



Consulate of Ireland Newsletter for U.S. Southwest
NEWS
& Current Events

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December 2018

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A chairde, dear friends,
Fáilte/Welcome to this latest edition of the Consulate’s newsletter with reports on recent events across Texas and beyond.

We wish you and your family a very happy Christmas and a great start to 2019.

Best wishes,
Consulate General of Ireland, Austin

Senator George Mitchell visits Austin

Consul General Farrell was honoured to invite Senator George Mitchell in Austin during Thanksgiving Week to speak about the critical role he played in the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement two decades ago.

Following short speeches from Consul Farrell and his British counterpart Consul Karen Bell, Senator Mitchell was interviewed by Angela Evans, Dean of the LBJ School at the University of Texas in Austin. The Senator also took questions from audience members about twenty years of peace in Northern Ireland.

During his stay in Austin the Senator also visited the LBJ library where he met with Lucy Johnson, daughter of President Johnson.





Regional highlights

Irish Ambassador Visits Texas

Dan Mulhall, Ireland's Ambassador to the US, paid his first official visit to Texas in November. In San Antonio he met with Mayor Ron Nirenberg to congratulate the city on its 300th birthday. Thanks to the Harp and Shamrock Society for warmly welcoming the Ambassador with a reception at the city's Art League Museum. Ambassador Mulhall also visited the Alamo and laid flowers in memory of the Irish defenders.



Thank you to Rachel Gaffney, Irish Network DFW and the World Affairs Council who hosted the Ambassador in Dallas for a great evening of discussion about Ireland, its current relations with the US and more. The Ambassador also met with Irish community contacts at an Ireland Funds luncheon and with Mayor Mike Rawlings. He also met with Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly, and joined American Airlines to celebrate the launch of the first Texas-Ireland air service from DFW to Dublin in 2019.

In Houston the Ambassador visited the Texas Medical Center and met with Mayor Sylvester Turner before joining the city's Irish community at the annual Gala for the Flynn Irish Studies Center at the University of St. Thomas. Thanks to Lori Gallagher and her amazing team for another wonderful evening!

To hear Ambassador Mulhall's extensive interview with Kris Boyd on Think which was broadcast across the Texas NPR network logon to: <https://beta.prx.org/stories/258571>



An Irish-Mexican Christmas

The Consulate of Ireland with the Consulate of Mexico in Austin was delighted to welcome guests from Irish communities in Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Houston and Corpus Christi at its annual Christmas party featuring the best of Irish and Mexican dance, music and food.



News and Events

Irish in Mexican and Texan history

Austin's Mexican Vice Consul Jorge Salcido Zugasti delivered a fascinating lecture on the history and influence of the Irish in Mexico and Texas.



Congratulations Sr. Margaret!

Many congratulations to Sr. Margaret Daly (Order of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio) who celebrated her 100th birthday on 29 November. Sr. Daly was born in 1918 near Farranfore, Co. Kerry and moved to the US in 1938.

Sr. Daly received an early birthday visit from Ambassador Mulhall. Consul Farrell presented her with a letter of congratulations from President Higgins when he joined her 'official' birthday party on 29 November.



Irish Christmas in Texas



The Consulate was delighted to join and support Christmas events with the San Antonio Harp & Shamrock Society, Austin's Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Dallas Irish American Society.



News from Ireland

Our Online Passport Renewal Service has expanded services to permit the online renewal of children's passports. We have also introduced a passport card for children, and expanded the cohort of adults eligible to renew online, 24/7 from anywhere in the world, provided your passport has expired in the last 5 years.

The US House of Representatives voted to add Ireland to the E3 visa scheme which could expand the opportunities for Irish nationals to work in the US. This legislation is now in the Senate.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar issued a statement following the negotiated draft Brexit Withdrawal Agreement. He reiterated regret at Britain's decision to leave but indicated a satisfactory outcome on Ireland's four national priorities, which were also outlined by Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney, on NPR's Morning Edition.

Ambassador Dan Mulhall spoke on CNBC's Closing Bell on the next steps regarding Brexit, remarking on the EU's "amazing capacity to overcome challenges and to find pragmatic solutions to problems." In a Washington Post interview, he outlined the opportunities to enhance the US-Ireland relationship.

November 20th marked the 100th anniversary since women got the right to vote in Ireland and to be elected to Parliament. The 32nd Dáil currently has the highest female representation in Ireland's history.

Former Irish President Mary Robinson was appointed to succeed the late Kofi Annan as chair of The Elders, an international NGO founded by Nelson Mandela, in recognition of her work for international peace, justice and human rights.

Figures from the CSO's latest Labour Force Survey show that employment is at its highest level ever, a 3% year on year increase in the 3rd quarter of 2018, with growth recorded in the last 25 consecutive quarters.



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