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Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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Bold Irish American Steps into the Future

By

Raymond D. Aumack

The flight to Florida was awful. There was intense turbulence for about three quarters of the three-hour trip. Maria Costo was not a stranger to turbulence. She had made many flights to Florida since she left home to work in Philadelphia and, while she experienced turbulence, this was far worse than other experiences. She was no stranger to danger. She and her father rowed through three to five-foot swells through a difficult and shark infested stretch of the Atlantic for well over one hundred miles from Cuba, to land at a Miami beach. She was so exhausted that she knelt in the sand and keeled over into a deep sleep. This was the source of the nickname given to her by her American friends throughout high school. She was known as Sandy Costo.

Desmond held her hand tightly while the pilot apologized for the turbulence. He had appealed to local control towers along the route for permission to fly at different levels. There was discomforting turbulence at every level. He assured everyone that the plane was perfectly safe, but they had no choice but to accept the discomfort. Their ETA in Miami was forty-five minutes from the pilot's announcement.

The plane started its descent into Miami Airport. It was not the normal smooth descent. It was like tumbling down a flight of stairs to rest on the landing, only to do the same thing for the next flight. While the low-level cruise was still slightly bumpy, the crosswind kept tilting the plane and the pilot kept readjusting. The wheels touched the runway with incredible gentleness, and they ran smoothly while the rear thrusters engaged to help the plane come to a complete stop. As they turned onto the tarmac toward the gate, applause broke out with cheers, hoots, and whistles for the pilots in gratitude for their amazing skill in flying them safely to Miami.

At the gate, the welcoming party was incredible. All the Dowds from Ireland, Desmond's brothers and sisters-in-law, and his sister and her husband were present along with Maria's parents, sisters, aunts, and uncles, and cousins. The line of hugs and greetings lasted for a full forty-five minutes. There were twelve cars in the motorcade leaving the airport with a variety of on lookers trying to identify the

celebrity. Back at the house it was difficult for Desmond to catch up with his brothers, sister and their spouses. Maria was catching up with her cousins, aunts and uncles.

Dave Garvey had chartered a plane to attend the wedding and refused the contributions of his passengers. It was a relatively large contingent and take off time was 10:00 AM. They would arrive in time to rest, prepare for the rehearsal, and the rehearsal dinner. It was a very smooth flight filled with the joviality of friends and relatives mingling freely. The wheels of the plane touched the ground at exactly 1:00 PM. They would have time for further mingling.

Susan's mom had healed from the wounds inflicted by her husband. However, she still required some dental work. She wasn't on the trip, but Maeve was looking for some private time to talk with Susan about her mom's future. Maeve did not know about the financial details and wanted to talk with Susan about giving her a job in the office. When she was settled, Maeve called and invited her for a sandwich in the hotel lounge to discuss how the situation ended.

When they met, Susan was anxious to tell Maeve the outcomes of a lot of interventions.

"I just found out about this last night from Brian. O'Sullivan is knee deep in another criminal case, but his office had just completed all the paper work. Mom is living at my apartment. After Michael and I are married, I am going to transfer the lease to her name. She is a tough lady and she healed well from the incident. My father is in a state-run psychiatric center. He'll be there a minimum of seven years. If they feel he hasn't progressed enough, they can keep him for as long as it takes. For a prison environment, life is pretty good there. My mom is financially secure now. The house sold quickly for \$500 thousand. Mom gets half of that. She also gets half of the money my father had hidden from her and that will come to \$200 thousand. She got rid of all the furniture in the house by donating it to the Jesuit Urban Mission. So mom has about \$500 thousand available to her. She also has a 401K from Denny's. I don't know how much she has there. I want her to invest \$200 thousand in a growth fund. I plan to speak with Hugh Quinn about a financial advisor."

"My father might be able to help you. Speak with him on this trip. He handles all my investments and they are growing well," said Maeve.

“Thanks Maeve. I’ll do that. Mom is in the RCIA program at St. Rita’s and she loves it. She worked through a whole morass of emotions with Father Fred. She is in therapy now. She is ambivalent about what to do about my father. Fr. Fred said that she clearly is a candidate for an annulment. She has other things to work through. She forgives my father as I do, but neither of us want anything to do with him. My sister feels the same way. When she left home, she left everything behind. She spoke on the phone with my mom but only when my father wasn’t home. My father doesn’t even know where she lives and never bothered to ask. We were just an annoyance in his life, probably because we are girls.”

