

Grand Council of United Emerald Societies Inc
Irishman of the Year Dinner

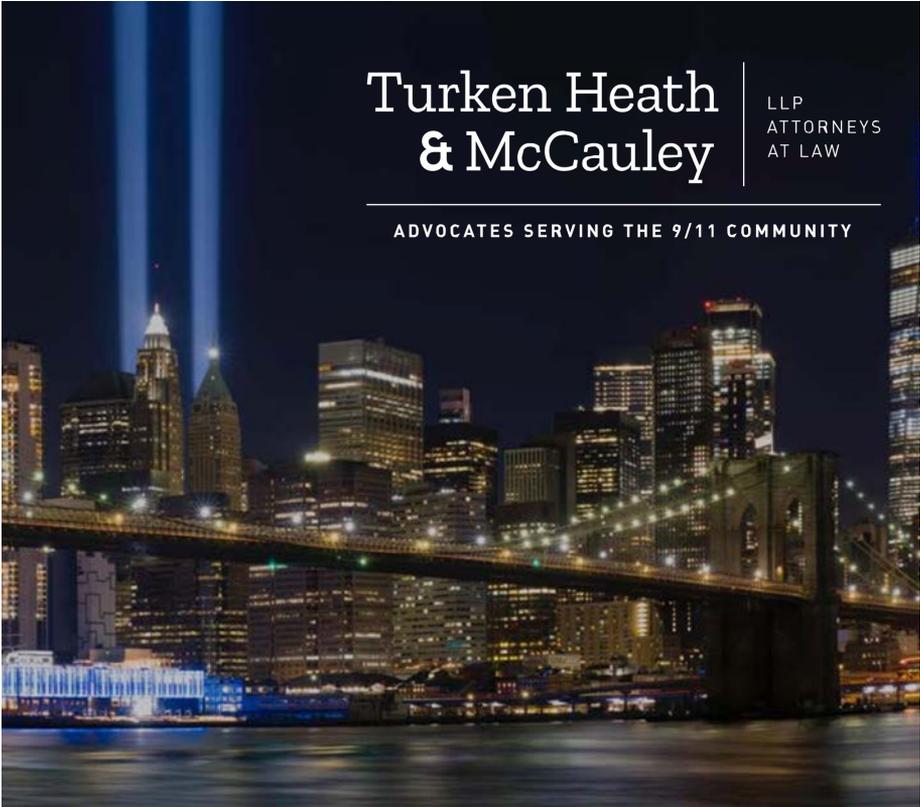


Patrick J. Ryder

Police Commissioner,
Nassau County Police Department
Guest of Honor

Martin Bellem
President

Antun's of Queens Village
January 21, 2026



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**We Are Proud to Support
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**Congratulations to
Patrick J. Ryder
2026 Irishman of the Year**



**We acknowledged the valuable contributions
made by the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies
and their 27 affiliated organizations.**

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Martin Bellew

PRESIDENT

Cairde a chara
Dear Friends,

This evening, our affiliated Emerald Societies will convene to commemorate our 75th anniversary since our organization's inception and to honor our 2026 Irishman of the Year, Patrick J. Ryder, Police Commissioner of the Nassau County Police Department and a proud member of the Nassau County Police Emerald Society.

Patrick, a distinguished son of Irish immigrant parents from County Dublin, deeply cherishes his Irish heritage. His unwavering dedication to preserving Irish-American traditions in law enforcement and public service is evident in his distinguished career with both the New York City Police Department and the Nassau County Police Department. As an ambassador for the Emerald Society and Law Enforcement, Patrick embodies the essence of Irish America. On March 17, 2026, he will assume the prestigious role of Aide to Grand Marshal Robert J. McCann, representing the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies in the New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Brian J. Sharkey, Casey Quinn, Michael Barzal, and Thomas J. Ryan for their unwavering dedication in organizing this evening's event. Additionally, I acknowledge the leadership, both past and present, of our Emerald Societies for their relentless commitment to nurturing our organizations and advancing the objectives of our Emerald Society community.

Your presence is greatly appreciated. I extend my heartfelt regards and best wishes to you.

bráithreachas

Fraternally,

Martin Bellew

Martin Bellew

President



Brian J. Sharkey

Dinner Chairman

Dear Friends and Fellow Emeralds,

As the Dinner Chairman, I extend my sincere welcome to you at the 70th Anniversary Irishman of the Year Dinner. Tonight, we commemorate seven decades of unwavering dedication to Irish Heritage, Emerald Fellowship, and Public Service.

We are honored to recognize our 2026 Irishman of the Year, Honorable Patrick J. Ryder, Police Commissioner of the Nassau County Police Department. Commissioner Ryder exemplifies leadership and dedication through his public service and his profound pride in his Irish heritage. As Paddy prepares to assume the role of GCUES Aide to the Grand Marshal in the upcoming New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade on March 17th, tonight marks an auspicious beginning to the Holy Season of celebration of Irish Pride.

The Grand Council, organized on May 29, 1956 and reorganized on February 18, 1975, currently comprises twenty-seven affiliated organizations. Members of these organizations serve in diverse public service sectors, encompassing law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical service, education, waste management, mass transit, and public utilities. Your presence tonight exemplifies the "strength through unity" ethos that characterizes the Emerald movement.

We express our gratitude for your unwavering support of the Grand Council. I eagerly anticipate an evening of Irish spirit and Emerald fellowship with you all.

Fraternally,

Brian J. Sharkey

Dinner Chairman



Grand Marshal Robert J. McCann

President Martin Bellew,

Thank you for your gracious invitation to attend the Grand Council of the United Emerald Societies' Annual Irishman of the Year Dinner. I am truly honored by your thoughtfulness and regret that I am unable to attend.

Please accept my sincere congratulations to Patrick J. Ryder, Commissioner of the Nassau County Police Department and a proud member of the Nassau County Police Emerald Society, on this well-deserved recognition. A strong advocate for law enforcement, he exemplifies outstanding leadership and dedication. I look forward to marching with Patrick in the parade and am delighted by his election as Aide to the Grand Marshal, a role he richly deserves.

I am disappointed to miss this special celebration but appreciate the opportunity to join in honoring Patrick's achievements. Thank you again for the invitation and for your continued commitment to recognizing exceptional service and leadership.

With warm regards,
Bob McCann



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Martin Bellew, DSNY ES 2023-present

***Deceased**



I am a child of immigrants. I am of a people who for over eight hundred years have bent a knee to no king but the King of Heaven and bowed a head to no queen but the Queen of Heaven.

