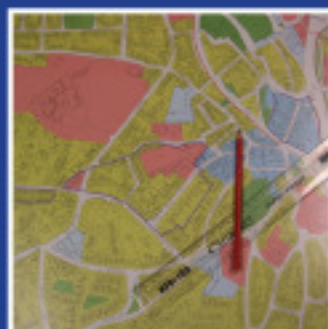


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Launch of the History of AIDS West - "A Brave Stand" by Geraldine Mills

Irish AIDS Day is one of support for all those living with HIV as well as a time to remember those who have died from an AIDS-related illness. AIDS West strives every year to find innovative ways to draw attention to the fact that there are over 5000 people living with the virus in Ireland. This year was no exception and the day was commemorated on 15th June with two major events.

Lunchtime saw the launch of 'A Brave Stand: The History of AIDS West' by Maria Joyce. The book was launched in Galway City Museum with Mayor Declan McDonnell in attendance. It was very fitting that John Kilmartin, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs at Medtronic did the honours as Medtronic has always been very supportive of AIDS West's work. The book charts the history of the organisation from those early days, when an HIV positive diagnosis was a death sentence, to where it is today, supporting HIV positive people to live long and fulfilling lives. It was an honour that the founders of the organisation, Dr Evelyn Stevens and Dr Angela Savage were both there to see their story in print. There was a fantastic attendance with many volunteers from those early days as well as

past staff members, managers and members of the board.

The evening celebrations continued with a fundraising concert in Munroe's of Dominick Street, featuring The Black Magic Big Band with special guest appearance, Julie Feeney. It was the best value concert in town for a long time. For a mere €10 the audience not only got the great sound of the Black Magic Big Band and a mesmerising performance from award-winning Julie Feeney, but there was food courtesy of Munroe's, some fantastic raffle prizes and a wonderful display of Swing on the dance floor. The Black Magic Big Band is aptly named, magic in its music and big, not just in numbers (there are 17 of them) but also in the generosity of its members, especially Micky Belton, who initiated this fundraiser. For all new fans, they play regularly at Busker Browne's in Cross Street. And Julie Feeney, who hails from Athenry, once again amazed the audience with her ever-popular numbers Impossibly Beautiful and Grace. We are very grateful that she took time out on the eve of her world tour to perform for us.

A terrific night was had by all. The concert not only highlighted the issues of HIV but the funds raised will be used to support those living with HIV and to deliver educational programmes on sexual health to the public in the west of Ireland. If you would like a free copy of 'A Brave Stand', please **ring the office at 091-566266** or **email info@aidswest.ie**



The launch of A Brave Stand with (from l to r) Liz Martin, Geraldine Mills, Mayor Declan Mc Donnell, and Maria Joyce



The Black Magic Big Band

Successful ALâ Season

by Jim Aherne

The objective of ALâ is to benefit the community and advance access, participation and education in the arts through the promotion and operation of a community theatre, arts and education project in Ballybane, Galway, and other designated disadvantaged communities. The August 2009 to June 2010 season was another successful one for ALâ in which we moved forward.

"Stinky Cheeseman" was developed as a pantomime and it was performed in the Ballybane Library and in Milltown Malbay during book week to an audience of several hundred children. ALâ, in conjunction with City Of Galway VEC and NUIG, ran a twelve-weekend course in Theatre Of The Oppressed (T.O.) facilitation skills. It finished with a showcase of Forum Theatre plays in the University in March 2010.

Using a story "A Day In The Life Of An Asylum Seeker" written by Adedotun Adekeye as inspiration and facilitated by Annette Tierney. The group, comprising of six asylum seekers and five local residents spent several workshops developing and improvising scenes; discussing the content as we progressed. The group delivered great performances of the play in December and again as part of the NUIG Drama Festival, in March. In conjunction with the Galway Refugee Support Group it was



ALâ presented with Mayors Award 2010

performed in the Town Hall Theatre during the Anti Racism week. "Christmas Cheers", facilitated by Kieran Reddy and Claire Marlborough, was a devised and performed piece by ALâ Ballybane workshop members. ALâ performed in Brigits Garden, Roscahill on the 19th June as part of their Mid Summer Festival.

The New Year, 2010, started on a high note when ALâ was presented with the Galway Mayor's award for its contribution to the Arts in the Galway community. This award has given us all encouragement to strive to continue developing our work. It has also promoted our organisation in the wider community.