“Mom is well now; the future is going to be great and she deserves that. I have never known her to be this happy.“

“I know that she was a secretary, said Maeve. There is a job for her at Garvey Consultants. Michael may have a spot for her. I’m sure that John could use her at the club. His Banquet Manager is getting married and moving to Denver. Your mom could get hands on training from her before she leaves. It is a nice position in a nice atmosphere. John wouldn’t tolerate anything else. He wants his club and staff to have the best working opportunity in Philadelphia.”

“I’ll talk with her and introduce her to John. Of course, she has already met John. I’ll talk to John first. Mom is very capable, probably more so, now that she is out from under my father’s thumb. He was even skeptical because she was working in an office with men in it. I strongly explained to him that men make up half the world’s population, so you are bound to meet one every once in a while. He muttered at me that if they were so good, why didn’t I meet one. Little did I know that he was catting around on my mom and squirreling away that money. He probably planned to just walk away from mom.”

“Maeve, I don’t know how to thank you. I don’t know what I would do without your support.”

”And the people in your life, me included, would not know what to do without your input.”

The wedding rehearsal was chaotic fun. The poor priest was overwhelmed. He worked it out. Desmond and Maria were the bride and groom. Maeve was the matron of honor. He let everyone else figure out where they should be. Maria’s sisters, Eva and Louisa, led the procession walking together side by side. Susan followed June. Dierdre followed Susan. Grace followed Dierdre, and Theresa

walked in front of Maeve, who was the matron of honor. Maria and her father. Juan Carlos looked so proud.

Desmond and his brother, Sean, waited near the step to the altar. Rauri, and Richard, his brother and brother-in-law served as ushers and would retire to the first pew when the bride and her father reached the altar. His sister and sisters-in-law had seats of honor with the ushers. Juan Carlos kissed his daughter and then grabbed her arm to not let her go. His little joke generated a lot of laughter.

Fr. Camillo went through the Mass. Maria had alerted him that everyone was a regular at Sunday Mass and more. Everyone was active in the Jesuit Urban Ministry and June was the Executive Director and supervisor of nine priests.

The dinner was a lot of fun, as well. Juan Carlos restricted it to the wedding party so he could get to know his daughter's friends as well as Desmond's family, and the rest of the wedding party. Maeve's brothers were not present for the rehearsal dinner. Juan Carlos wanted to meet with Dave and get to know the toast of the legal profession. The joviality of the dinner included hilarious mini roasts of the bride and groom. Desmond's brother, Sean, could have been a comedian, but he finished with a beautiful tribute to Desmond's late wife, and an even more beautiful tribute to Maria, whom he had gotten to know in Ireland. The room was mesmerized into tearful smiles.

The wedding celebration was a beautiful Hispanic fiesta. The liturgy was inspiring. During the Mass, a dove found its way into the Church and lingered above the altar, and then flew out the front door. Both Desmond and Maria smiled at the visit and blessing of Desmond's deceased wife. Maria's sisters had the spotlight for their prepubescent beauty. The bridesmaids, in their personal gowns, radiated a stunning array of diversity and beauty. This was a very special wedding even for upscale Miami. If anyone in Miami needed a lawyer, they would have to go to the reception to find one. The eloquent Sean Dowd gave a beautiful toast to Desmond and Maria. Desmond responded with a beautiful tribute to Maria and how blessed they were to have met and fallen so deeply in love. This was the result of the Sunday gatherings with their marvelous friends, all of whom were present and starred in the wedding party.

Juan Carlos and Dave were enjoying meeting each other. The two lions of the Law had much to share. When asked, Dave told the story of the assassination attempt but gave all the credit to Theresa and Dierdre. "Who would have thought that practicing Law could be so dangerous."

“I am amazed that we are both victims of assassination attempts.”

“You mean that that beautiful little girl with the black hair brought down the cartel.”

“Yes, with the help of the little girl with the red hair who did the shooting. Dierdre will be awarded the Silver Star later this month for heroism in combat. Try to catch the award on TV. It will be broadcast nationwide. The Marines want to showcase the contribution of women in combat. Both Theresa and Dierdre are outstanding persons. After Theresa’s parents died, she adopted my wife and me as surrogate parents. Not surprisingly, Theresa and my daughter Maeve met in Church. Grace, Maeve, and June went to college together. June and Maeve were roommates for four years. There is more spiritual awareness, courage, and competence at that table than you will find any place else in the country. Maeve and Maria met in Church and gather with Theresa, June, Grace, Dierdre, Susan, and my sons, after Mass, each Sunday afternoon. My son, Brian is engaged to June. Susan is engaged to my son, Michael. Patrick, my daughter Maeve’s husband, is the brother of Theresa. My sons, Brian, Michael, and our longtime friend Desmond are all part of the group of friends.”