I am of a dispersed people, sent in slavery to Barbados, In chains to Australia, In Famine to America. I am of a people who tore themselves from their Father's trembling arms, kissed their tear stained mother's face goodbye.

Traveled all over the world to keep a roof over beloved heads, and food on the hungry table.

I am of an empire on which no sun has set, for wherever you go in this whole wide world, Wherever a House of God has risen, where ever a house of learning founded, or a tree of liberty planted by loving hands, and watered by the tears of an Irish exile, there you will find the Irish Empire.

I thank God for the blood of my Fathers. I thank God for the land of my birth. I pray that God will unite and save Ireland. I pray that God will continue to Bless America.

MARY HOLT MOORE

This poem was written by the late great Mary Holt Moore, for many years a prominent NYC Irish American community leader and the second woman to lead the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade. She led the 230th parade in 1991.



Patrick J. Ryder

2026 Irishman of the Year
GCUES Aide to the Grand Marshal

Patrick J. Ryder, was appointed Acting Police Commissioner of the Nassau County Police Department on July 20, 2017. He was formally sworn in as Police Commissioner on February 26, 2018.

Commissioner Ryder's distinguished law enforcement career commenced with the New York City Police Department on January 4, 1984. Subsequently, he joined the Nassau County Police Department on July 18, 1986, and was assigned to the 3rd Precinct. In 1989, he was transferred to the Bureau of Special Operations. In 1995, he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the 5th Precinct, 8th Squad, and the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) as the Deputy Commanding Officer.

In 2008, he was designated as the Commanding Officer of Asset Forfeiture & Intelligence (AFI). During his tenure, he proactively implemented several life-saving programs and initiatives that significantly contributed to ensuring officer and public safety. These initiatives include the Nassau County Police Department's Real-Time Intelligence (RTI) system, the R.E.A.C.H. Program, the Civilian Intelligence Analyst Program, the DNA Collection Initiative, and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Unit, Think Tank, and the Department's Criminal Intelligence Rapid Response Team (CIRRT). Collectively, these initiatives have substantially reduced crime. Nassau County was recently ranked as the safest county in America in 2025, continuing its reputation for low crime rates and effective law enforcement.

Commissioner Ryder holds a Master's Degree in Homeland Security and Management from Long Island University. He is an Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice and Intelligence-Led Policing at Nassau Community College and previously taught at Dowling College. Currently, he serves on the Advisory Board for Criminal Justice at SUNY Farmingdale and has been a Counter-Terrorism Lecturer at the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security.

Patrick's parents, Seamus and Kathleen Ryder, were newly wed when they arrived in New York City in 1955 from County Dublin, Ireland. Like many of the new Irish immigrant families, they settled in Queens. Subsequently, Seamus and Kathleen relocated east for a better life in Lynbrook, New York, where they raised six children.

Patrick and his wife Jill have three children: Liam, Sean, and Meghan.



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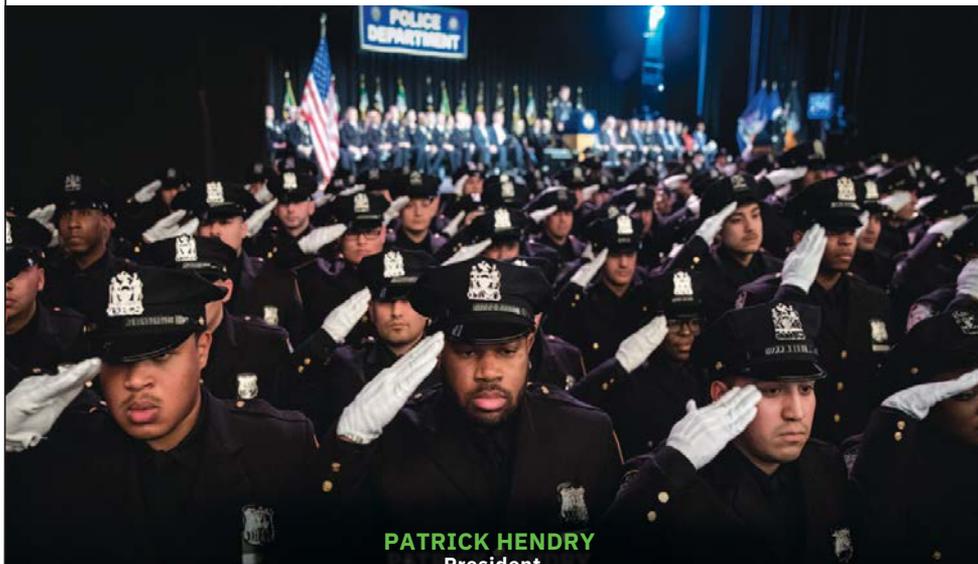
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Congratulations Patrick J. Ryder 2026 GCUES Irishman of the Year



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CONGRATULATIONS

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ON THE IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR DINNER

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The Beginnings

In the 1950s, the movement for Emerald Societies gained momentum with the establishment of the NYPD Emerald Society on March 16, 1953. Following suit, the NYCD Emerald Society was formed on November 17, 1955, and the FDNY Emerald Society was created on March 17, 1956. The Emerald Movement spread throughout New York City and beyond, becoming a significant part of the Irish American community.

The founders of the Emerald Societies recognized the diverse backgrounds of Irish people and sought to create a platform where individuals of Irish descent, regardless of their occupation, could connect and share their heritage. This idea of occupational groups under the name “Emerald Society” offered a unique opportunity for people of Irish heritage to preserve their history, customs, traditions, and accomplishments.

The history of the Grand Council is also noteworthy. It is often said that the Irish stand together only in Church. This principle extended to Emerald Societies as well. At one point, there were three Grand Councils, and an Emerald Society would automatically switch from one Grand Council to another upon leaving.

The Grand Council of Irish Societies Inc. was established on June 29, 1956, in New York City. William J. McGowan, a founding member of the NYPD Emerald Society, was elected as its inaugural president. By 1958, the Council boasted a membership of 65,000 individuals across all Emerald Societies and Irish-American societies affiliated with Federal, State, and City civil service. The Council's meetings were held at the Irish Institute of New York, located at 326 West 48 Street, New York, New York. In 1968, the Grand Council of Irish Societies Inc. underwent a name change to The National Grand Council of Irish Emerald Societies Inc. The Grand Council of Emerald Societies Inc. was established on May 29, 1958, while the Grand Council of Police Emerald Societies was formed in the 1970s.



In the early 1970s, the Grand Council was divided into two groups. The Grand Council of Emerald Societies, led by William J. McGowan (NYPD ES), encompassed several Police Emerald Societies. On the other hand, The National Grand Council of Irish Emerald Societies, headed by John P. Clark (NYCD ES), represented Emerald Societies in both the law enforcement, public and private sectors.