What plans for next term? Well! says Deirdre Dooley – Chairperson of ALâ, that very much depends on the funding allocation from the City Of Galway VEC and Galway City Arts. Never the less we intend to continue our workshops in Ballybane and hopefully the successful Asylum Seeker project. A new "Forum Theatre" presentation will be scripted and performed by the members. With the uncertainty of future funding ALâ must try to become self-sufficient. Therefore the training of facilitators and technical staff remains a priority.

Finally ALâ wish to thank our funders, volunteers and all those who helped the organisation to be so successful over the years. We look forward to their continued support in the future.

GCCF to organise Seminar for Residents Associations

The Community Forum's Steering Group is planning a Seminar for Resident's Associations and would welcome any proposals for themes/issues your association would like to see included in the agenda for such a Seminar. You can e-mail your proposals to: communityforum@galwaycity.ie, or contact one of the Steering Group members to discuss your ideas in greater detail.

GCCF to lobby for changes to Galway City's Draft Development Plan for 2011-2017

In a comprehensive submission document, Galway City Community Forum (GCCF) has outlined a number of comments and observations to the Draft Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017.

It is the general view of GCCF that the Draft Development Plan contains many positive elements, which would support the overall development of Galway City as an excellent place to live, work, play and educate. However, GCCF believes that the Development Plan generally should aspire to be more specific and that key actions are outlined in greater details and with a clear timeframe.

Some of the key points in the submission include:

- Equality proofing at all levels, in order to ensure that the promotion of social inclusion, accessibility and equal opportunities for all is at the heart of the development plan and is considered under all headings.
- All opportunities to increase the housing stock for social housing should be actively pursued and examined, including the transfer of houses arising from NAMA to the local authority and bringing existing empty houses back into the housing stock. A commitment to a mid-term review of the Draft Housing Strategy should be given with a view to reassessing the situation at the point and amending the strategy accordingly.
- GCCF welcomes the Plan's acknowledgement of the need for additional and improved community, recreational, social and cultural facilities to serve the city as a prerequisite for tackling social exclusion, for retaining a skilled workforce and building stable and integrated communities.
- GCCF welcomes the emphasis on promoting sustainable transportation throughout the City. In emphasis on Road Safety, GCCF supports the of railway transport. However, GCCF calls for a more ambitious plan for building bus shelters, extended reduced speed zones, a commitment to significantly reduce roadside car parking and a Roads Works Improvement Scheme to address Road Safety.

- GCCF supports the continued commitment of Galway City Council to developing Galway as a city of Arts, Culture and Creativity. This includes the need for the Council to recognise and support the Arts as intrinsic to the economic, social and cultural life of the city. It also highlights the necessity for Arts provision being central to all new capital developments in the city and welcomes progress on the development of a new Arts Strategy for the City.
- GCCF welcomes the Plan's acknowledgment that provision of community, cultural and social infrastructure greatly improves the quality of life and encourages a more inclusive and self-sustaining society and urges the City Council to uphold this commitment.
- GCCF welcomes the acknowledgement of the distinctive Gaeltacht cultural and linguistic heritage of the City and calls for the advancement of Galway as the bilingual capital of Ireland to be specifically mentioned in the Development Plan. Access for the general public to areas and buildings of importance to the heritage of the City should be ensured, and architectural conservation areas should be extended. GCCF also calls for a Master Plan to be put in place for the Harbour Area and the Ceannt Station, in full and open public consultation.
- GCCF welcomes the commitment to developing and maintaining a green network based on a sustainable, integrated use and management of natural heritage, recreational spaces, parks and open community spaces. GCCF calls for the inclusion of Galway City Habitats Inventory, creation of community gardens and allotments across the city, protection and development of wildlife/ecological corridors and continuation of residents.

GCCF wish to work in partnership with the elected members of Galway City Council to ensure the best possible Development Plan for the city. To that end, GCCF held a positive and constructive meeting with members of the Council on 8 June 2010, and it is the aim to continue the dialogue with all relevant partners over the coming months.

To view the Community Forum's Submission in full, please log on to www.galwaycityforum.ie/publications.

An Ghaeilge Ag Dul In Airde I Ngaillimh

Is minic a bhíonn cúrsaí gnóthach do Ghaillimh le Gaeilge i rith an tsamhraidh le gnólachtaí ag déanamh athraithe, ag déanamh iad féin a athmhúnlú agus ag seoladh táirgí nua. Chuir BÁCÚS Uí Ghríofa, buaiteoirí Ghradam Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh na bliana seo cruth nua ar a n-aghaidh siopa le déanaí.