Juan Carlos was happily startled that young people attend Church. “This is an outstanding story. The entire world should know about this. Maria always talks about her friends, but I could never imagine the group they have created.”

“Juan Carlos, I am just as startled. My wife and I join them from time to time and we have a lot of fun together.”

There was serious dancing going on. Theresa was teaching several groups to do an Irish reel, to the beat of Spanish music, to the amusement of the native Irish who were also participants. And so the music and laughter continued until the early hours of the morning.

Sean gave a moving toast to the bride and groom. This time Maria responded by paying a loving tribute to Desmond, thanked her parents for being great parents and providing this great reception. She then introduced the wedding party one by one, starting with her lovely sisters Eva and Louisa. and finally introduced Desmond’s family and Maeve’s brothers as the affianced of Susan, June, and Theresa. When she introduced Maeve and Patrick she announced that they had been married for a little more than a month to the great applause of her audience. “These are the great friends of my life and the finest people you meet anywhere. Introduce yourselves and mix with them, because you also are the greatest people

anywhere who embraced us, supported us, and share our great success in America. Thank you and God bless you all.

The next morning, Ana Maria Costo had arranged a marvelous buffet breakfast at the Costo home. A tired group staggered in and the breakfast was low key after a night of fun and revelry. Dave and Brigid arranged to host Ana Maria, Juan Carlos, and their daughters for the Philadelphia reception. That party would be just as elegant but a lot less formal at Bookbinders. Jimmy Byrne would provide the entertainment and music for dancing.

Desmond and Maria left the reception at about three quarters through the evening. Intending to steal away, they were caught and subjected to cheers and applause. After changing into street clothes, Desmond had a taxi take them to the airport to a waiting plane that took them to Key West for a week of love and relaxation. No one knew where they were going to celebrate their bold step into the future. They did not arrive as honeymooners and for all practical purposes, no one paid much attention to them. They spent their days shopping and sightseeing, swimming in the pool, walking on the beach and just enjoying each other's company. Every night they had a romantic dinner in one of the fabulous restaurants and finished every evening making love.

After breakfast, Susan and John stepped into the library to talk about her mom. "Maeve told me that you were expecting a vacancy on your staff. I think that maybe my mom could fill it. If you don't think my mom would be a good fit, I certainly don't have a problem with your judgement and I'll still love you."

"Tell me about your mom."

"My mom has long experience as a corporate assistant. She worked in the administration of a restaurant chain, Denny's. Her skills are outstanding. In fact, Maeve wanted to hire her for our office. I don't think she would enjoy working for me. She has independence for the first time in her adult life and she is enjoying it. She has experience having direct contact with the public. She has experience as a scheduler. She helped people in her office with planning. She is efficient, can set budgets, has a high degree of charm relating to customers."

"Sounds interesting. I am planning on looking for a banquet manager. Our current banquet manager is moving to Denver in six weeks. I will certainly want to speak with your mom. If I think she has the skills, I'll have my banquet manager train

her. If I don't think she has the skills, I'll let you know and maybe we can find her a more appropriate opportunity."

"John, I can't ask for anything more than that. I'll speak with her tonight and she'll call for an interview appointment. Thank you, thank you."

Shortly after they landed, Susan called her mom and set up a dinner at a local neighborhood restaurant.

During the meal Susan raised the prospect of getting another job. Her pitch was that to have a place to go every day, an opportunity to do different things, meet new people, and enjoy the stimulation of accomplishing things would be a great experience for her. Her mom had no objections. In fact, she thought it was a good idea. "Where do I start?"

"John Garvey's club will have a job opening for a banquet manager. You have the transferable skills to do that job. The incumbent is leaving to get married and move across the country in six weeks. She can spend that time training you. All you have to do is talk with John and convince him that your work skills are transferable. He knows what he is looking for in a manager, and from my perspective, you have the basic skills necessary. All you have to do is learn the particulars. Mom, one thing about work is that it is a springboard to a great future. Look at me. I was such a dingbat when I started working for Maeve. Now I run the company as a co-owner." You would love working in a country club environment. Learning new things is a great adventure."