In the spring of 1974, Frank Cull, the renowned Irish Echo columnist known for his weekly “Round the Emerald Green,” was approached to mediate a merger between the two groups. He was appointed as the Pro-Temp. Attorney Thomas McCarthy then took on the task of resolving legal disputes, including differences in constitutions, by-laws, treasuries, and other relevant matters.

Thomas Reilly of the PAPD ES proposed an overwhelmingly accepted name for the new entity: the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies (emphasizing the word “United”). Paul Cinder of the MABSTOA ES designed the logo for the new organization.

To establish a constitution, a committee was formed, comprising Pat Heslin (PAPD ES), Ed Hazel (DSNY ES), Jack Clark (NYCD ES), and Matt Walsh (NYC TAPD ES). In December 1974, the first elections were held at the Irish Institute in Manhattan, and Jack Clark (NYCD ES) was elected as the inaugural President, with his term commencing on January 1, 1975. This marked the official birth of the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies (GCUES).

Historical Emerald Moments in Time

The NYPD Emerald Society was established on March 16, 1953, with Henry Fitzgerald as its inaugural president. The NYCD Emerald Society followed suit on November 17, 1955, with James Mulvey as its first president. Lastly, the FDNY Emerald Society was organized on March 17, 1956, with Eugene O’Kane as its first president.



The New York City Department of Sanitation Irish American Association (IAA) was organized in 1938. The organization's first president was William Nally Sr. The IAA officially changed its name to the DSNY Emerald Society in 1985.

The Postal Employees Sons of Erin (affiliated with the American Fraternity of Sons Erin), Inc. was organized on June 7, 1939. The Postal Employees Sons of Erin changed their name to the Emerald Society of the New York Post Office, Inc. on February 27, 1957.

The New York City Transit Authority Emerald Society comprises Subway engineers, conductors, tradespeople, and support staff organized in 1961. The first president of the organization was Gregory Perrin.

The Parade Delegates elected GCUES President James "Barney" Ferguson (NYPD ES) as the Grand Marshal of the 1978 New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

The Emerald Society of the Federal Law Enforcement Agencies (ESFLEA) was organized in New York City in 1995 by USINS Inspectors with common interests, heritage, and desire to improve their professional agency. Rebuffed by their agency, the ESFLEA founders expanded the scope of their fraternal and social organization nationally by including all federal law enforcement agencies. As a result, federal law enforcement officers such as Special Agents, Police Officers, and Customs and Border Protection officers of Irish/Gaelic descent are eligible to join.

The National Conference of Law Enforcement Emerald Societies Inc (NCLEES) was organized in 1995 by native New Yorker Patrick J. O'Brien (DCPES), who served as its first president.





The primary objective of the National Conference of Law Enforcement Emerald Societies is to unite all public safety Emerald Societies to foster camaraderie among its members, preserve Irish culture, honor the contributions of our forebears, and acknowledge the achievements of Irish Americans in Law Enforcement and other public safety fields. Notably, eighteen of the GCUES-affiliated organizations are members of the National Conference of Emerald Societies.

GCUES Today

Reorganized in 1975, the Grand Council comprises over 20,000 members who serve in front-line professions such as law enforcement, fire service, EMS, education, waste management, mass transit, and public utilities. Serving as the political umbrella group for 27 Affiliated Emerald Societies, the Grand Council also selects the Aide to Grand Marshal, representing the Emerald Societies in the New York Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

History of the Irishman/Irishwoman of the Year Dinner

Since its inception and reorganization, the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies presents an accomplishment award to an outstanding Irish American who has made a significant impact in their chosen field. In selecting each year, the Grand Council feels inspired and proud to recognize each award recipient as a proud American of Irish descent who has distinguished themselves through their leadership and dedication. It's not a coincidence that five of our esteemed honorees—Connie Doolan, Dorothy Hayden Cudahy, John Lawe, Bill Burke, and Ed Sheerin—were elected as the Grand Marshals over a span of fifteen years, from 1975 to 1990.

In 2008, Past President Brian J. Sharkey revived the Irishman/Irishwoman Dinner. Sharkey suggested that the Award dinner be held in December. The dinner would serve two purposes: to recognize the Aide to the Grand Marshal as the Irishman/Irishwoman of the Year and to host the Grand Council Delegates' Christmas Party. The dinner has become an integral part of the Grand Council's lexicon and is now a yearly, stand-alone event in January.



Recipients of the Irishman/Irishwoman of the Year Award

- 1975 James P. Moriarty, President- T. Moriarty and Sons Inc.
- 1976 Joseph Christian, Commissioner, NYC Housing Authority
- 1977 Denis Hanrahan, Executive Vice President, Aer Lingus Irish Airlines
- 1978 John Flynn, State Senator, Yonkers' Irish contribution to Albany
- 1979 Monica Conway, Vice President, Bank of Ireland & Connie Doolan, Sales Manager, Guinness Harp Corp
- 1980 Ens Lanagan, Eastern Manager, CIE Tours & Jack Donohue, Donohue Restaurant and Pub chain
- 1981 Jerry Toner, Restaurateur, Kennedy's Pub & Dympna Kenny, Banking Executive, and Offlay's First Lady
- 1982 Hal Madden, Irish-American Industrialist & Bridie McManus, Noted Restaurateur and Travel Agent
- 1983 Jack McCarthy, TV host NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade, Mary O'Dowd, Irish American Entertainer
- 1984 Brother John G. Driscoll, President, Iona College & Dorthy Hayden Cudahy, Radio Personality
- 1985 Paschal McGuinness, President, NYC District Council of Carpenters
- 1986 Anna Monahan McElroy, Director of Housekeeping, New York Hilton & John Lawe, International President of Transport Workers Union of America
- 1987 William Joseph Burke, Senior Vice President, Bank of Ireland
- 1988 Barbara Kane O'Neill, Outstanding Catholic Laywoman and Patron of Irish Culture
- 1989 Edward A. Sheeran, VP, Chase Bank, Queens Branch Network
- 1990 Joseph B. Buckley, Prop of Katie Daly's Restaurant, Massapequa, NY
- 1991 James J. Boyle, President, UFA of Greater New York
- 1992 Patrick Harvey, Business Agent, Local 608
- 1993 Rosemary Lombard, Treasurer, NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade Comm & Terry Connaughton, Prop, Riverdale Steakhouse
- 1995 Mary & Francis P. Beirne, Outstanding Catholic Laywoman, Past Chairman, Saint Patrick's Day Parade
- 1997 Bob Burke, Chairman, Queens Surface Corporation
- 1998 TBD
- 1999 TBD
- 2000 Msgr. Thomas P. Leonard and Honorable Mario R. Biaggi, President's Award
- 2001 No Honoree
- 2002 Eamon Donohoe, Ret NYPD Sgt and Prop of The Saloon & The INN, Long Beach, NY
- 2009 Denis Mulchay, NYPD ES and Chairman, Project Children
- 2010 Bernard Sullivan, DSNY ES
- 2011 Frank Beirne, FDNY ES
- 2012 William Fitzpatrick, WCFF ES
- 2013 Robert J. Creighton, SCPD ES
- 2014 Edwin Day, Rockland County Executive



