



newsinbrief

A night of feekin' fantastic comedy for a great cause

CASTLEBAR: A host of top comedians are appearing at a comedy night in aid of Mayo Athliss School this Friday night in the FF Royal Hotel. Joe Rooney, of Father Ted fame, will headline the comedy showcase supported by New Zealand comic Danny Dowling and funnyman John Donnellan.



Fr Danno Lennon, aka Joe Rooney, will be performing in Castlebar next Friday.

The Athliss School is a specialised school, serving children diagnosed with autism. It was established by Mayo Autism Action, a group of concerned parents determined to improve services for children with autism in the Mayo region. In particular, the school was established to provide interventions based on the principles of applied behavioural analysis (ABA), a model that has been scientifically proven effective in the education and treatment of autism. The school aims to improve the

lives of children with autism by developing individualised programs to address the unique academic, social, communication, and behavioral needs of the students.

Tickets for Friday's event cost €5 and can be purchased from the FF, on the door, or by emailing athlisschool@gmail.com. Doors open at 8pm and the show begins at 8.30pm.

You can find out more about Athliss school at www.athlisschool.com.

Amenity grant allocations approved by town councillors

BALLINA: The local town council has approved the recommended amenity grant allocations for local organisations for 2010. When the matter came before last week's meeting, the councillors were led by town clerk Carmel Murphy that €35,000 was to be allocated. They were advised that the council had received eight more applications for the funding in 2010 than it did last year.

Consequently, allocations were slightly smaller this year.

Ms Murphy stressed, however, that the town council considered that it received excellent value for money from the organisations that benefit from the funding.

Mayor Mary Kelly led the tributes to the town clerk for the very fair distribution of the funding which had taken account of the size of the housing estates applying.

Boat trip to Inishkea Islands

INISHKEA: A trip to the Inishkea Islands is scheduled for Sunday next, June 13. Anyone wishing to partake in the flotilla is requested to bring their crafts to either Ballymuroh or outside the Valley Pier in Achill at 10.30am. Launch time is 11am. The current state of the Valley Pier is a cause for concern and boat owners are requested not to anchor too close to the pier. A maximum limit of ten knots will apply for all boats in the interest of safety. All participants are asked to follow the lead boat and a safety boat will accompany the flotilla.

Full details from the usual organisers.

Drunk man ran backwards

CASTLEBAR: An intoxicated man who was spotted by gardai running "backwards" up a street in the town has been fined at a sitting of the local district court. Garda Caoimhe Walsh told the court that she was on duty at Main Street at 2.20am on May 30 last when she observed Sean Jordan, 10 Greenfields, Castlebar,

in an intoxicated state. Garda Walsh said the defendant ran backwards up the street. Aiden Crowley, solicitor, said his client had "serious difficulties with alcohol" and on the date of the incident had been drinking since 1pm the previous day. Judge Aineas Borneo imposed a fine of €200.

On your marks for 5k fun run

SLIGO: The countdown is on to the 5k fun run on Friday, June 18. Organised by the Calry Athletic Club, the run kicks off at 7.30pm. Registration will open from 6pm on Friday day at the Hazelwood Football Grounds in Calry. Charging facilities are available and the kilometres are marked on the route. Presentations will take place immediately after the race. For more information contact John Elliott on 086-6286860, Michael Killy on 085-1678790 or Gerry Higgins on 087-6427044.

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Kiltimagh plan could be on the road to nowhere...

BY SANDRA COFFEY

THE Kiltimagh local area plan could suffer yet another delay if councillors decide next week to delay its adoption in favour of conducting an impact study on options for a bypass of the town. The four councillors at last week's electoral area meeting in Swinford were at odds about the adoption of the Kiltimagh local area plan despite promptings from Iain Douglas, senior planner of Mayo Co Council, to adopt the plan.

"Any decisions we make here can be overturned at the main meeting. This is just a talking shop."

Cllr Jimmy Maloney on the electoral area meeting

The main issue is regarding the bypass for the town and whether it is a national primary route or a ring road.

Kiltimagh-based Cllr Eugene Lavin says he is in favour of the plan but wants to know the status of the bypass.

"It is this a ring road around a small town or a regional road? It can't be a regional road as it is not designed for that." Worries about the status of the bypass emerged after the N26 from Ballina to Foxford was turned down by An Bord Pleanála. Since then, a complete review of strategic routes in the county has been undertaken. The council's senior engineer, Noel Barrie, told councillors that consultants had been appointed to look at strategic routes in

Mayo, especially links between Ballina and Galway.

"It is unlikely that this road at Kiltimagh will be part of this. This road is designed to slow down traffic."

Director of services, Paddy Mahon, said it was unlikely the road in Kiltimagh would become a national road because it was too close to the town centre.

Cllr Gerry Murray said the Kiltimagh to Bobsia/Kilberry road was to be upgraded to a national primary, which would bypass the town.

"If this is the case then the town will have two bypasses. The residents of these towns are entitled to voice their opinions. Only one route, this route, has been put forward. A constraints study should be done in order to give

those people due process. Kiltimagh needs a bypass. We need to look at how it is delivered."

The constraints study could take up to 18 months to complete, thereby delaying the development plan.

Cllrs Lavin and Mellett voted to proceed with the plan as is while Cllr Murray asked that the plan go ahead but only if a constraints study is done.

Cllr Jimmy Maloney abstained stating "Any decisions we make here can be overturned at the main meeting. This is just a talking shop."

While the plan as it stands was passed at the meeting it now goes forward to next Monday's meeting of the full county council where Cllr Murray is expected to express his concerns.