The Mayor of Galway, Councillor Declan McDonnell recently unveiled their new bilingual shop front. The Mayor congratulated the Griffin Family on their new bilingual image, as well as the development of their new products within the bakery and wished them continued success. "It's great to see well established Galway businesses developing and growing like this. Their use of the Irish Language has great impact and certainly attracts your attention. I am also delighted to see an international name such as Fuji opened here on Shop Street, Galway. I congratulate Niall on his imaginative use of the Irish Language within Galway Fuji Centre and wish him every success.

Ag seoladh an Aghaidh Siopa Dátheangach nua dúirt Jimmy Griffin ó Bhácús Uí Ghríofa "Tá an-áthas orainn leis an íomhá nua agus fuaireamar aiseolas iontach ónár gcustaiméirí. Rinne John Herrick ó Herrick Sign Writers, Sráid Dhoiminic jab iontach dúinn. Tá an comharthaíocht dhátheangach curtha san áireamh taobh amuigh ar ár n-aghaidh siopa úrnua agus i siopa an bhácúis é féin chomh maith. Tá táirgí nua seolta againn chomh maith le pácáistiú dátheangach. Cabhraíonn an Ghaeilge go mór le



Jimmy Griffin of Griffins Bakery Bacus Uí Ghríofa, Councillor Declan McDonnell, Mayor of Galway City, and Brid Ni Chonghoile of Gaillimh le Gaeilge

mo ghnó agus is í an aidhm atá agam anois ná go mbeadh siopa dátheangach is fearr in Éirinn againn!" Across the street from Griffins Bakery is a new international business using the Irish Language. Niall Considine of Galway Fuji Centre said 'Our shop fitters 'Irish Time Design' suggested that we use the Irish Language and they referred us to Gaillimh le Gaeilge. We ourselves were very much aware of Galway's reputation as a City of Arts & Culture and the Irish Language is very much part of that mix.

The City is located near one of the biggest Gaeltacht's in the Country, many of whom do their shopping and other business on a regularly basis in the City. In that context, we felt it important that of Galway Fuji Centre acknowledge and appreciate this expenditure by using the Irish Language".

Speaking on behalf of Gaillimh le Gaeilge, the organisation that promotes the Irish Language in Galway city, Brid Ni Chonghoile said; "tá tacaíocht an lucht gnó riachtanach chun íomhá uathúil agus tarraingteacht Chathair na Gaillimhe mar Chathair chultúrtha a choimeád. Is í an príomhaidhm atá againn ná go mbeadh an teanga le feiceáil – is í an phríomhchúis leis sin ná an leibhéal ard tionchair a bhaineann le timpeallacht dhátheangach a chruthú agus an phraiticúlacht a bhaineann leis an gcuspóir sin a bhaint amach agus acmhainní teoranta againn". She went on to say "Using the Irish language attracts new customers, especially among Irish speakers and learners – Galway city holds a unique Irish-speaking customer base, many of whom will choose a company that uses Irish over one that does not".

Má tá spéis agat sa Ghaeilge a úsáid i do ghnó nó i bpáirt a ghlacadh in obair Ghaillimh le Gaeilge maidir le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge chun stádas speisialta dátheangach a bhaint amach don Chathair, **déan teagmháil linn ar 091 568876 nó cuir ríomhphost chuig: eolas@gleg.ie. Tuilleadh eolais ag www.gleg.ie.**

If you are interested in using the Irish Language or participating in the work of Gaillimh le Gaeilge in the promotion of the Irish Language in order to gain special bilingual status for the City, **please contact us at 091 568876 or mailto: eolas@gleg.ie. Visit www.gleg.ie**

Galway International Club by Sabina Salim

Established in 2007, Galway International Club is a non-for-profit community organisation with the purpose of fostering friendship and promoting integration. We aim to lend a helping hand to those new to this culturally rich area, and hopefully, also to give something back to this wonderful community in which we live.

Galway International Club works to unite members of local and International communities, build relationships, promote integration and support an interesting and active life in general. We aim to support and help each other by organising English and Irish languages classes, providing opportunities for professional growth, building valuable contacts and networks, and by sharing information.

In 2008 -2009 we had a great time studying English together, arranging book readings for children and adults, jogging, and visits to the swimming pool.

We visited a number of different communities and supported vulnerable people from various countries. Throughout 2010 we plan to provide our members with a series of exciting events and activities, which will allow us to explore and attain the knowledge of some of today's global issues.

We seek to celebrate different national events and share our traditions, history and culture, including songs, traditional food, dances, storytelling, games etc. Our biggest celebration so far was NOVRUZ - a spring celebration in Asian countries, which we hope to do again next year.