2015 Thomas Doyle, DSNY ES

2016 Keith Lavalley, NCPES

2017 Brian Coughlan, NYPD ES

2018 Dr. Kathleen Cashin, NYCDOE ES

2019 Thomas B. Farrell, NYCD ES

2020-2021 Edward P. Boles, FDNY ES

2022 Edward Grayson, Commissioner, DSNY, DSNY ES

2023 Patrick J. Lynch, President, NYC PBA, NYPD ES

2024 Edward T. Cetnar, Superintendent of Police, PA of NY & NJ, PAPD ES

2025 John Samuelson, President, International Transport Workers Union, NYCTA ES

2026 Patrick J. Ryder, Commissioner, Nassau County Police Department, NCPES

GCUES Aide to the Grand Marshal

Since January 1975, when The Grand Council underwent reorganization, the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies has been the governing body responsible for selecting the Aide to Grand Marshal, representing the Emerald Societies in the prestigious New York Saint Patrick's Day Parade. Prior to this date, notable individuals such as Bill McGowan, Frank Brady, J. Barney Ferguson, Gerald O'Malley, Jim O'Meara, and John Clark graced the role of Aide to the Grand Marshal. Notably, J. Barney Ferguson also held the esteemed position of Grand Marshal in the 1978 Parade.

This is an ongoing endeavor, and we kindly request your assistance in identifying the Aides for the following years: 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1992. If you possess any relevant information, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@gcues.org.

1975- Frank Cull, FDNY ES

1976- William Conklin, SCPD ES

1977- Philip Bolger, NYCDOE ES

1978- John Warne, NYPD ES

1979- Gerald Sullivan, CON ED ES

1980- John McInerney, NYSCTS ES

1981- Matthew Feeley, NYPD ES

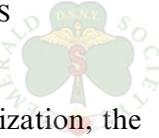
1982- Martin Harding, WCPES

1983- Jerry Kruger, NYCHAPD ES

1984- Thomas Doyle, FDNY ES

1985- Jim Harrington, NYPD ES

1986-TBD





1987-TBD

1988-TBD

1989-TBD

1990- Thomas Connaughton, DSNY ES

1991- Robert Algar, SCPD ES

1992 TBD

1993- Charles Duffy Wagner, NYCHA ES

1994- Michael P. Lavalle, NYCTA PD ES

1995- Patrick Comaskey, US CUSTOMS ES

1996- Willian Whelan, FDNY ES

1997- Louis Walker, NCPES

1998- Brian J. Sharkey, NYCD ES

1999- Michael P. Donnegan, GCUES Legal Counsel

2000- William Lawrence, ConEd ES

2001- Thomas Dunn, FDNY ES

2002- Robert Goff, NYCHA ES

2003- William Reilly, MABSTOA ES

2004- James W. Byrne, SCPD ES

2005- Frank Jordan, Tele & Comm Workers ES

2006- Thomas Gormley, WCPES

2007- Robert J. Earley, SCFF ES

2008- Robert Gibson, TBTA ES

2009- Dennis Mulcahy, NYPD ES

2010- Bernard Sullivan, DSNY ES

2011- Frank Beirne, FDNY ES

2012- William FitzPatrick, WCFF ES

2013- Robert J. Creighton, SCPD ES

2014- Edwin Day, Rockland County Executive

2015- Thomas Doyle, DSNY ES

2016- Keith Lavalle, GCUES Legal Counsel

2017- Brian Coughlan, NYPD ES

2018- Kathleen Cashin, NYCDOE ES

2019- Thomas B. Farrell, NYCD ES

2020-2021 Edward P. Boles, FDNY ES

2022- Edward Grayson, DSNY ES

2023- Patrick J. Lynch, NYCD ES

2024- Edward T. Cetnar, PAPD ES

2025- John Samuelsen, NYCTA ES

2026- Patrick J. Ryder, NCPES





Robert J. McCann

2026 Grand Marshal
NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Robert J. McCann was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and is a third-generation Irish American with roots in County Armagh. He holds dual Irish and American citizenship, embodying the enduring connection between Ireland and New York City. Serving as a bridge between his ancestral homeland and the city that shaped his professional life, he is President of the Irish Arts Center's Board of Directors. In this role, Mr. McCann has been instrumental in promoting and preserving Irish culture in New York, particularly through the Center's transformative growth, which led to the opening of a \$60 million new facility in 2021 and redevelopment plans for its original building.

Professionally, Mr. McCann has played a significant role in strengthening New York's position as a global financial capital through leadership positions at three distinct financial services firms. As President of Global Wealth Management at Merrill Lynch and later as CEO of UBS Americas, he led organizations employing thousands and contributing greatly to the city's economic vitality. Today, as an investor and Co-Chairman of NewEdge Capital Group, Mr. McCann continues to impact the financial landscape of the New York metropolitan area while also championing the vibrant Irish-American cultural community that has been central to the city's identity for generations.



Brian Hennelly

FDNY Emerald Society
GCUES Aide to the Grand Marshal
Bayside Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Brian Hennelly is a Lieutenant with the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) and serves as a Board Member of the FDNY Emerald Society. Raised in Fresh Meadows, New York, he comes from an Irish Catholic family and is the eldest of five children of Thomas and Patricia Hennelly. He was educated at Holy Family Grammar School, Saint Francis Preparatory High School, and Iona College.

In the fall of 1995, he began working on Bell Boulevard as a bar back at BB Jr's, later becoming the owner of Bellview Sports Bar, which he operated from 1998 to 2004. Following the sale of the business, he continued bartending on Bell Boulevard for the next 16 years at Monahan's, Sullivan's, and OSP. A former high school and collegiate football player, he returned to his alma mater to coach high school football for ten years.

Brian is an active member of the FDNY and was involved with the Bravest Football Team for sixteen years. He currently serves as Director of the Rooney Fund, which supports firehouses with members diagnosed with 9/11-related cancers and now also provides scholarships to Catholic high schools for children of Emerald Society members. He is also a licensed Real estate Agent with deep ties to the Garden City South Community.

