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Duke Castiglione of FOX 5 will be a presenter at this Friday's Top Forty Under 40 Awards.

Forty plus Duke

By Ray O'Hanlon
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It promises to be great sport indeed this Friday night at Rosie O'Grady's Manhattan Club when the Irish Echo hosts its Top 40 Under 40 Awards.

The celebration of Irish America's youthful best will feature FOX 5 sports anchor Duke Castiglione, who is proudly Irish on his mother's side, as a speaker and award presenter.

This will be the seventh annual gathering that acknowledges Irish American men and women for their work and achievements before reaching the age of forty. The first awards gathering was at the same Manhattan venue in 2008. It has been held at the same venue since that first year with the exception of one year when it was staged at the Irish Consulate.

This year is a standout for a variety of reasons not least the fact that the youngest ever award recipient, Dara Malone, is just 14. Dara is a champion swimmer from Connecticut.

Awards winners, their family members and friends, will be traveling from near and for this year's award. The nearest will be from New York City, the farthest from Texas.

The Top 40 Under 40 Awards is one of a number of events in the Echo's calendar. The next up is the Small Business Awards to be held in April.

Please turn to Page 21 for the 40 Under 40 special supplement.

TO D.C.!

Immigration reform a theme for St. Patrick's Day



Irish immigration reform advocates will be gathering on Capitol Hill March 12.

By Ray O'Hanlon
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Irish National Lobby Day will take place in the nation's capital five days before Ireland's national day. On Wednesday March 12, two days before the traditional shamrock bowl summit at the White House, the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform will be hosting the lobby day on Capitol Hill and is inviting any and all to show up.

"We will have a number of people from each state on the Hill to meet with their GOP representatives to let Congress know that the Irish American community supports immigration reform and Congress should too," said an ILIR statement.

"The Irish have been effectively locked out of the U.S. since the 1965 Immigration Reform Act, when

the 'No Irish Need Apply' language was added. As a result, it is next to impossible for the Irish to come to the U.S. legally," the statement added.

Pinning numbers to the argument, ILIR said that Ireland had received less than 15,400 Green Card visas between 2002-2011, this out of 10 million issued globally. "That's about 0.15% of the U.S. visas issued globally during that period.

"The Irish American community needs immigration reform and Irish America has an important role to play in the immigration debate so let your voice be heard, loud and proud, by joining us on the Hill."

Two days after the rally, Taoiseach Enda Kenny is due to confer with President Obama at the annual White House St. Patrick's Day meeting reception.

Immigration reform is expected to feature in the discussions between the two leaders.



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St. Patrick's Day without alcohol

Saint Patrick's Day is such a special day for all of us Irish and Irish Americans who have so much more than a sentimental interest in our heritage. We take great pride in the fact that we are Irish.

Everyday I write about the best of the Irish: a highly educated workforce that draws US corporation to Ireland daily, serial entrepreneurs who leave Ireland for the US and take Silicon Valley and the startup tech scene by storm, Irish medical researchers who are responsible for progress in medical research that saves lives, the creative Irish: fashion designers, web designers, performers, literary, dramatic and otherwise.

Because of all this, the perception of the Irish as being drunk and disorderly on St. Patrick's Day was never a concept I have taken seriously or taken offence at. We, the Irish have been secure enough for long enough here in the US, to shrug off the stereotypes that advertisers roll out every year in early March: the stage Irishman with the shillelagh or the drunk and disorderly leprechaun, or so I thought, until I met with William Spencer Reilly of "Sober Saint Patrick's Day" this past weekend.

After speaking with William, I realized that we need to look at this issue more seriously, of how our biggest day of celebration has been hijacked to a certain extent and how it's not good enough to allow our biggest day of the year to be associated with alcohol, or rather the abuse of same.

