

# NEWS

Spring 2026

## 35th Anniversary Celebration

### Book of Kells

Thursday, May 7, 2026

Hackley Public Library



More than 1,200 years ago, monks on the island of Iona created what would become one of the world's most treasured illuminated manuscripts: **The Book of Kells**. Written around 800 A.D., this extraordinary work—containing the four Gospels in Latin—features lavish illumination on all but four of its pages. It is widely regarded as one of the greatest masterpieces of medieval art.

In 1990, Trinity College in Dublin, where the original manuscript is carefully preserved, authorized the publication of a limited number of exact facsimile replicas. Thanks to a dedicated fundraising effort by the **Muskegon Irish American Society** and the **Friends of Hackley Library**, one of these rare replicas was acquired for Hackley Public Library—along with the custom display case that now protects it. This remarkable volume is believed to be the only replica on permanent display in a public library in North America.

This year marks the **35th anniversary** of the Book of Kells' arrival at Hackley Public Library, and we invite you to join us in celebrating this milestone. We are honored to welcome Pádraig Manning, Vice Consul of the Consulate General of Ireland in Chicago, as our guest speaker. In what will be his final visit before returning to Ireland, Pádraig will share insights into the history, artistry, and cultural significance of this national treasure.

### Reservations Are Required!

**Seating is limited! Please make your reservation by April 24th.**

**Call Meg Jennings at 231-736-9926 and please leave a message!**

**WHAT:** 35th Anniversary Celebration, Book of Kells

**WHERE:** Hackley Public Library (lower level) 316 W. Webster Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49440

**WHEN:** Thursday, May 7, 2026

**5:30 pm: Doors open. Use front entrance!** Light hors d'oeuvres, small desserts, coffee and punch.

This is **NOT** a dinner event, so please plan accordingly!

**6:00 pm:** Program with Pádraig Manning, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Ireland

**COST:** \$10 per person, cash or check only

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:** Members **MUST** make their reservation by April 24th. No Exceptions! There are only 80 seats available!



## 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade



Our membership had a great showing at the parade, with 20+ of us following this year's Grand Marshal, Sue Donovan. A very special "Thank You" to Mary Beth Ramos at Ramos Towing for supplying us with the tram and driver!



## 53rd Annual Flag-Raising & Luncheon

This year's St. Patrick's Day brought a heartfelt and memorable gathering as nearly 50 members and guests came together at the Muskegon Mart Dock for the 53rd Annual Flag-Raising Ceremony. Hosted by Max and Patrick McKee, the event honored Irish heritage, community, and the traditions that continue to bind generations.

The morning opened with a touching memorial prayer from Kelly Powers, offering blessings for the day and remembering those no longer with us. Meg Jennings followed with moving reflections on the Donovan family's emigration story and genealogy, weaving history into the present moment.

Music and camaraderie filled the air as David McIntire led the group in a rendition of *"When Irish Eyes Are Smiling"*, followed by Dee Carlson's Irish toast. The crowd then stepped outside for the ceremonial raising of the Irish flag — a particularly emotional moment as Sue and Kasey Donovan carried out the honor on behalf of our late President, Kevin Donovan.

After the ceremony, attendees gathered at the Knights of Columbus for a cheerful lunch. Laughter, stories, and shared memories filled the room, bringing the celebration to a warm and joyful close.

This year's event not only upheld a long-standing tradition but also highlighted the strength of community and the enduring pride in Irish heritage.



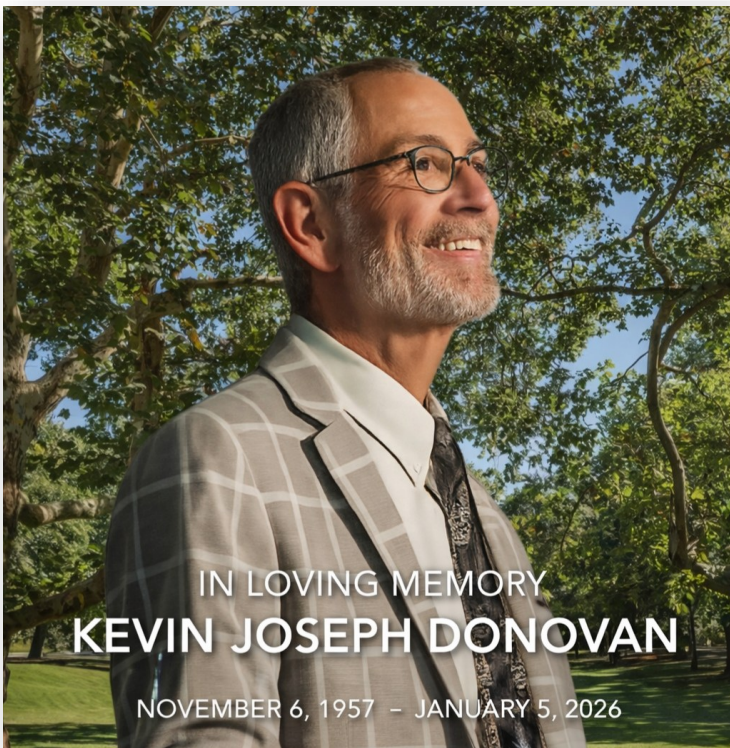


## Winter Pub Party Reflection

Our winter pub party carried a bittersweet tone as we honored our late President, Kevin Donovan, with a moving video tribute created by Hon. Neil Mullally and Dr. Steve Demos. Photos of Kevin, paired with the beautiful rendition of *May the Road Rise Up to Meet You* sung by Cathie Ryan, filled the room with warmth and remembrance. More than 80 guests shared stories, some bringing laughter, others bringing tears, as we celebrated Kevin's life and legacy.

In recognition of St. Brigid's Day, society member Scott Decker offered thoughtful remarks on the historical and religious significance of the feast, bringing depth and meaning to the afternoon.

Adding to the spirit of the day, Mick Lane and company kept everyone entertained with their lively Irish songs and stories, bringing energy and camaraderie to the gathering. Befitting the day, their final song was *The Parting Glass*, a reflective and heartfelt tribute to Kevin.



## Welcome New Members!

Maureen Cannon, Conor Donovan, Larry Halverson, Kenna & Bill Loxterman, John & Darcy Mullett, Amy & Walt Plant, Tom Schaub, Charles Wahl, and Morgan Witmer.

## 2026 Dues

**Just a reminder...your 2026 dues need to be paid as soon as possible!** Our dues remain a bargain at \$25 per family, and are essential to support our club's programs and the newsletter.

Mail your check payable to "Muskegon Irish American Society" to:  
Bruce Duff, 2973 Ridgeview St., Muskegon, MI 49445