In 2006, Brian married his wife, Lea. They have three beautiful daughters: Mia (17), Kylie (15), and Dylan (10). He coaches his daughters' basketball team for St. Anne's Parish in Garden City and has served as a board member of his daughters' Little League since 2015, where he continues to volunteer and coach.



Francis J. Sheridan, Jr.

NYS Courts Emerald Society
GCUES Aide to the Grand Marshal
Brooklyn Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Francis (Frank) J. Sheridan, Jr., was born in Brooklyn, NY to Frank and Marie Sheridan, both of whom were of Irish descent (Counties Cavan and Galway, approximately 1820 And 1850). Growing up in the small community of Garritsen Beach, Frank lived with his parents, his grandmother, his two older brothers, one younger brother and his seven sisters. Frank was the 10th of 11 children. Frank always had a strong commitment to family, community, and his Irish heritage. Frank attended Resurrection R.C. grade school in Gerritsen Beach, and then Sheepshead Bay High School. After graduating from high school, his parents sold their home on Knapp St. in Brooklyn and moved to Ticonderoga, New York. Ticonderoga was a special place for the Sheridan family as every year during the last two weeks of August, this is where the family would go on for a family vacation.

In October 1978, Frank joined the United States Air Force shortly after moving to Ticonderoga. Frank was an Air Force security policeman assigned to the 91st Missile Security Squadron at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota.

After separating from the Air Force in 1982 as a Staff Sergeant, Frank joined the United Nations Security Police at the New York headquarters. In 1984, Frank began his court system career as a court officer assigned to the Appellate Term of the New York State Supreme Court in Brooklyn. Under the guidance of former Chief Clerks Jack Cahill and Nancy Sunshine, Frank rose through the ranks. In 2007, Frank was promoted to Court Clerk Specialist, working as the Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Operations in the King's County Clerk's office for former Celts Grand Marshall, Kings County Clerk/Commissioner of Jurors, Honorable Nancy T. Sunshine, Esq. In December 2025 Frank was promoted to Chief Deputy County Clerk and Deputy Commissioner of Jurors for the Kings County Clerk/Commissioner of Jurors office.

Frank and his wife Lorraine, have two sons and their spouses, Gregory Patrick (Hillary Jordan) and Sean Ryan (Danise Pimpinella). As a dad and an active member of the Marine Park Community, and an active member of St. Columba parish, Frank has been a volunteer coach for his children at football, baseball, basketball, and hockey. In addition to coaching his sons for Saint Columba Youth Council, Frank has been active for the last 35 years in running the Youth Council sports program for over 1500 boys and girls. Frank's love and dedication to his family is evident to all who know him, and this is true of his court family as well. Many members of the Sheridan family have or continue to work in the court system, including Frank's three brothers, two nephews, a niece, and a cousin.

Frank has been a member of The Celts of The New York State Court System since he first began his court career and has proudly marched in the Celts Saint Patrick's Day Parade for over 20 years. Frank was also the last Grand Marshall along with the Honorable Robert Miller in 2020. Frank has been the President of the New York State Courts Emerald Society since January of 2025.



Father Brendan Fitzgerald

FDNY Emerald Society
GCUES Deputy Grand Marshal
Queens County Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Fr. Brendan Ahern Fitzgerald is one of four sons born to Esther and Denis Fitzgerald, both natives of County Kerry, Ireland. Growing up, Fr. Brendan attended high school in Ireland and spent his summers in the Rockaways, NY. After completing his secondary education at St. Brendan's College, Killarney, Fr. Fitzgerald entered St Patrick's Seminary, Maynooth, in County Kildare, Ireland, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree and then spent a pastoral year working with Mother Theresa in Calcutta. Fr. Fitzgerald went on to continue his academic formation in Rome, where he graduated with a Master's in Theology. He continued his studies at Fordham University, where he earned a Master's and an A.P.D. in Education. In 2000, Fr. Fitzgerald was ordained a priest at St. John's Cathedral, Limerick, Ireland. He spent his first year of priesthood in Meelick, County Clare, and was then appointed a Diocesan Advisor for Education for the Diocese of Limerick. Fr. Fitzgerald held this position for five years before returning to New York to work as a Parochial Vicar in Saint Barnabas Parish the Bronx, from 2006 to 2009.

He then spent a brief period as Parochial Vicar at St. Margaret of Cortona, Riverdale, before being appointed priest secretary to His Eminence Edward Cardinal Egan. In 2012, Fr. Fitzgerald was appointed Pastor of Regina Coeli, Hyde Park, NY, and in 2016, Pastor of Saint Barnabas in the Bronx. Fr Brendan Fitzgerald is Chaplain to, the FDNY Emerald Society, as well as the FDNY Holy Name Society, FDNY G.A.A., United Emerald Societies, AOH Division 5, the New York GAA, as well as Chaplain of the NY Kerry. Association. Since 2018, Fr. Fitzgerald annually celebrates a mass in Gaelic and it has become a national AOH event. In 2022, Fr. Fitzgerald was honored with the 'The Sprit of 1916' Award by Bronx County AOH. He served as the Bronx County Aide to the Grand Marshal, Michael Benn, in the NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade on March 17, 2025.



Kevin Burke

FDNY Emerald Society
FDNY Aide to the Grand Marshal
NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Kevin, a lifelong Bronx resident, is the third of four children born to Bridget (Nee Hoare) and Michael. His Mom hailed from County Kerry while both of Dads parents were from County Galway.

Kevin and his siblings were raised in the Wakefield section of the Bronx where they attended grammar school at St. Frances of Rome. Kevin attended high school at Mount St. Michael Academy and later went on to Manhattan College where he would obtain a Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering.

In January of 1985 he joined the NYPD (Housing) and in August of the same year he was sworn into the FDNY. Upon graduation from the Fire Academy he was assigned to Ladder 51 in the Bronx. Promotions included Fire Marshal in 1994 and Lieutenant in 1996 where he would eventually be assigned to Ladder 35 (Manhattan). A promotion in March of 2003 to Captain would lead him back to the Bronx (Division 6). In February of 2004 he would find a home in Engine 71 in the Melrose area of the Bronx where he continues to proudly work today.

He is a member of both the Emerald Society and Holy Name Society.

Growing up in the Wakefield section, Kevin has not gone too far as he moved 'over the bridge' to Woodlawn (some call it County Woodlawn). In 2004, he was finally able to convince Diane (Nee Flanagan), AKA 'the Beautiful One', to marry him. In 2016, his stepson Michael married Eilish Reilly in County Cavan where Eilish is from. They live nearby in Yonkers. Diane and Kevin are active members of St. Barnabas Church where they were married and continue to live in the Woodlawn section of the Bronx.