"I'll call John tomorrow and set up an appointment. He seems like a nice guy."

"He is. And more than that, Maeve thinks he is the smartest person in the family of terribly smart people. John doesn't really project that because there is nothing arrogant about him. His father has a hundred very smart lawyers working for him. Yet, whenever he needs help, John is his 'go to' guy."

"Great, I'm looking forward to chatting with him."

"OK! Wear your best business suit. Come down to the office tomorrow and I'll ask Theresa to give you an interview outline and practice answering questions. Do you have a resume?"

"Yes, I'll look for it tonight."

They spent the rest of the meal with stories about the wedding, the people she met, the charm of Miami, even though it is about to be inundated by the Atlantic Ocean,

the beauty of the wedding, and the great reception. She told how Theresa showed people how to dance Irish jigs even to Hispanic music. She talked about the beauty of the Costo home and how gracious Maria's parents were. She talked about the charm of Maria's sisters, late in life blessings for her parents.

"Your father thought of him as an immigrant wet back that took away American jobs."

"Mom, he is one of the most prominent immigration lawyers in Florida. He came here with nothing. He and Maria rowed over a hundred miles through treacherous shark infested choppy waters to escape from Cuba. Castro was planning to assassinate him. He worked as a waiter in a Cuban restaurant while he was studying for the Florida bar exam. Maria was twelve when they landed on Miami Beach."

Susan drove her mom to her apartment and then proceeded to Michael's apartment where she was now living almost full time.

John, Theresa, Dave, Brigid and Dierdre appeared at the offices of Beame, Bien, Bean, Bing and Arnold. They will interview them as a group and then interview each individually. David had warned his family to take this interview seriously because it was a top of the line law firm representing Sean McNeil. He wouldn't expect anything less than the best for Sean. He counseled them to tell the truth to the best of their memory of the event. If they weren't sure of something, mention that. We do the deposition under oath. That shouldn't be intimidating, and the same rules apply. Just answer the question. Don't elaborate. If they want a story, they'll ask for it. Just give the facts, not your opinion. John and I will do some fishing, so just ignore us.

Ed Beame, well known to David, explained the process.

"How did you come to be at that location?"

"I was the host," said John, "so I'll answer the question. My fiancé and I had prepared a special dinner for my mom and dad. We made the arrangements the previous week to meet that evening at my apartment. During the day my dad and I each received a note by e-mail to meet in the parking lot because we needed help removing packages from the car. Ironically, we would have been there anyway at that time."

"Was there a return address in the e-mail?"

"It never occurred to me to look," said John.

“Nor did it occur to me,” said Dave.

“Do you have the e-mails?”

“I normally don’t save casual e-mails from my dad.”

“Can they be recovered?”

“I’ll give it a try and let you know,” said John as he wrote the note down.

“What happened when you got there?”

“Well Theresa and I left our car as did my mom and dad. We were looking at each other expecting to hear about the packages in the car. Almost immediately, these five guys jumped out of the shadows with guns drawn. Theresa saw the gun and disarmed and disabled one of the gunmen. I disabled the other on the other side of my dad’s car. Meanwhile Dierdre came in like a bullet and disarmed the third gun. Theresa saw the gun and leapt to push the shooter who was going to take out my dad. The shooter’s bullet went through Dierdre’s hair. Her shot caught him square in the chest, killing him instantly. The fifth guy ran, and the FBI guy corralled him with a bullet to the butt. It was all over in about 90 seconds. Theresa totally disabled one gunman and distracted another gunman who was killed. Dierdre broke all the ribs of the third gunman, and the fifth gunman laid in the field trying to escape. The FBI agent took his weapon and dragged him to where the cars were parked. The FBI called the local police.”

The attorney looked at Theresa, demurely sitting at the table.

“I read the reports. You did all that? Where did you get your training?”

“Villanova University: We had five days of training as part of freshman orientation. I liked it and took two semesters as electives and earned a black belt.”

“You must be a terror. I read that you once worked in the inner city.”

“I never had to use these skills before. I never even told my fiancé because it never came up and I didn’t remember that page in my biography. This is the first time I used these skills since my sophomore year at Villanova 12 years ago. The course gave me a lot of self-confidence, discipline, and a supportive spirituality.”

“You disarmed two people with loaded guns in a little more than a minute?”