I am struck by Williams' anxiety to get this message across: "Sober St Patrick's Day" is not anti alcohol, it is simply anti St Patrick's Day being associated with alcohol, particularly the abuse of alcohol, the notion that getting drunk is the same thing as being Irish. It aims to highlight that this "negative" St Patrick's Day image portrayed, is in reality so far removed from the Irish culture we admire and embrace, it is obnoxious and just reflects a tiny minority. There is so much more to us than that. The booze, blarney and stage-Irish strutting that exemplifies "Irishness" mid-March is so far removed from the reality.

Well known psychiatrist and founder of the Betty Ford Institute, Garrett O'Connor noted recently "The Irish character becomes caricature" around St Patrick's Day, "when being drunk is supposed to be the same thing as being Irish."

Interestingly, traditionally us Irish have been taught to un-



Pictured (l-r) at the 2013 Sober St. Patrick's Day event at Regis High School in New York City: Sis Wenger, President and CEO of NACOA, Emerald Spirit Award honoree Jerry Moe, Vice President and National Director of the Betty Ford Center's Children's Programs, and William Spencer Reilly, founder of Sober St. Patrick's Day.

derestimate our own achievements so we tend not to acknowledge the complexity of the Irish experience or challenge the perception of our contribution to the American mix. So it took New Yorker, William Spencer Reilly, a fourth generation Irish American, renowned television executive and special events producer, winner of over 30 national television awards to put his other life on hold and throw himself into this voluntary "Sober St Patrick's Day" celebration which takes up over 80% of his time currently.

The light bulb ping moment was when basking in the sunshine on the steps of St Patrick's Cathedral watching the parade in 2011. A young man of 22 was drinking beer with his friends on the street from a can, he was already quite under the influence and was wearing one of the now infamous t-shirts, with the quote "St Patrick's Day Today, Hungover Tomorrow."

Suddenly it hit Reilly like a firecracker that something had to be done to offset or neutralize this false and inaccurate and unethical marketing of the Irish and drink saga.

The mission statement is "to reclaim the true spirit of the day" as I jokingly add, with no pun on the word spirit. And the success of the event, "It has been beyond my wildest expectations." The event sold out in advance in 2012 and 2013. This year the event has to be moved to a much larger location in New York City adding a new extra dimension, Children's Sober St Patrick's Day. This year the event has expanded to four other cities, Belfast, Casper, Wyoming, Richmond, Virginia

and Cleveland, Ohio with further expansions to Philadelphia planned for 2015.

With the continued expansion is there anything Reilly would like to see?

Yes, he adamantly says, no question, a Chairman who is willing to take this whole project and bring it to the next level and more corporate sponsors to partner with Pepsi who is currently the major sponsor. So anyone out there looking to get more involved on a financial or business angle, contact William through the website and book tickets for this years "Sober St Patrick's Day by logging onto the website : www.soberstpatricksdays.org. Have a great Sober St Patrick's Day !

La Fheile Phadraig gan alcól

Is lá speisialta Lá Fhéile Pádraig dom. Cosúil le formhór na hÉireannaigh agus na hÉireannaigh Meiriceánaigh, tá suim i bhfad níos mó agam ná suim sentimental i m'oidhreacht. Taimid bródúil as an bhfric go bhfuilmuid an Ghaeilge agus cad tá an Ghaeilge Ranníochta leis an tír mór agus vice versa. Scriobhaim laethúil mar gheall ar an chuid is fearr de na Gaeilge: an lucht saothair ardoilte a tarraingíonn corpráideacha US Éirinn laethúil, na fiontraithe sraitheach a itheann dtí na Stáit Aontaithe agus a ghlacadh Silicon Valley agus an ardteicneolaíochta nuathionscanta ardan ag stoirme, cé hiad na taighdeoirí Leighis na hÉireann atá freagrach as an dul chun cinn i dtaighde leighis sin sábhálann saol, an Ghaeilge cruthaitheach: dearthóirí faisin,