Kevin Sherlock

NYPD Emerald Society
NYPD Aide to the Grand Marshal
NYC Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Kevin Gerard Sherlock was born in Queens, New York, to parents who immigrated from Ireland. He grew up with two siblings, GERALYN DeMayo and Thomas Sherlock. His father, Thomas Sherlock, originated from Doo Castle, County Mayo, while his mother, Ann T. Sherlock (née Honan), was from Baltard, County Clare.

Kevin attended Saint Mary's Help of Christians from first through eighth grade. He continued his education at Christ the King High School. He later earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the State University of New York (SUNY), Master of Public Administration from Marist College and completed a certification in Child Protection at Harvard University. He also holds the qualification of New York State Certified Police Instructor.

Kevin dedicated thirty-three years to law enforcement, beginning his career with the New York City Police Department on January 21, 1985. He advanced through various bureaus and was promoted to Lieutenant. In 2003, he became the Commanding Officer of the 25 Detective Squad in East Harlem. His commitment earned him another promotion in August 2006, when he became Lieutenant Commander of Detectives. In his final assignment, Kevin served as Commanding Officer of the Citywide Missing Person Squad within the Special Investigations Division. He oversaw crucial cases involving missing individuals throughout New York City. His leadership helped ensure diligent and professional investigations, providing closure for families and communities. Kevin retired from the NYPD on November 28, 2018.

Kevin has actively participated in both professional and community organizations. He served as President of the NYPD Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island Holy Name Society. He is a member and former delegate of the NYPD Emerald Society, and is also affiliated with the Police Anchor Club, the Knights of Columbus George W. Hudson Council, and the Fraternal Order of Police Stephen P. Driscoll Memorial Lodge #704.

Kevin resides in Kent, New York, Putnam County, with his wife Sheila (née Tierney), who is from Woodside, Queens. Sheila's parents, Gerald and Ann Tierney (née Reilly), are originally from Ballyhaise and Cootehill in County Cavan. Kevin and Sheila are the parents of two daughters, Brenna Marie and Annie Catteriona.

As a proud Irish American, Kevin has visited Ireland more than twenty times, spending several summers working on family farms, saving hay, and helping milk cows. He enjoys Irish plays, musicals, and concerts in the Metropolitan area. Kevin is also an active participant in Irish music sessions, where he enjoys singing.

Kevin has been a resolute participant in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade since childhood. In previous years, he represented the Holy Name Society at parade committee meetings, contributing to preparations for this memorable event.



Brian McCabe

NYPD Emerald Society
Grand Marshal

Mid-Hudson Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Brian is one of a large Irish American family with a distinguished tradition of service in the political, legal, law enforcement, fire service, educational, building trades and cultural life of the Irish-American Community.

Growing up in a family of twelve siblings, Brian was introduced to his Gaelic heritage and Catholic faith from the cradle. He has raised his five children with the same pride in those traditions, and is doing the same with his six grandchildren.

Brian has been involved in very many aspects of our shared traditions, supporting Gaelic Athletic Association growth and events, sponsoring and supporting Irish art and music, mentoring recent Irish arrivals on the path to citizenship and maintaining focus on the unfinished promise of the Good Friday Agreement, seeking peace and reconciliation in a United Ireland.

To that end, Brian is currently a representative for Ireland's Future, advocating for national reunification through an all-Ireland referendum and recently leading a team to the nation's capital to meet with Congressional leaders to advance that goal.

The former Chairman of the American Irish Historical Society, Brian led the successful campaign to reform that important symbol of the contributions of Irish and Irish American people to the development of the United States of America.

Brian feels it very important to continue to maintain the standing of our community and expand, promote and raise our profile in wider society. To that end he has been involved in numerous initiatives to promote our shared culture including:

Organizing and chairing "The Meitheal, Irish-America In Support of Healthcare Workers", an organization that supported hospital workers, primarily our sisters in Nursing, and Irish American businesses that suffered during the initial months of the Covid pandemic.

Organizing and receiving a new charter for Orange County AOH Division 3 in 2019, the first new Division to be installed in New York State for a very significant length of time. Brian serves as President of Div.3 and is also a Board Officer of the Orange County AOH.

Organizing a parade in Warwick where he has resided with his wife Joan and family for over twenty years.

Conceiving of an annual Warwick Valley Irish Cultural and Athletic Festival which is currently in development.

Passionately believing in the conservation and promotion of our shared values and heritage, Brian believes it essential to grow our organizations and in particular, reach out to young people to keep the flame alive.

Brian enjoyed a long and accomplished career primarily in the NYPD Detective Bureau as a detective and squad commander and was widely recognized for his service in the Irish Peace Process during which he served as the American liaison and facilitator for key Irish participants in the process, while also providing logistical support and security.

He is currently a System Director with the WMC/Bon Secours Charity Health System and is a consultant in investigative and security operations, creative and educational projects.

Brian is also a featured columnist with the Irish Echo newspaper.



Dennis J. Schock

Gael of the Year

Queens County Saint Patrick's Day Parade

DSNY Emerald Society

Dennis J. Schock has devoted his life and career to serving, protecting, and advancing the dedicated men and women of the New York City Department of Sanitation and the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831.

Born in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, to Robert E. Schock and Mary Schock—both of proud Irish descent—Dennis's family's American journey began in 1890 when his paternal grandparents emigrated from Kilkenny, Ireland. They initially settled in Bangor, Maine, before establishing their roots in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Mary Schock was the matriarch of an extraordinary family of nine children—two born in Ireland and seven in the United States—who dedicated their lives to public service as civil servants, police officers, firefighters, and sanitation workers. Their commitment to service exemplifies the classic and enduring route to the American middle class.

Deeply connected to his Irish heritage, Dennis J. Schock has been an active member of the Emerald Society for thirty-nine years. During this time, he has served with distinction as Vice President and currently sits on the Board of Directors. For thirty-five years, he has also proudly played the bagpipes as a member of the Emerald Society Pipe and Drums, participating in numerous cultural and commemorative events.

In further reflection of his lifelong commitment to Irish heritage and fellowship, he holds the Major Degree in the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), Division 7.

Dennis J. Schock's life is a testament to legacy, tradition, and leadership—honoring both his family's immigrant roots and his unwavering dedication to community and culture.

Dennis began his career with the Department of Sanitation on March 21, 1987, proudly starting as a Sanitation Worker. Just over a year later, his leadership qualities shone through when he was elected Shop Steward. On June 29, 1988, he advanced to the role of Union Delegate, marking the beginning of decades of dedicated union advocacy.

