

2005 Dignitaries

2005 Mr. Pat: Chuck Mitch



Chuck has lived in St. Paul his whole life. He attended St. Leo's Grade school, Cretin High School, and St. Thomas College. Chuck has two grown children, Niki and Charlie. Chuck owned Mitch's Supper Club for 35 years. He currently works at Griggs Cooper & Company, a liquor and wine distributor in St. Paul. His favorite activities are golfing and boxing. In the past, Chuck was an amateur and professional boxer.

2005 Miss Shamrock: Heather O'Keeffe Schmidt



Heather was raised in the Stillwater area but now resides in St. Paul with her husband and two wonderful children, Joey and Liam. She has a background in early childhood education and is currently work as a Program Specialist at a learning center in Woodbury. Heather has been able to trace her Irish heritage back five generations, which all hail from Cork County. Heather is an active member of the St. Pat's Association (acting President), and appreciates having met such wonderful people she now considers part of her Irish family.

2005 Distinguished Irish Woman: Joni Delaney O'Connell



This 3rd generation Irish lass has remained a St. Paul resident all her life. Her paternal ancestors hail from Ardfinnan, County Tipperary.

Joni's father, Thomas J. Delaney, Jr. was founder and co-owner of Delaney, Joyce & O'Dell Travel Agency. In 1961, her parents began offering escorted tours to Ireland, and Joni continued the tradition. This tour is the longest running custom tour to Ireland from the United States, and Joni has been honored for this.

Joni went to high school at Derham Hall and college at St. Kate's, and is active in both alumni associations.

2005 Grand Marshal: Deputy Mayor Denis Flaherty



Dennis is a first-generation American, born to Galway tailor John Flaherty and his St. Paul Hungarian wife, Helen. Other Flahertys followed and settled in St. Mark's parish; in the '50s and '60s the neighborhood was full of Flahertys. Dennis was able to take his father back to Ireland in 1979. Dennis recalls, "It was one of the most wonderful experiences I've ever had in my life, looking into his eyes and seeing that twinkle. They went back every year, until John's death in 1992.

Dennis Flaherty's parents were proud of his family devotion, they were proud of his B.A. and his Master's degree, but they were perhaps most proud when Dennis graduated from the police academy in 1973. Dennis's police career ended early due to an injury. The accident led to detective work until he was tapped to be the Executive Director of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers' Association. It was through that office that he met Randy Kelly and Kelly offered him the toughest job of his career, Deputy Mayor of St. Paul.

2005 Celebrity Grand Marshal: Sweet Colleens



The Sweet Colleens are Jeremy Greenhouse, Pete Sandvik, Dave Bade, Jeff Gram, and Dave Willcock — accomplished multi-instrumentalists who together fuse their diverse musical backgrounds into a high-energy, infectious, and crowd-pleasing mix of “fiddle-infused, accordion-fueled, celti-cajun folk pop.” With rootsy original songs, warm vocal harmonies, and fiery instrumental arrangements, the Twin Cities-based Sweet Colleens are winning fans across the country.

2005 Honorary Irish Person: St. Paul Chief of Police John Harrington



John Mark Harrington was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1956. He was strongly influenced toward public service by his mother, a Cook County, Illinois, social worker and his father who served as a Cook County Deputy Sheriff. He moved to Minnesota after college graduation. After 27 years as a Saint Paul police officer and working his way up through the ranks, he was named the Saint Paul Police Department’s 39th Chief of Police in June, 2004.

Chief Harrington has served as an adjunct faculty at three Twin Cities universities where he taught popular classes in community policing and gang prevention/intervention.

Chief Harrington holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dartmouth College (New Hampshire) and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Saint Thomas (Saint Paul). He has participated in doctoral level study at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis) and Hamline University (Saint Paul). Chief Harrington is a graduate of the 201st Session of the FBI National Academy. He currently serves as chair of the Minnesota Crime Victims Reparation Board and is president of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE). He is also on the Board of Directors for the non-profit organizations, Girl Scout Council of Saint Croix Valley and Neighborhood House on Saint Paul’s Westside.

Chief Harrington is the proud father of seven children.