

# Chronicle-Telegraph

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## “Irish for a Day”: Quebec City's St. Patrick's Parade, Part II

By BETHANN G. MERKLE

“The parade is a learning tool, it teaches the younger generation about their heritage. The parade belongs to citizens of this city, whether they be francophones, anglophones, or allophones. It can only enrich the culture of this city, and that can only be a good thing for the future,” said Peter Farnell. The third edition of the parade starts at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 24. It begins at St. Patrick's High School on rue Maissoneuve, follows Rue Fraser, avenue Cartier, and Rue St-Jean, and ends at City Hall. The complete route is available online at [www.qcpatrick.com](http://www.qcpatrick.com).

Farnell is the co-founder and current president of *Le Défilé de la St-Patrick de Québec*, and he shared his vision of the parade with the *QCT* this week. He ex-



The team of La Défilé de la St-Patrick de Québec: (back row) Jean-Paul Schmouth\*, Marie-Gabrielle Cannon, Dan O'Dowd\*, President Peter Farrell\*, Marie-Michèle Côté\*, John Pape\*; (front row) Julie Chênevert, Conrad Castailloux\*, Catherine McKenna\*, Laura-Lee Bolger\*, Vicky Daigle, Michael-James Noonan\*; in the boat: Gregori. \*Those with asterisks are board members.



plained, “*Le Défilé* is a 100% non profit organization. It is non political, non sectarian and has no affiliations with any other organization. Our mission is simple - to produce, manage and preserve the Saint Patrick's Parade in Quebec City for the families and citizens of this city.”

The parade is also a complex enterprise with a hefty price tag. Farnell noted, “The reality is that it takes over \$80,000 to stage a parade of this size. The city contributes 30% and the remainder comes from sponsors.” He further specified that, “The City of Quebec, the NYPD of New York City and United Irish Societies in Mon-

tréal helped in the huge task,” of re-starting the Quebec City parade “from scratch.”

Farnell underscored what it takes to make the parade happen – dedicated volunteers. “It takes about 1,500 hours of work per parade. Work begins in August and continues to May.” Board member Catherine McKenna added, “It's not just sitting around a table drinking pints of Guinness. If you are on the board, it's not just a hobby.” Farnell elaborated, “Without them it would have been impossible. Their names deserve to be known.”

On top of the board's

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## Red Bull Crashed Ice

By JUANITA CRAIG

St. Patrick's Day 2012 will be one that Kyle Croxall will remember forever as the 24-year-old firefighter from Mississauga, Ontario, became the first Canadian to win two Red Bull Crashed Ice World Championships. The first time he stood at the top of the podium was in 2010.

There were only forty points separating Croxall and the three-time world champion Arttu Pihlainen from Jyväskylä, Finland, who finished second. Pihlainen is a physical and health education teacher, father of two, and guitarist with the band Funky Monkeys.

In third place was Kyle's 21-year-old younger brother Scott Croxall who jumped up three places from last year's competition. Scott emigrated to Holland in November 2011, where he now plays with the

Red Bull Crashed Ice hockey team.

At the press conference held after the event on Saturday night, Scott stated that his crash in the final that allowed his brother to take first place was not an intentional set up but was “a result of.. [his]..injury.” Moreover, the top three athletes confirmed that this is an individual sport and they were each out there to win.

Philippe Poirier, a Bike Shop Manager from Mont Tremblant, was named as the best Québécois competitor this year gaining 12th place overall. In 2011, he won the first ever Mini Rookie Award.

In the Women's Final, first place went to Fannie Desforges, the Franco-Ontarian who was placed 5th in last year's competition. Fannie was followed by Salla Kyhala from Finland and in third



Red Bull Crashed Ice 2012 Champion Kyle Croxall, with 2nd place winner, Arttu Pihlainen, and 3rd place winner, his brother Scott Croxall.

place by Marquise Brisebois from Montreal.

The longest-reigning

Red Bull Crashed Ice World Champion is Jasper Felder from Sweden who won the

title for five consecutive years from 2001-2005. Felder has been known to say that, “All that counts is staying calm and not showing off.”

There were four competitions in this year's Red Bull Crashed Ice World Championship. The first took place

in Saint Paul, Minnesota, on January 14, the second at Valkenburg in the Netherlands on February 4, followed by Aare in Sweden on February 18 and then finally in Quebec City on March 17. At each stop of the World Championship there is an Elimination Round for both national and international athletes.

The National Shoot-Out for Canadian athletes in Quebec City took place on Thursday, March 15. The following night, it was the International Shoot-Out for International competitors. From those two Shoot-Outs, the 64 fastest Canadians and 64 International athletes advanced to the Elimination Round which occurred on Friday. Only the top 64 ice cross downhill male competitors and 16 women went through to the final that started at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The sport was created in Stockholm, Sweden in 2000. Formally known as Ice Cross Downhill, it is a mixture of ice skating and ski cross staged in an urban setting that has groups of four athletes at a time racing down a steep 500-metre-long ice track in full ice-hockey gear.

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**COMMENTARY**

# Commentary on Pink Shirt Day article

I was heartened to read Bruce Todman's article about Pink Shirt Day at Quebec High School in the March 7 issue.