On December 1, 2001, he furthered his leadership journey by being appointed Business Agent of Queens West, representing members with fairness, integrity, and a profound understanding of union values.

His strong voice for the membership and steadfast commitment to labor rights led to additional responsibilities within the union. On June 5, 2010, Dennis was elected Vice President of Local 831, where he served with distinction, always prioritizing the needs, safety, and dignity of the workforce.

Throughout his career, Dennis has remained grounded by the values instilled in him by his parents, Robert and Mary. He is supported in all his endeavors by his wife, Bernadette, and is a proud father to two sons, Michael and Matthew, who share his pride in public service and commitment to the labor movement.

Today, as President of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831, Dennis J. Schock continues to lead with humility, experience, and a deep commitment to safeguarding the rights and welfare of the thousands of sanitation professionals who keep New York City safe, clean, and operational every day.



Francis O'Keefe

DSNY Emerald Society
Aide to the Grand Marshal
Yonkers Saint Patrick's Day Parade

Frank O'Keefe has been a Yonkers resident for the past 46 years where he and Mary, his wife of 49 years, raised their three children. Frank, son of Nora (Curran) and James O'Keefe, both from County Kerry, Ireland grew up in the Woodlawn section of the Bronx. He was the youngest of six children. From a very young age, Frank embraced his Irish heritage and has passed that passion onto his own children and grandchildren.

Frank attended Mt St Michael Academy and graduated from St. Leo University in 1974 with a degree in History. He was a member of Local 1 Paperhandlers Union and worked for the New York Post for 23 years. During his tenure, he served as Recording Secretary of the Union for 10 years. He then joined NYC Department of Sanitation where he was employed for 23 years, rising to the rank of District Superintendent. Through DSNY, he was an active member of the Emerald Society, and served as a Board member, Scholarship Chairman and Journal Chairman for many years. Additionally, Frank played the drums in the DSNY Emerald Society Band and was Secretary of that group. He retired from DSNY in 2013 and is currently a Tour Guide at Yankee Stadium.

Frank has always been very active in the New York Irish community, and joined the Kerry Association in 1975. Through the years, he has held various positions within the Association, including President from 2018-2020 following in his Fathers' footsteps, who was President from 1953-1955. Frank is currently serves on the Board of Kerry Association Property Inc. and is a delegate for the Kerry Association to the United Irish Counties.

As a long-standing delegate of the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies, he served as President for two terms. Currently, he is on the New York City St Patrick's Day Parade and Celebration Committee, a role he has held for the past 10 years. Additionally, he is the Secretary of the Narrowbacks, Thomas Minogue division, and a member Division 9 of the AOH New York County.

As proud as Frank is of his Irish heritage, it is Frank's family that is his true passion. Eldest son Patrick, married to Megan and has Brynne, 14 and James 12 and live in Eastchester. Son Sean, who lives in New Rochelle is married to Donielle and they have five children; Brendon 19, Kyleigh 16, Declan 12, Timmy 9 and Maeve 4. Molly, who served as the 2011 Southern California Rose of Tralee is the youngest child.

For many years, Frank has participated in the Yonkers parade both as a participant and spectator. His earliest recollection is marching proudly up South Broadway in the '50's holding his fathers hand. Growing up and spending so much of his childhood years on McLean Ave, passing St Barnabas where he attended grade school and received all his sacraments add to this very special honor. Frank wishes to dedicate this day to honor his older brother Paddy who died serving his country in South VietNam in March of 1968.



CONGRATULATIONS TO:

THE GRAND COUNCIL OF EMERALD SOCIETIES, PRESIDENT MARTIN BELLEW, & THE 2026 HONOREES!

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*Congratulates this evening's worthy honoree
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*Best Wishes for Continued Success
to the
Grand Council of United Emerald Societies, Inc.*

*P.J. Smith
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Wishing our friends at the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies a great evening at the Irishman of the Year dinner!

Congratulations to this year's honoree!

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TO ALL OF TONIGHT'S HONOREES**

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POLICE COMMISSIONER
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BEST WISHES

2026 IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR
AIDE TO THE GRAND MARSHAL
PATRICK J.RYDER
POLICE COMMISSIONER
NASSAU COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

IN LOVING MEMORY
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ANNA PAULINE WHALEN
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**CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES
TO THE
IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR
PATRICK J. RYDER**

**2026 AIDE TO THE NYC ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE
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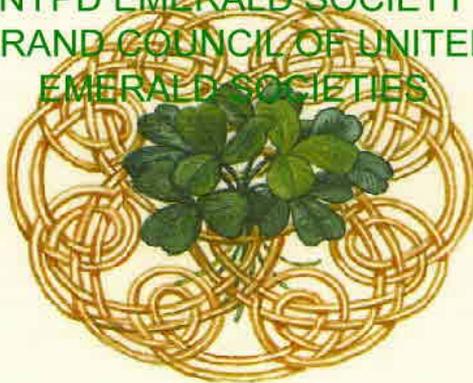
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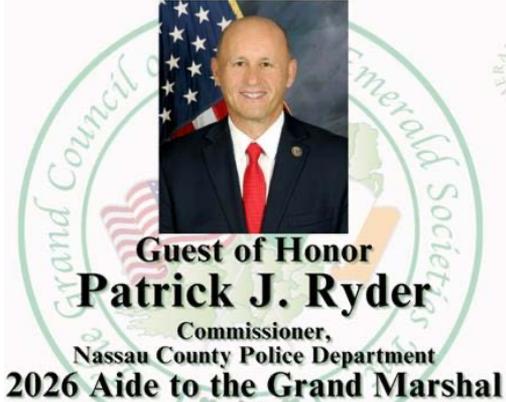


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IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR



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&

Dennis Shock

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On Behalf of
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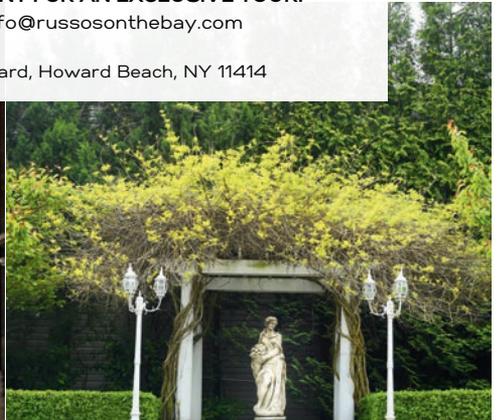
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Congratulations from all your brothers in The
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Well Done!





