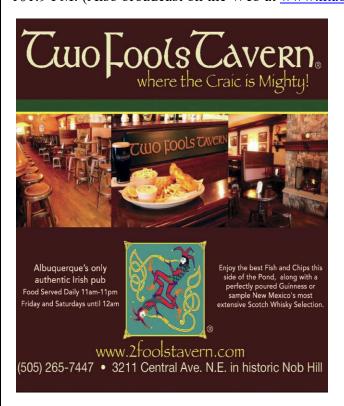
FOR INFORMATION ON CLASSES FOR CHILDREN AGES 4 & UP, AS WELL AS ADULTS,
SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT KATE PADILLA, MSW, AT
(505) 415-4390
OR BRIGHTBURNACADEMY@GMAIL.COM

https://www.brightburnacademy.com

♣ 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 Laverty 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-NWxVrg
- ♣ 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.)



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-onone 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.

Questions? Contact Robert Harper at robertharper48@comcast.net

Calendar of Events IAS Events

Date	Day	What
August 29	Friday	An Irish Movie in the Afternoon: The Wind that Shakes the Barley,
		Barley, 3 PM at the Rudolfo Anaya North Valley Library. (Details on p.
		4.)
September 4	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM in person. (Location TBD.) All
		members are invited to attend.
September 20	Saturday	Annual IAS/SASS Family Picnic! Noon to 4 PM at the Elena Gallego
		Picnic Area. (Details on p.1.)
October 2	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. (Email Kathy Wimmer
		for the link.)
October 10	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program: A musical performance by Jug
		O'Punch!
November 6	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. (Email Kathy Wimmer
		for the link.)
November 14	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program: A musical performance by The
		Celtic Coyotes!
December 4	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. (Email Kathy Wimmer
		for the link.)
December 13	Saturday	IAS Annual Christmas Party, 11-2:15 PM at the Taylor Ranch
		Community Center. (Details to come.)

Celtic Community Events

		a /
September 2, 9,	Tuesdays	The Irish Slow Session meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano Mesa
16, 23, 30		Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact <u>Kip</u>
		Malone on Facebook.
September 3, 10,	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC, 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience
17, 24	-	necessary! (Call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756 for info.)
September 3, 10,	Wednesdays	Celtic Music Session at the Singing Arrow Community Center (13200
17, 24		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).
September 3, 10,	Wednesdays	<i>Irish Trad Music Session in Taos</i> , 6-8 PM, at the Barra Vino, 241 LeDoux
17, 24		St. For more information, contact Jamie at jaima@taosnet.com or 575-779-
		1018.
September 4, 11,	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 7-9 PM at Hops
18, 25		Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at
		hpinson@indepthl.com.
September 6 & 20	Saturday	First Saturday Irish Session, from noon to 2 PM, at The Lucky Goose,
		3503 Central NE. All levels are welcome. Our pace can be fast or
		moderate, but hopefully always fun. The food is vegetarian and terrific. For
		info, contact Susan Sponar at
		https://www.facebook.com/susan.sponar/about

Irish Times		SEPT 2025				
September 7 & 21	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.				
lrísh-An	períca	n Society of New Mexico				
	Membership Application/Renewal Form					
Please Check One:						
First Name:		Last Name:				
If this is a renewa	ıl, has your co	ontact information changed? Yes No				
1 HOHC.		State: Zip:				
Please choose you	ır membershi	p level:				
■ Student (\$25) ■ Individual (\$30) ■ nily (\$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	l of \$					
Please		s payable to "The Irish-American Society" and mail to: ox 13435, Albuquerque, NM 87192-3435 OR				
You can also vi	isit our websi	te (<u>www.irishamericansociety-nm.com</u>) and pay by credit card.				
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		10				