“Of course, if I paused, we wouldn’t be having this conversation. Those guys were trained killers.”

Theresa knew enough to halt the small talk since distraction was a way to get information.

The inquisitor turned his attention to Dave. “How do you know Sean McNally?”

“We have been colleagues for many years. We socialized frequently. I invited his wife and family to Christmas dinner. In spite of the fact that he tried to have me killed, his wife and children are innocent, and the scandal of the arrest embarrasses them. We would meet weekly at Kiwanis meetings. And we were both involved in local charities and church. We were close friends until this unfortunate incident. He has a big price to pay and I know that I don’t want to carry the burden of hatred.”

Turning to John, the inquisitor wanted to know his occupation.

“I am the Executive Director of the Glen Gables Country Club, owned by my family.”

“My information says that you are an attorney.”

“Your information is correct.”

“So you don’t work as an attorney.”

“I do work as an attorney. I handle special assignments for my father’s firm, and I help out my brothers Brian and Michael, at their call.”

“I assume you don’t like being an attorney.”

“Au Contraire, I love being an attorney. I have great respect for the Law. I am very good at practicing Law.”

“Yet, you don’t have a law practice.”

“I like the contract arrangements I have with my father and my brothers. I like running the club.

”Your father’s firm has the reputation of being Philadelphia’s best. Why would he need to contract with you?”

“You’ll have to ask him. I have already said, I am very good at what I do.”

“What else do you do Mr. Garvey.”

“Well, I do a lot of things with my fiancée. We like to travel to the various sights of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I am active in my parish church and serve on

committees. I jog every day. I have been very helpful, I hope, in assisting the poor and homeless. I volunteer for the Jesuit Urban Mission.”

“That is not what I mean Mr. Garvey. It says in my material that you are a licensed private investigator.”

“Oh that! Yes, but I haven’t been very active. I decided years ago that I didn’t want to make that my career. Too much dangerous work and I don’t own a gun and don’t want to.”

“Did you expect any danger on the night of the incident in question?”

“No, I had already planned a home cooked dinner in my apartment at the clubhouse for my fiancée and my parents.”

“Do you know Mr. McNally?”

“Yes, I do.”

“How do you feel about him?”

“Remember, I was shot, and I still feel discomfort from the wound. Like my dad, I don’t harbor any hatred for Sean. I feel badly that a man with his impeccable reputation and a large and thriving practice could go so far astray. I also like his family and one of his sons and I are quite friendly.”

“When did you last see him?”

“About six months ago when he left for Afghanistan.”

“Thank you Mr. Garvey. You are aware that we have the right to recall you as our investigation proceeds.”

Theresa, Dave, and Brigid also went through a similar interrogation. Dave’s was more intense because he was invited to join the Ponzi scheme. He had gone to the SEC and the FBI to try to get Sean Michael off the hook.

After the deposition, they gathered in the lounge at Glen Gables.

“Well, what did you think,” asked Dave?

“I was surprised,” said Theresa. “They didn’t seem to be well prepared.” I agree with Theresa,” said Brigid. “I was expecting a grilling like I see in the trial shows on television. They didn’t ask anything that wasn’t already in the newspaper or on TV.”

“Go ahead, John, you tell them.”

“This was all carefully staged to lower our guard. What they are looking for is something that was not in newspapers or on TV. They will be calling us in individually, now. They will be looking for motives or attitudes that might change the color of our story. We are already comfortable answering their questions. They want us to tell them what they don’t know.”

“When we answer their questions, if we don’t have a fact, tell them that. If they challenge that, tell them that you were there, and they weren’t.”

“Don’t tell them your feelings or assumptions. Dierdre, they are going to question you at length about your military training and experience. They are going to want to explore your feelings after a battle, for instance. If you didn’t shoot that guy, what would have happened?”

“Mr. Garvey would have been killed. The killer would have quickly recovered from Theresa’s push and probably killed her as well.”

“How long was the confrontation?”

“The FBI estimates about 70 seconds.”

“They’ll ask why you shot him.”

“He had a gun that he was in the process of using it. He was going to kill Mr. Garvey.”

“Why didn’t the others shoot?”

“Theresa immediately disarmed one. John disarmed the other, I disarmed the third. The fourth ran into the field when things started to go bad. I did not have a gun in my hand when Theresa hollered ‘gun,’ I spun toward Mr. Garvey who was on the ground to protect him, simultaneously drawing my gun. Theresa pushed him as he fired his gun. I fired simultaneously striking him while his bullet tore through my hair. “The person I shot had his gun pointed at Mr. Garvey when Theresa pushed him.”

