



# Commodore John Barry Arts and Cultural Center

6815 Emlen Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119  
215-843-8051  
[www.theirishcenter.org](http://www.theirishcenter.org)

June 18, 2020

A Chara,

Dear friend, as a supporter of the Commodore John Barry Arts & Cultural Center (the “Irish Center”), you are aware that the mission of the Irish Center is to teach, celebrate and promote Irish art, culture and heritage. Our mission is in action daily - - **there is always something happening at the Irish Center!**

Well, at least there *was* always something happening at the Irish Center until March 13, 2020 - - when a global pandemic curtailed all that we know and love about the Irish Center.

As President of the Irish Center, I am committed, along with the Board of Directors, to communicate directly to you, our donors, on an annual basis to share news about the Irish Center. Communication is vitally important now more than ever as the world and the Irish Center work to rebound from COVID-19.

I am happy to report that the Irish Center entered into an agreement with the City of Philadelphia and, assuming we make all payments according to a certain payment plan, the Irish Center will have paid all outstanding Philadelphia real estate taxes by December 2020. This is a huge accomplishment and one that we should all celebrate.

From May 2019 until March 13, 2020, the Irish Center had event bookings many nights of the week and every weekend. We were getting ready to start a waitlist! The Irish Center hosted a variety of music and dance sessions, lectures, Irish language classes, Society meetings and Balls, concerts and the first Christmas Tree Lighting and Open House. Unfortunately, COVID-19 abruptly ceased any new bookings. In addition, existing bookings were either cancelled or postponed. On a positive note, the proceeds from all of the events that were held during this time helped to build up some cash reserves (finally) in the books of the Irish Center.

Finally, the Irish Center’s capital improvement plan was on target and new lighting and security cameras had been secured and installed. The Board was looking forward to additional upgrades and renovations.

All of the events, the progress, our cash reserves, and the capital improvement plan came to an abrupt **STOP** on March 13th as a result of COVID-19. The Board is meeting and working with the City of Philadelphia and other event venues to understand when it might be feasible to re-open and what that re-opening will look like in the future. There is so much uncertainty at the moment but be assured that we are working hard to understand all the issues. We promise to make prudent decisions on behalf of the Irish Center.

The health and safety of our community is most important to the Board of Directors of the Irish Center. As a result, the Irish Center is not budgeting for any large events through December 2020. The cash surplus that was generated between May 2019 and March 13, 2020 will allow the Irish Center to pay its basic bills (tax, insurance, mortgage, PECO, etc.) through September 2020. However, with no new income, the Irish Center will need approximately \$30,000 to cover its basic bills due between September and December 2020.

The Irish Center needs your help – if you are able, please consider making a tax deductible donation to the Irish Center either by mail at the above address ATTN: Carolyn Killion, Treasurer or through our [Paypal account on our website www.theirishcenter.org](#). Every donation, large or small, will make a difference.

The Irish Center will survive – we are strong and resilient and hopeful. We will get back to hosting those music and dance sessions and a whole lot more just as soon as it is safe to do so. The Board is very grateful for all your support.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

*Sean*

Sean McMenamin, President

killadangan@comcast.net