dearthóirí gréasáin, taibheoirí, litríochta, drámaíochta agus ar shlí eile. Mar gheall ar seo go léir, bhí an dearcadh an Ghaeilge mar a bheith ar meisce agus míomprach ar Lá Fhéile Pádraig coincheap Ní raibh mé riamh dáiríre nó a tógadh i gcion ar. Sinne, na hÉireannaigh a bhíodh slán go leor do fada go leor anseo sna Stáit Aontaithe, a bhaint amach na steiréitíopaí. Go rolladh amach fógróirí gach bliain go luath i mí an Mhárta: an tÉireannach stáitse Leis an Síol Éalaigh nó an leprauchan meisce agus míiomprach, nó mar sin shlí mé go dtí gur bhuail mé le William Reilly ar "Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sober".

Tar éis labhairt le William, shíl mé gur gá dúinn chun breathnú ar an tsaincheist seo níos dáiríre ar an gcaoi ar á lá is mó de cheiliúradh curtha go pointe áirithe agus conas nach bhfuil sé maith go leor chun go mbeidh rochtain lá is mó den bhliain a bheith bainteach le halcól nó in áit an míúsáid an chéanna.

Tá mé bhuail ag imní Bhille a fháil teachtaireacht seo ar fud : níl Lá Sober Fhéile Pádraig frith alcól, tá sé ach frith Lá Fhéile Pádraig a bheith acu le halcól, go háirithe míúsáid alcól, ar an nóisean go bhfuil dul ar meisce an rud céanna mar a bheith in Éirinn. Tá sé mar aidhm aird a tharraingt go léirithe an "diúltacha" iomhá Lá Fhéile Pádraig, tá i ndáiríre go dtí seo a bhaint as an cultúr na hÉireann againn agus a glacadh, Is é lár mhí an Mhárta aistrithe amhlaidh i bhfad ó na fírinne. Ar eolas go maith sciaitraid agus bunaitheoir an Institiúid Betty Ford, faoi deara

Garrett O'Connor déanaí "Éiríonn an carachtar Éireannach scigphictiúr" thart ar Lá Fhéile Pádraig, "nuair a bhíonn bheith ar meisce ceaptha a bheith ar an rud céanna a bheith in Éirinn. Suimiúil go leor, an Ghaeilge go traidisiúnta An bhfuil Been Muínte dúinn beag is fiú ár n-éachtaí féin ionas muid aitheantas a thabhairt don chástacht an taithe in hÉireann nó an dúshlán tuiscint ar ár ranníocaíocht leis an meascán Mheiriceá. Mar sin, thóg sé, William Spencer Reilly, an ceathrú glúin Mheiriceánach atá ina léiritheoir feidhmiúcháin cáil teilifíse agus ócáidí speisialta, Buaiteoir os cionn 30 dámhachainí teilifíse náisiúnta a eile a chur ar a shaol ar a shealbhú agus caith é féin Isteach Seo deonach Sober Naomh Pádraig Cén Glacann ceiliúradh Lá suas níos mó ná 80% dá chuid ama faoi láthair. Ach bhí an nóiméad bolgán solais nuair a bhí se ag baint taitneamh as solas na gréine ar céimeanna de ú Paticks Ardeaglais ag faire ar an pharaid i 2011. Fear óg de 22 a bhí ag ól beora le cairde ar an tsráid ó féidir, raibh go leor cheana féin faoin tionchar a imirt agus a bhí acaitheamh ar cheann de na léine anois infamóus, ag rá Lá Fhéile Pádraig lá atá inniu ann, hungover amárach agus bhuail sé dó cosúil le firecracker Sin go raibh rud éigin a dhéanamh chun a fhritháireamh beagnach os cionn margaíochta nó neurtalaise seo agus deoch ar an saga na hÉireann. Is é ráiteas misin "chun éileamh ar ais an fíor-spiorad an lae" mar liom a chur a magadh, gan aon punt ar an spiorad focal.



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