”If he wasn’t in harm’s way, why did you shoot him?”

“He was in harm’s way. As I mentioned, his gun was pointing at Mr. Garvey. Therese pushed him as he fired. I fired almost simultaneously, striking him in the chest. Sir, all of this happened probably within one and three seconds.”

“Within three seconds you rolled over to cover Mr. Garvey, drew your gun when Theresa hollered ‘gun,’ and you fired with pinpoint accuracy?”

“Sir, I have more medals for marksmanship than I can wear on my uniform. I wear only one my on uniform.”

“It is hard to believe that you were able to do that with what must have been intense emotional stress?”

“It is my training, sir. I was a Marine for five years, in combat zones for most of that time as a search and rescue specialist. This is one of the most dangerous of combat related assignments. We trained every day to stay alive in intense fire fights. In these situations, you have to trust your training. It guides the way you act and react. In this situation, my job was to protect Mr. Garvey. No one ever anticipated that they would send a squad of assassins to kill him. My training saved him, but I had a lot help from Theresa and John.”

“That is good Dierdre. That is the right response.”

“Okay, we’ll do some practice interviews before you go in to meet them.”

“Susan and Theresa were helping Dierdre prepare for meeting the President. Dierdre, usually affable, and charming, was having a difficult time fearing that she would disrespect her former commander-in-chief for whom she had no respect at all. Maeve contributed that the company had clients that they do not like, but they have to provide services anyway. It is for the benefit of the company’s employees as well as for their customers and associated companies. Half of America voted for him and you don’t want to disrespect the other half of America. Think of the good of the republic and accept your honor graciously.”

Dierdre stared at Maeve and said, “Yes I can do this. I will be cordial, and I will not disrespect half the country that did not vote for him. He has a lot of famous and intelligent critics. They really don’t need me.”

“Atta girl!” Theresa chimed in. Also think of your fellow Marines. They are so proud of you. You will be as big a hero on the national stage as you were on the battlefield. They may never know it, but you and we will. Dave has the highest respect for you. When you pull this off, you will know that his respect is even more justified.”

The next day they boarded a Marine jet plane that flew Dierdre and her guests to Washington. The other two recipients Carmela Lagassi and Josephine (Jo) Chesta, arrived at Reagan Airport. at roughly the same time, Guests were taken to the

White House by bus. The recipients rode in a presidential limousine accompanied by two Marine Corps generals.

The conversation on the way was cordial, mostly about what they were doing in retirement. Carmela was a software specialist for Google and Jo was a technical digital specialist in a pharmaceutical company. Both occupations were in the wheelhouse of their Marine training. All were amazed at their selection for the Silver Star since they had been on far more dangerous missions than their most recent one. Her colleagues remembered that Dierdre had won the Croix de Guerre for a far more dangerous rescue mission in intense fire that neither the rescuer nor the rescued should have survived. It was reaction to a need. A wounded soldier was trapped in withering machine gun fire. Dierdre asked for covering fire and crawled out to drag the wounded soldier to safety. Witnesses said they had never seen anything like that except in the movies. The military brass ignored that one. The French government did not, once they heard the story. The Croix de Guerre is their highest military honor. When questioned about the incident, Dierdre said that she just called on her training. The embarrassed Marines then kept their eye on Dierdre, who seemed fearless, yet she continued to train intensely.

When Carmela and Jo were assigned to her to form a team, they trained with her every day. She learned everything she needed to know about combat situations, especially, how to identify enemy weaknesses and how to use them to your advantage. She, in turn, taught her team and they vowed to do everything possible to keep each other safe from harm. They had several missions together some of which were far more dangerous than the one for which they were being honored.

The lunch was delightful. The Secretary of Defense was the host. The Vice President stopped by for introductions. The Marine Brass proudly joined the party. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development was present as the only woman in the Cabinet.

Each Senator provided good conversation. Dierdre spoke to each one about the great work of the Jesuit Urban Ministry in Philadelphia for which she is now a volunteer paramedic. She was licensed through the military. She had considerable experience treating wounds in combat. She said the same thing when she met the congressmen for the Philadelphia District. Everyone listened intently and stated that they would look into the work of the Jesuit Urban Ministry. She told them that she would personally follow up with their offices.