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*Congratulations
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2026 Irishman of the Year*



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Patrick J. Ryder
2026 Irishman of the Year





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***Congratulations on this well-deserved
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With gratitude

The Codignotto Family &



to Patrick J. Ryder!

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e your achievements.*

*tion,” truly reflects the way you
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*ved recognition! It is a privilege to
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and best wishes,

The Blumencranz Family



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Irishman of the Year

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2026





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The Grand Council of The United Emerald Societies
IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR DINNER

Guest of Honor

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Superior Officers Association
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Honoring Irishman of the Year

*Patrick Ryder*

NCPD Commissioner of Police



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**CONGRATULATIONS**

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**2026 IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR**

**&**

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for being honored as the Irishman of the Year.

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GCUES Irishman of the Year Award 2026

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Congratulations &  
Best Wishes Always to  
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**Congratulations to  
Patrick J. Ryder  
the 2026 Irishman of the Year.**

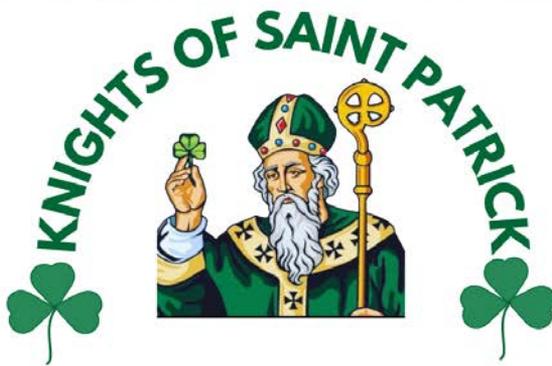
**Wishing you fair winds at your back  
on March 17, 2026.**



**Up Dublin!**

**With warm regards,  
Brian and Maria  
Sharkey**





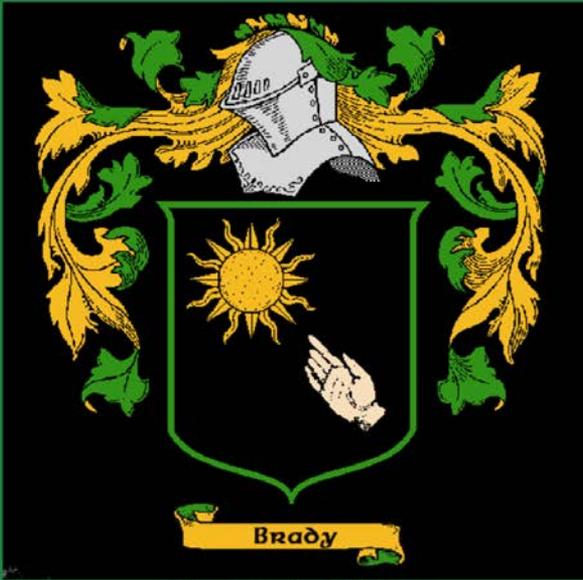
**We honor the Grand Council of Emeralds  
for their remarkable contributions to the  
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**Congratulations**

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**Congratulations**

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**The Brady Clan  
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**The Grand Council of United Emerald Societies**



*Congratulations to*

**Patrick J. Ryder**

*on receiving the  
prestigious honor of the*

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BEST WISHES TO OUR FRIENDS OF THE  
**GRAND COUNCIL OF UNITED  
EMERALD SOCIETIES**

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO NASSAU COUNTY POLICE  
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Warm Congratulations

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**Congratulations to**  
**Patrick J. Ryder**

**Warmest congratulations and best wishes to Patrick J. Ryder, the 2026 Irishman of the Year!**

**Donald Denihan**





Congratulations to  
Patrick Ryder

Nassau County Police Commissioner



St. Patrick's Day 2026

John & Laurie Murray





**CONGRATULATIONS  
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**WE ARE ALL LUCKY TO HAVE  
YOU LOOKING OVER US AND  
OUR COMMUNITY!**

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# The Irish Poet



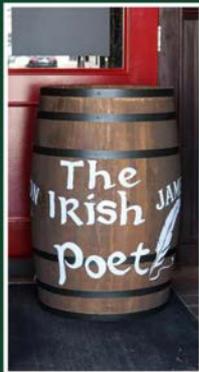
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**Congratulations to**  
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**Warmest congratulations and best wishes to Patrick J. Ryder, the 2026 Irishman of the Year!**

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Police Department of New York City

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## Congratulations

TO THE GUEST OF HONOR

**POLICE COMMISSIONER PATRICK J. RYDER**  
NASSAU COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

&

## Best Wishes

TO THE

**GRAND COUNCIL OF UNITED  
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FROM

YOUR FRIENDS IN THE

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**Congratulations to**

**PATRICK J. RYDER**

**2026 Irishman of the Year**

**Good Luck on March 17, 2026**

**May the Wind Be at your back!**

**Fraternally,**

*Timothy N. Cowen*

**Timothy N. Cowen**

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The NYCD Emerald Society Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 Non Profit EIN #853661767  
Charter Member-Grand Council of United Emerald Societies Inc  
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**Grand Council of United Emerald Societies**

**Irishman of the Year - 2026**

**Congratulations to:**

**Patrick J. Ryder**

*Commissioner of the Nassau County  
Police Dept.*

**We are all so proud of you!**

**Congratulations to all of this year's honorees!**

Fraternally,

*The Emerald Society Officers*

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# CONGRATULATIONS!

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AT THE GRAND COUNCIL OF EMERALD SOCIETIES  
IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR DINNER

ON BEHALF OF  
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Port Authority Police  
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PATRICK J. RYDER



AS THE GRAND COUNCIL OF  
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IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR!  
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**Your leadership, integrity, and  
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deserved honor celebrates a legacy of  
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**&**

**ALL THE 2026 AIDES**

**ESPECIALLY, GRAND COUNCIL OF UNITED EMERALD SOCIETIES**

**IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR**

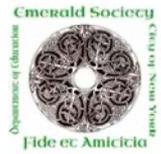
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The New York City  
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Emerald Society  
would like to congratulate the



**Grand Council of United Emerald Societies**

**Irish Man of the Year  
Patrick J. Ryder  
Commissioner,  
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&  
2026 Aide to the Grand Marshal**



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Save the Date: Friday, March 13th, 2026: 54th  
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12:00





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EST. 1990

Nassau County, New York

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Commissioner

Nassau County Police Department

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Commissioner  
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Email: nyscemeraldsociety@yahoo.com



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the 2026 Irishman of the Year.**

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*In Honoring their Irishman of the Year*

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The NPDF is an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation that funds the "Safe Cop" and "Operation Kids" Programs.

