




*An áit a bhuil do chroí is ann a thabharfas do chosa thú.  
Your feet will bring you to where your heart is.*

**H**appy St. Patrick's Day to all of yuh's! Right. So where was I then? I was tellin' youns about our kit & kin and I just took a breath and another year's gone by...it's magic dontcha know and tis & twas magical to be sure. For brevity's sake, going back to the


beginning in 1991, can we just take all that transpired twixt now and then thru the first 18 Annual Wee Epistles "as read" and get on with this 19<sup>th</sup> year's epistolic and episodic enumeration of the essentials of Eire-like events engaging the ever-expanding zone of Erin's influence known hither and yon and from this day forward as the wee Ryan's Amer-Irish diaspora. You'd better sit down for it's a wild Ryan ride indeed. Before we chronicle the as-of-yet un-chronicled from our perch on this the precipice of Ryan Year 2011 (RY11) can I just take a moment to say ("You may") thanks to one and everyone of you for the warmest of wishes all warmly received at Christmastime past (and some long past Christmas). New friends may not know, but as long-time AWE-inspired readers will attest, this AWE-ful tradition began shortly after the birth of our first as we, enthralled as we were with the miracle of we wee




ones, completely missed the mailing deadline for holiday wishes. There and fore, in this the first year of Emptorus Nestum, as RY10 draws triumphantly to a close (or in Gloria's case "clothes" – Mike can no longer close his clothes) ending as it does at the break of St. Paddy's day, may I officially welcome you dear noble and indulgent reader to the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Ryan Hysterical Chronicles put down gently in this Annual Wee Epistle 2011 (AWE-11), and without fail, may I ("You may") wish you the happiest of Ryan New Years!  Diaspora indeed! As you can see at left Michael me Boy burst forth from secondary education in grand style as his sister before him at the Hotel de Ville on the Grand Place in Brussels, Belgium bound

blissfully without boast to Boston on the coast installing himself with merriment and might at Northeastern uni in the grandest of all Amer-Irish locales, Beantown. The famous "boy in the Santa hat" is bending light (see his Facebook videos) discovering delights and making friends faster than Finnegan finds fun! A'fore he went, dontcha know, he managed more than a few victories on the track in a multi-plethora of events and graciously garnered awards in his senior class. Hurdling at the European championships, crossing the country quickly "a pied", and jostling a bit on the wrestling mat, his physical pursuits broke the monotony between video games and girls. A few swift kicks from an adoring Mexi-Merican Mom meant Michael (at right just after his elevation) mounted the herculean heights of the envied ranks of Eagle Scout!



 The Volvo+4 (less two cats) holidays were again superseded by rentals + sis & b-in-law as the latter Judy & Robert graced us again for graduation and then some. The thensome included the Autobahn to Oberammergau ("Kids, what's the fastest car in the world? A rental!") to see the justly famous "Passion Play" in German (you know how it ends)-the kids weren't in it this time-then back to Brussels via castles and Kaefers (crystal!\$) to a water-shed event, the largest-ever re-enactment of the Battle of Waterloo with rinkside seats! (Why water & rink? Ccccoldd & wwzett! It was in French but you know how it ends) On the way we did see Concorde and Concordsky side-by-side in Sinsheim-scintillating! Richer in memories, poorer in monetaries and packed precariously J&R jetted to Jax to prepare for our upcoming visit to the malls o'plenty! So, after a brief respite at work, which included Carissa's conference services career at NATO (with a clearance-relax ladies, not a sale a security), we packed for yet another entitlement, something called "Home Leave" which means we get to take extra vacation, but only in North America! Kids first: Carissa to Boston, Michael to oHlo then a family rejoin via the Fisher clan in Carrolltown, PA.

 Childhood environs can and should elicit warmth and welcome and this certainly was the case as we took up an extended residence in the "Manse" in quasi-ancestral Appalachia. People sure are nice there it must be said and our good friends the Barbers are exhibit A, as were the Steelers nation folk when we made the pilgrimage to both Latrobe for Steelers summer camp and the high altar of the NFL, Heinz Field, for a pre-season game where our boys and mother nature deluged the Lions and us in that



order (see a very wet picture at right). The kids became intrepid aviators, as their grandfather before them had done at their age, if only for one B-17 flight when they too slipped the surly bounds of earth to the roar of four mighty props. As Dad did last year, they flew aboard Aluminum Overcast, shining as it does in 398<sup>th</sup> BG colors, and had the time of their lives! (on board in the picture at left) Next up they commanded a pontoon boat at sea conquering the waves of Glendale Lake