We are delighted to be a member of Galway City Community Forum and Intercultural Forum, as we see it as an opportunity for us to contribute to the community and take part in positive changes in Galway. We have great plans for the future and are looking forward to work with the Forum to achieve better integration.



Sabina Salim, Chairperson of Galway International Club

Intercultural Forum sets sails with launch of new website by Susana Campos

Since our establishment in 2007, Galway City Intercultural Forum has worked to provide a formal platform for intercultural dialogue and to increase the participation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in local development processes. Today, we have more than 30 members from all parts of the world and with the launch of a new website earlier this year we hope to reach out to even more groups.

The website seeks to raise awareness of the Forum's activities and promote Galway as an Intercultural City. It features a wealth of information on our activities, including news on upcoming events and meetings, member profiles, links, and how to register with the Forum. The website was developed by Ms. Caroline Butler together with a small group of volunteers and the Forum is very grateful by the commitment they have shown to the project. We were also delighted that his worship, former Mayor of the City of Galway, Cllr. Declan McDonnell, took time out of his busy schedule to formally launch our website in the Town Hall Museum on the 22 March 2010, and by the unforgettable experience of portuguese Fado singing at the launch.

This development and launch of the Intercultural Forum's website is included in our Work Plan for 2010, which will see a series of activities implemented over the course of the year. Our next Intercultural Forum meeting is taking place on Wednesday 1 September 2010 at 7pm and members of community and voluntary groups interested in promoting Galway as an Intercultural City are off course more than welcome to attend.

To view our website please log on to www.galwayinterculturalforum.ie/wordpress. If you have any comments or suggestions for the website please feel free to contact **Poul Walsh Olesen on Tel. 091-536458 or via e-mail: communityforum@galwaycity.ie**.

Sr. Susana Campos is a member of Galway Latino Community and the Steering Group of Galway City Intercultural Forum



Members of the Intercultural Forum Steering Group with Councillor Declan McDonnell, former Mayor of Galway City, at the launch of the new website

Intercultural Photo Competition

Digital
Photography
Competition

A City of Equals
Partnership of Schools and Clubs

To coincide with the launch of the Galway City Intercultural Strategy, Galway City Development Board has launched a digital photography competition.

The Competition offers a top prize of 400 with a number of other prizes including the chance for over 30 winning photos to be published as part of the Strategy publication.

The Competition will focus on Galway City as an Intercultural City, with 5 specific themes under which photos can be entered. The themes relate to the strategy's actions - Promoting an Intercultural City, Living Together, Rejecting Racism, Planning for Diversity and Building an Intercultural Economy.

The Intercultural Strategy working group suggest that entrants have a look at the draft strategy and capture images that reflect the type of actions that the City aims to tackle in the Strategy. The competition is open to all ages and photos must be taken within Galway City. The Closing date is the 10th September 2010.

A submission form and further details including the draft Intercultural Strategy can be downloaded from Galway City Council's website at www.galwaycity.ie/photography.

Keeping the Beat at Castlegar

by Denise Heneghan

Castlegar National School nestles in the hedgerows of the School Road, which links the Tuam Road and the Headford Road. This scenic ridge overlooks the city and Ballindooley Castle and Lake. It is home to diverse flora and wildlife, including foxes, badgers and otters, yet is too dangerous for residents and school children to walk due to the absence of footpaths and intensity of traffic. There is no bus service to the area either, or a hall to serve the needs of this community with its distinctive rural identity.

In 2004 some concerned parents, working in collaboration with Paddy Houlahan, singer songwriter and community musician, set up The Keep the Beat Klub, a special interest youth club providing music tuition, instruments and equipment for Castlegar children and their families to learn music and perform in bands. Funding has mainly been by grants and one off sponsorships, and the Keep the Beat Klub gratefully acknowledges funding from the V.E.C., The National Lottery, the Dormant Accounts, Galway City Council, Galway City Partnership and the Society of St. Vincent

De Paul. Since 2004, the Keep the Beat Klub together with Paddy Houlahan, has written and recorded five original songs, some of which have been played on local radio. In 2008 the senior members of the Klub performed Trick or Treatin', an original Halloween song, on The Den, RTE. Working together with the Ballybane Intercultural Music Project, the Klub recorded "We're All One" and went on to mount a St. Patrick's Day Parade entry reflecting a richness of cultural diversity in the participating groups. Each year, in co-operation with the Parents' Association of Castlegar N.S. and with the help of local neighbours, the Keep the Beat Klub presents an annual Community Barbeque in the grounds of the school. The fifth annual barbeque, held in June 2010, was opened by the then City Mayor, Cllr. Declan McDonnell and later in the evening received a surprise visit from Minister Eamon O'Cuiv.