Titanic effort: Students and teacher recreate the past

BY ORLA HEARNS

ALMOST a century after its tragic founding in the Atlantic Ocean, the haunting tale of the sinking of the Titanic is deepening bonds between the generations in one north Mayo townland.

Last Thursday the children of the 18-pupil, two-teacher national school at Killocran, Castlehill, performed their own play about the Titanic to parents, extended families and neighbours. Many of those present have a personal link with the infamous maritime tragedy, as a number of emigrants from the North Mayo area died on that terrible night in August 1912.

Credits for the extremely successful project goes to principal Elizabeth Syron and teacher Pauline O'Boyle, who teaches junior to second class students. Ms O'Boyle, who is a native of the area, is actually leaving Killocran school at the end of this month but her hard work in putting the Titanic play together with the students makes for a priceless legacy that few teachers could match.

Pauline's own grandparents, John and Catherine Bourke (nee McHugh) of Carravale and Townagh, Adzergoole parish were passengers on board the Titanic, as was John's sister, Mary. They were among the 14 people from that North Mayo parish who set sail on the "ship of dreams". Eleven of the group perished, including the Bourkes.

When Michael Molloy, PRO of the Adzergoole Titanic Society, visited the school and spoke to the children about the event, Ms O'Boyle was struck by their interest.

"They were quite into it. Their grandparents would have told them stories about it and they all would have had relations or neighbours who were on board the Titanic," Ms O'Boyle said.

The teacher decided that creating a dramatic production about Adzergoole's involvement in the Titanic would be an excellent way to help the children learn the details.

The play was a collaborative effort between students and Ms O'Boyle, with the children choosing which real life



Shane McDermott, second from left, played Titanic captain Edward Smith, with fellow ship officer Brendan O'Malley, right, joined in salute by Killian Fergus and Mark Dermody, who played the part of Adzergoole passengers in the Killocran NS drama.

character they wanted to portray. Ms O'Boyle remarked that the play has had a snowball effect with older generations coming forward to share their Titanic-related stories with the Killocran students. This personal touch brought a real emotional element to the way Ms O'Boyle and her students connected with the characters they portrayed.

"It's lovely that they can appreciate the significance of the Titanic to their local area. Even 100 years later people are still talking about it here."

RIGHT: Parents, younger children and Ms O'Boyle, with the children choosing which real life



Members of the cast of Killocran NS play. Front row, from left: Killian Fergus, Mark Dermody, Shane McDermott, Brendan O'Malley, and Laurie Dermody. Standing: Niamh O'Malley, Anna Clarke, Emma Lawlor, Conor Caden, Ronan McDermott, Luke and Conor Fergus, Claire O'Malley, Darren Caden, Lisa Clarke, Therese Clarke and Darragh Ruane.



The cast of the play, front row, from left: Brendan O'Malley, Shane McDermott, Mark Dermody, Therese Clarke and Laurie Dermody. Middle row, from left: Lisa Clarke, Gerrold Clarke, Luke Fergus, Killian Fergus, Conor Caden, Conor Fergus and Emma Lawlor. Back row, from left: Niamh O'Malley, Claire O'Malley, Darragh Ruane, Anna Clarke, Ronan McDermott, and Darren Caden.

Heverin on his bike for peak challenge

CASTLEBAR: A local man has commenced an epic challenge to raise funds for cancer research and pay tribute to his father who died from the disease, writes Keith Bourke.

Snugboro native, Mark Heverin (25), will scale the highest peaks in each of the 32 counties and will cycle the thousands of kilometres between them. He will attempt to do all of this in an incredible 24 days. Mark took on the first part of his challenges last Friday when he scaled Mount Errigal in Co Donegal and Savel on the Derry/Tyrone border. Mark's arduous undertaking will end on home turf with an ascent of Mweera on the Mayo/Galway border. His average day will involve 40km of cycling and 850m of climbing. The Pedal to the Peaks challenge was borne out of tragic circumstances. Last summer, Mark's father was diagnosed with untreatable cancer of the bile duct. He died just seven weeks after receiving the news of his illness.

If anyone would like to donate to Mark's charity challenge they can do so at Michael Killy on 085-1678790 or Gerry Higgins on 087-6427044.



Water quality at Ross a 'European disgrace'

BY ORLA HEARNS

ROSS Beach in Kiltilla is one of nine designated bathing areas nationwide that have been listed as failing to comply with minimum mandatory EU bathing water standards.

North Mayo was left reeling after the Kiltilla beach was the only one of 15 designated bathing areas throughout Co Mayo where water quality was rated as poor in the Environmental Protection Agency's summary report, The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland - An Overview for the year 2009.

All other beaches in the county were rated as having good bathing water apart from Old Head in Louth, which received a "sufficient" rating.

But local Fine Gael councillor, Jarlath Munnally says the poor rating for Ross Beach comes as no surprise and is directly related to the lack of a new sewerage treatment plant in Kiltilla.

"Disrupting the situation at Ross as a 'European disgrace', the councillor

says no progress has been made in recent years in delivering this key piece of infrastructure to Kiltilla, despite his consistent representations on the matter.

Cllr Munnally claims the construction of the sewerage treatment plant is being held back by the Department of the Environment's delay in issuing the foreshore licence that is required to allow the project progress through planning. He claims the Chief State Solicitor's office had signed off on Mayo Co Council's application for the licence last year.

Cllr Munnally says Deputy Minister Ring has pursued the matter by way of two Dail questions in recent months but on both occasions the Minister for the Environment John Gormley has failed to provide a proper answer and the licence has yet to be issued.

Cllr Munnally says the State could now choose between spending money on building the treatment plant in Kiltilla or on paying EU fines for breaching water standards.

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