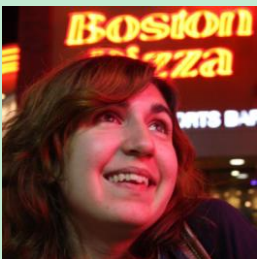


(seen here aboard SS Rent Me) before taking to the hi-ways and bi-ways of Pennsylvania in their beloved 'Chester'-a 2002 Olds intrigue! (below) Intrigue indeed! Increasing their diasporic-inducing means, Carissa went from zero to driver's license in two weeks (with both professional and personal instruction-it's the drink (or the prayers) what keeps me calm-with Michael relegated to a permit only by virtue of his birthdate (if yur 18 ya don't need to log a lot of hours before the test). So, with a license (which Dad calls "for emergency driving only") firmly in-hand she went solo! To the store and back...my heart is still palpitating-but I have to say, both kids "done good!" Whilst we were galavanting about the Josh joined us betwixt and between all this (see Sacred

Family update below). I must say, we took in a drive-in movie as well to see, irony here, Despicable Me. The best way to go from near Pittsburgh to Boston is, you guessed it, via Niagara Falls. So, we did! (Joshless) Maid of the Mist, helicopter over the falls (beats a barrel), great steak and rainbows galore presaged a rental road-trip onward to Boston for Michael's (and parents) Orientation and Carissa's homecoming. Then Webb-based as we were we courageously sallied forth (who's Sally?) to deposit our 2<sup>nd</sup> (and a good portion of cash minus scholarships) into the vaults of academia--So awesome twas I wanted to stay--and, I'd even go to class!



Josh is in AWE of Carissa and why not? He's now a long-standing member of the Sacred Family, which still has Squirely as Patriarch (recall his trip to Pluto, where boyfriends go if they don't behave--just kidding ;-)) but now adds Mr. Smiley, "mah nook," and until recently, Chester (he's now a moneymaker=\$\$\$) Carissa, always energetic (Bunny? Not) declared her majorS (Communications & History!) and decided to graduate a year early. Work as a



writing tutor and a student aide at the Academic Resource Center keeps her out & about, as if she needed help having gone to Nantucket, concerts e.g. Dresden Dolls (her favorite--she got a free ticket thanks to social networking)--Goo Goo Dolls (in my day it was GoGo, but don't tell Mom), and Say Anything (Don't tempt me!). She also continued her Rock Werchter streak this time with galpal Giorgia, who's Italian Canadian from CANADIA lika hey. On weekends, she lives off free samples of jalapeno-pineapple bread and frequents Rocky Horror Picture Show (I hope she takes toast!) To cap off a typical Boston winter, she walked on the frozen Charles river in front of the city skyline! Her boyfriend-heavy New Years in the UK included a trip to Edinburgh to see the birthplace of Harry Potter while Michael me Boy was in Brussels & M&G were in O'gau.

We all enjoyed a snow white Christmas together this year, but dat's gettin' ahead of me self, t'isn't it? So, dear father Michael began RY10 in glorious style at his half time show (aka 50<sup>th</sup> b-day) with a "quiet" evening at home: i.e. the rock band "Article 5" in the living room, an Irish-Mexican Saint Patricio/San Patrick's Day fiesta stewing in the dining room, an official Finnish delegation on the terrace, Guinness & Corona on ice, Let's Make a Deal live in the salon, and 50 or so dear friends of many nationalities wandering about merrily. All were thick as thieves including Mike's twin Lars-Gunnar, born in Sweden at lit'rally the same moment in 1960, his bride & son, the Operation Bear team, and dear friends too numerous to mention here but too hard to forget as well. Months later after his cranium cleared, Michael abandoned Brussels and threw his lot in with Snoopy's swashbuckling Swabian



squadron at European Command fulfilling a prophecy made in 1966 by Charles de Gaulle that he had to move from Paris to Stuttgart. And so, having crammed 10 pounds of stuff into a 5 pound base house on the aptly named "Floridastrasse"--it's southern Germany after all--Mike started his DJ5 Security Cooperation & ODC Support. Suffice to say, with 38 offices to visit scattered over 51 countries, AWE 12 will enumerate travels to Chisinau, Tbilisi, Yerevan and the like; "alas," this year he's been relegated to Paris, London, Athens (don't tell the Turks) and Istanbul (don't tell the Greeks!). Great people, great mission, great life thanks be to God! (TBTG). But, before we moved we did have to make sure we still liked Germany, so we strapped on the Volvo and we gratefully followed our BeerMeister Rowdy (and his Mrs it must be said) to the world's best wine and beer fests, Bavaria's best breweries, and many a caloric conundrum in September. TBTG we got the last of the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Oktoberfest Beer steins--another great story--ask Rowdy

Stuttgart's stunningly stupendous and surprisingly serendipitous siren strongly sings the song of scientific salvation! Alert and long-time readers (OK, not so long) will recall the follicle follies of Gloria's chemodic cocktails. The onset of RY11 marked the start of her interior tanning sessions all cheerfully embraced. Twixt the two she erased swimming with dolphins from her Bucket List, self-published two cookbooks, continued cooking in Flemish, visited Mom and sisters for Thanksgiving, and really started a new life here in our small American town (which is 5 minutes from Germany!) Finally, (you know how it ends) as is our custom please join us in inviting our Lord to watch over our coalition troops as they go into battle today! Godspeed.



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