Following invitations from Galway City Council to community groups to submit to the City Development Plan, the Keep the Beat Klub extended its constitution and membership to represent the community from which it is drawn, including several families whose grandparents are native Irish speakers. Junior and senior members participated along with their parents in the brainstorming for the city plan submissions. Since early 2010, in the absence of any funding at all, the senior members have been tutoring their younger counterparts and have also played an active part in representing the Klub at all meetings with political and council representatives, earning much praise as the hope for the city's future.

The Keep the Beat Klub resumes in September, Tuesdays, 7 – 9 pm at Castlegar National School and is open to all families of the school or living in the area.



Keep the Beat Members recording Colour it Green with students of Castlegar National School

Galway Volunteer Centre carries out research on the volunteering experiences of asylum seekers

A new research study titled 'What Difference Can You Make?' has been published by Galway Volunteer Centre. The study examines the volunteering experiences of asylum seekers registered with their service.

GVC decided to carry out the study due to direct feedback from asylum seekers, around the challenges they were facing in finding suitable volunteer placements in Galway. 'Examining this issue in greater detail allowed us to identify both the challenges being faced, as well as what aids successful volunteering for this group', said Ruth Fagan, Volunteer Liaison Officer.

Three direct provision centres in the city, including The Eglinton Hotel, Great Western House and Lisbrook House were engaged with. Registered volunteers in each of these direct provision centres were invited to take part in the research.

Challenges:

One of the main challenges experienced by participants who took part in the study was a lack of response from organisations after making initial contact about a role. Many found that when they were not contacted back they felt extremely discouraged in seeking other volunteer work and stopped looking at this point as they had lost motivation.

Keys to Success:

Successful volunteering experiences focussed on the quality of volunteer management in organisations that the participants had been involved in. Factors such as clear volunteer role descriptions and having available supports while in a placement were reported as keeping volunteers motivated and happy in their role, which ultimately aided successful volunteering experiences.

The report will be made available on GVC's website and the centre will be publishing an information booklet in three different languages aimed at promoting the benefits of volunteering for all and encouraging asylum seekers to volunteer in their local community.

Commenting on the research findings Ruth added; 'It is our hope that organisations in Galway using our service can learn from the findings and implement greater support structures for asylum seekers wishing to volunteer with them. This ultimately ensures that both volunteers and organisations will have positive volunteering experiences and the benefits of volunteering can be enjoyed by both'.

To contact Galway Volunteer Centre call 091-539930 or email: info@volunteergalway.ie

galway city
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*The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Galway City Community Forum or the Community and Enterprise Department of Galway City Council.

Poetry Corner

Through the Looking Glass

by Antoinette Fitzgerald

To the naked eye, nothing is different
The evidence of change invisible thus far
But soon there will be no way to hide
From scornful and sympathetic eyes
Some say she sinned, betrayed those close to her
Now she knows she lost herself in Java coffee eyes
And later in sheets she will never revisit
She believed she fell in love
She examines her face in the mirror
Of a room shrinking around her
Her own eyes stare back into herself
Not recognising who is there
To her own eye, no evidence of change
But in her heart she knows it will never be the same
Taking a pillow from her bed, she places it under her shirt
Turns to one side and contemplates
What is to come

Antoinette Fitzgerald lives in the Westside area. She is married to Eamonn, a mother of four and has attended writing classes with Kevin Higgins at Westside Library for the past two years. She has read her work at the Over The Edge open-mic in Galway City Library at the Westside Arts Festival.

Canal

by Donal Grehan

Closed, banks crumbling, dank,
years ago barges carried textiles and leather
to dublin and beyond, now disused, cut off from
the network, a grave for dead dogs,
torn prams, shopping trolleys, afterbirths,
brown rats fornicate, do laps in the stygian water,
i smell, belch out bitter methane, two fingers to
do-gooder renewal schemes, i will not be saved,
i abhor being a neat tourist attraction, smiling,
with fine paths, verdant verges, happy flowers,
revolted by cast iron seats, noble sculptures, memorials,
i hunger to suck in, to trap, to drown the sun,
i am a dark bottomless hole, still, still,
ever still, ever putrefying, a vortex from which
no life, no light escapes, i want to live forever

Donal Grehan writes poetry and short stories. He has been living in Galway for 20 years and is originally from Mountmellick in Co. Laois. He has read his work at the Over The Edge: Open Readings at Galway City Library and is currently taking part in a creative writing group facilitated by Kevin Higgins at Westside Library.