It was now 3:00 PM and time for routine TV make-up and a change of clothes into their dress uniforms. The President came in for introductions and quipped about

the TV camera being more formidable than a cannon on the battlefield. The three women laughed among themselves after he left. Jo mentioned that a remark like that can only come from someone who has never seen a battlefield.

At precisely 4:00 PM the ceremony started. The Secretary for the Department of Defense introduced the President for his remarks. His remarks were inane with some strange statements about women in combat. Dierdre didn't listen thinking of happy times walking and talking with Tommy, happy thoughts about working with Garvey Associates, and happy thoughts about her new friends and how much they embraced and respected her. She thought about Fr. Fred and Mass on Sundays and the luncheons after Mass. When the President finished she turned her attention to the ceremony. There was nothing negative in her feelings. Thank you, Susan for teaching me that trick. Carmela was the first to be honored. An officer read the proclamation about incredible courage taking on a superior force to save trapped comrades. He draped the medal around her neck, looked like he was going to hug her but then shook her hand instead and saluted.

Jo was next to be honored. The proclamation was similar. The medal was draped around her neck followed by a handshake and a salute.

Dierdre took a deep breath and walked to her position. The Officer read the proclamation. It was not quite the same as the other. It mentions her eight medals in marksmanship and several other military honors. It also mentioned her award of the Croix de Guerre. After putting the Silver star around her neck, the President looked at her and said, you received France's highest award for gallantry in combat and asked, "How did we miss that?"

Dierdre looked him straight in the eye, totally disarming him and said, "Sir, our highest honor is serving in the American Military. Serving with the Marines is the greatest honor."

"I read about your heroics in Philadelphia."

"I only did in my civilian work what I trained for in the military."

The President turned to the audience and asked Theresa Malone to step forward.

An usher practically dragged Theresa to the podium, where the President took her hand.

"Theresa, I understand that you single-handedly broke the Colombian cartel when they attacked your fiancé and his parents."

“Mr. President, it was Dierdre who saved the day and all our lives. I helped as did my fiancé, John, who was actually wounded.”

“My report states that you quickly disarmed and disabled an assassin, disrupted the shot that would have killed David Garvey, the target of the assassination, and disrupted the assassin’s shot until Dierdre could bring him down. The attack was ended because of your action in 70 seconds. Four assassins were arrested, and one was killed. Almost a billion dollars of illegal drug money was recovered. There would have been innocent deaths but for your intervention. In recognition of this I award you the Presidential Medal of Freedom.” He draped it around her neck, attempted a hug but shook her hand instead.

After they went off the air, Theresa crying uncontrollably hugged Dierdre, “I’m so sorry. Today belonged to you, Carmela, and Jo. This was a military honor for you. If I knew this was going to happen I would have stayed home.”

The three military officers embraced her in a group hug. “It wasn’t your fault,” stated Carmela.” I read about it, as well.”

“The President is just trying to soften up the hardened women’s vote,” said Jo.

Dierdre shared seats on the plane home. Theresa’s discomfort had turned to real anger. Dierdre was a comforter as was John.

“Theresa, these things are so political. We had so many more dangerous rescues. We were successful because we were so committed to each other and trained so hard. We knew training would not stop a bullet or a missile. But we just worked harder than everyone else. There are tens of thousands of soldiers who don’t have the medals they deserve. We were honored simply because we are female.”

Dave overheard that as he was walking up to help comfort. “Millions of women will be thrilled with your honor tonight. You comported yourselves very well through the reception and you were a great presence on TV. I wouldn’t be surprised if the Marines had an uptick in female recruitment because of the awards. I think the female voters of America will see right through this charade.”

“Thanks Dave. I am feeling better. John and Dierdre are talking me down from my angst. We didn’t have any control over that, did we.”

“You made a great appearance on TV, both of you.”

Susan came by and also offered her efforts at comfort. “Just remember this important Latin dictum. “Nulli in asperum disputationum est.” Loosely translated, “don’t let the bastards discourage you.”

Everyone laughed. John said that he wanted that as a motto on the front of his desk at the club.