Fifteen years ago, QHS was telling me, a parent, that the school was getting in front of the problem of bullying. Well, with Pink Shirt Day, perhaps, at last, they are. It's not enough to say that a certain amount of bullying is normal in schools. It's not enough to gently suggest that the victim should "stop provoking" the bullying. It is not enough to take the bullies aside and ask them to put themselves in their victims' shoes. Time, and too many teen suicides (how many suicides is too many?), have shone a harsh light on the inadequacy of our efforts.

Bullying is a systemic illness in schools, so the whole school – teachers, administrators, students and parents – must be treated for the problem. It is wonderful that guidelines are being drawn, including definitions of the different kinds of bul-

lying. For to be fair, some kids who bully may not even be aware that their "teasing" is in fact bullying. A visible, vocal demonstration such as Pink Shirt Day is a hugely positive action because the whole school is involved – and **everyone is the answer to the problem**. As Todman says, the answer is in the mirror.

Often, a child will tell an adult that she's being bullied and, despite everyone's best efforts, the bullying only worsens. But **if**, from an early age, children know that they can tell an adult and the bullying will stop, **if** parents know that they can discuss the problem with school authorities and the bullying will stop, **if** parents and teachers together can agree on and impose appropriate consequences for bullying, and **if** everyone is reminded regularly of the message of Pink Shirt Day, bullying can be reduced or even eliminated. And how great would that be, a learning/teaching environment where all children feel

safe, a bullying incident is no longer the norm, but a regrettable exception.

Define consequences? First, a bully should apologize to the child, parents and teacher, then be suspended and made to do a good number of volunteer hours during his or her time "off". If after that the bullying recurs, the bully should be expelled. (Teachers may consider this simplistic and idealistic.)

For Pink Shirt Days, the animated film *Mary and Max* might be a good starting point for discussion. Or any other time. It's a film that raises questions about friendship and growing up, as well as bullying and its effects, which are good to examine any time.

Kids who have been bullied remember the bully's face and name for the rest of their lives. Bullies should ask themselves: is this really how I want to be remembered?

Mary Hilton

## "Irish for a Day": Quebec City's St. Patrick's Parade, Part II ...continued



Photo By Bethann Merkle

New York City Police Pipes and Drums will march again in this year's parade on Saturday.

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effort, 140 volunteers help coordinate over 1,000 participants, during the parade. The average volunteer age is 24, and 80% of volunteers are francophone. As Farnell said, "They work together and are very proud to be part of the event. Not only do they have a great time, they also gain valuable experience. The beauty of the volunteers is that [...] they see the world differently, language is not a barrier, and they get the job done together. It gives me great inspiration to see young anglophones and francophones working together, all doing their best."

Farrell and McKenna also clarified a few key aspects of the parade which generate a lot of questions. "The Quebec City parade is always later because we don't want to compete with Montreal," McKenna said. "We never confirm a date until they do, and then ours is always the weekend after." She also explained why we do not see floats in the local parade. "It's a 'new' kind of parade" that harks back to the past. "There is a very

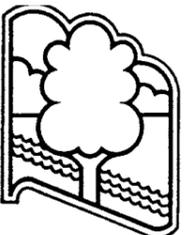
unique vision for this parade, for it to go down Rue St-Jean. That is because parades were always on St-Jean." Farrell emphasized creativity and an eco-responsible angle. Floats "produce huge amounts of diesel and gas fumes, and tend to be the same every year. People want entertainment, creativity and parades that their kids can learn from. I bet you, parades will someday follow ours, and maybe be a little bit more green – no pun intended!"

Sheila Shakibaian, half Irish and half Persian, embodies both the multi-cultural nature of the local celebration, and the collaboration between *Le Défilé* and the Montreal parade. A Shannon native, she was a Princess in the Montreal parade, and will march in the Quebec City parade. She said the element she most values about the St. Patrick's Parade tradition is, "you don't have to be Irish to appreciate the richness and resilience of Irish people and culture, or to attend the parades or other festivities." Farrell heartily agreed. In fact, the only difference he perceives in how various

cultural groups celebrate St. Patrick's Day is that some "have difficulty pronouncing *slainté* (slay-e-n-tay), which means 'Good Health' or 'Cheers!' in Gaelic.

When we spoke, McKenna emphasized the unifying role the parade plays. "It's about culture and language. St. Patrick's Day is probably very much parallel to how the *Québécois* feel about the *Fête nationale*. It's almost like toasting, raising a glass to our ancestors. The parades have evolved – they are so inclusive now. Everybody from every walk of life, every culture, is welcome."

That said, *Le Défilé* is issuing a call to residents of Quebec City, particularly the Irish community. They need your help to produce the 4th edition next year. In order to ensure that this parade moves into the future, new board members and volunteers are being actively recruited. If you would like to contribute, please contact *Le Défilé* at (418) 575-0449 or [communications@qcpatrick.com](mailto:communications@qcpatrick.com).



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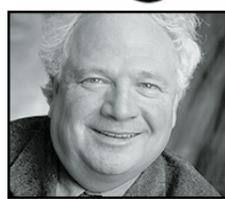
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