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Hibernian Rifles



1916 Easter Rising

American Eagle Flag † AOH – IAA

Originally shrouded in mystery, this gold on green flag was brought to the attention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America by Brother Hibernian Dennis McCarthy. In the course of the Easter Rising, a soldier appeared at a house on Mount Street, Dublin. He asked the family living there to keep some bullets and a flag for him, saying he would come back for them. However, the soldier never returned. Many years later, when the family handed the bullets and flag to the Michael Collins museum, nobody was able to shed any light on its origins. A carefully and beautifully made parade flag, Jenny Smyth of *Flags Ireland* suggested that it could be of American manufacture, as the eagle is American. The combined shamrock and laurel motif was a feature of flags of the Irish Volunteers from the time of the American War for Independence (and later IV on both sides of the Atlantic).

The matter was referred to scholars and experts, including: Dr. Marion Casey, and Miriam Nyhan, both NYU, Professor Ruán O'Donnell of the University of Limerick; Hibernian Historians John Ridge, Mike McCormack, Bob Bateman and Liam Murphy; Ruth Daykin of Irish History Links; Richard and Victor Case in Dublin; Dan Dennehy of the AOH National Board.

The consensus, led by John Ridge, is that this is a banner of the Hibernian Rifles / AOH Irish American Alliance, which had branches, and military units, both in the United States and in Ireland. The identity of the Hibernian Rifles soldier, who never retrieved his flag, remains a mystery. †

Irish History – March

2nd 1933 - Vote to remove the Oath of Allegiance is carried.

1934 - Wearing of Uniform (Restriction) Bill carried.

3rd 1942 - Gas rationing introduced.

5th 1867 - Fenian rising in Dublin, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare and Cork.

1936 - W. T. Cosgrave again nominated President of Fine Gael.

6th 1988 - The SAS controversially kill three IRA members in Gibraltar.

7th 1887 - The Times publishes the first in a series of article accusing Parnell of being involved in crime.

1957 - Fianna Fáil return to power in the Republic.

1965 - Mass is said in the vernacular for the first time.

8th 1966 - Nelson's Pillar in Dublin is blown up.

10th 1932 - The new Fianna Fáil government releases 23 political prisoners.

1934 - Women banned from National Athletic and Cycling Association events.

1944 - The United States alleges that Ireland's neutrality is acting in favour of the Axis Powers.

11th 1926- De Valera resigns as President of Sinn Féin after one of his proposals is defeated.

13th 1846 - 300 tenants evicted from Ballinglass.

1944 - The British government bans travel between Great Britain and Ireland.

14th 1984 - Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams is shot and wounded.

1991 - The Birmingham Six are freed after 16 years wrongful imprisonment.

15th 1953 - 10,000 civil servants march in Dublin, demanding a just wage.

16th 1939 - De Valera is greeted by Benito Mussolini in Rome.

1953 - President Roosevelt asks the American Congress to support a United Ireland.

1964 - Seán Lemass launches 'Ireland Week' in London.

1988 - Michael Stone kills three people at an IRA funeral.

1991 - Dublin becomes the European City of Culture.

17th 1931 - First St Patrick's Day parade in the Irish Free State.

1933 - Éamon de Valera gives the first State reception since the foundation of the Free State.

18th 1934 - General Eoin O'Duffy addresses 2,500 Blueshirts in the Trim Market Square.

1964 - The Agricultural Ministers of the North and the Republic, Harry West and Charles Haughey, meet.

19th 1969 - Ireland receives its first loan from the World Bank.

20th 1920 - Mayor of Cork Thomas MacCurtain killed by the RIC.

1935 - The army intervenes in a bus strike by providing lorries for transport.

1941 - Bread rationing is introduced.

1979 - Huge anti-PAYE demonstration in Dublin.

21st 2001 - Ireland confirms its first case of foot and mouth disease in many years.

22nd 1949 - The Irish government leases a residence in the Phoenix Park to the United States for 99 years.

1969 - Civil rights demonstrations all over Northern Ireland.

1987 - Irish National Lottery is launched.

24th 1968 - An Aer Lingus plane, St Phelim, crashes near the Tuskar Rock killing 57 people.

26th 1935 - 72 Republicans arrested in the Free State.

29th 1887 - Irish Crimes Act introduced in response to the National Land League's boycott of landlords.

1940 - Fire destroys the upper part of St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

30th 1849 - Doolough Tragedy: famine victims are forced to walk through the night to appeal for famine relief, resulting in many deaths.

1939 - The Treason Bill passes its final reading at Dáil Éireann.

1979 - The Irish government ends the parity of the Irish pound with sterling.

31st 1976 - Sallins Train Robbery.

1978 - 6000 people protest the building of civic offices on a Viking site.

1999 - Irish Land Commission dissolved after 108 years existence.