

North Offaly News Roundup

Community Activism is alive and well all over Offaly

By Ray Lucey

On a Wednesday evening in late March many community activists and volunteers from all over the Faithful County convened for an Offaly Public Participation Network (PPN) Plenary meeting in the Tullamore Court Hotel. (Although held in 2022, in actuality this Plenary was for the year of 2021). Such events are an ideal opportunity for attendees to acknowledge their achievements, share innovative ideas, to network and make valuable contacts with other like-minded people and groups, with potential to collaborate on existing and planned community development projects.

Bridie Costello Hynes, Co-Ordinator, Offaly PPN was MC for the evening introduced an extensive range of speakers and topical presentations to both inform and entertain the audience, including ex-RTÉ Television midlands correspondent, Ciaran Mullooly as the keynote speaker. First to speak was Rebekah Keaveny of Green Offaly, a representative of the Environmental Pillar of Offaly PPN, whose aims include securing of goals for green regeneration leading to a sustainable rural future with a twenty year plan, covering all sectors. The former ballroom in Kilcormac is inline to be Fiesta Green HQ and with many aspects to their ambitious plans, find out more at: <https://greenoffaly.ie>

Deirdre Fox, Manager, of the recently opened Offaly Volunteer Centre, and in charge of the Ukrainian hub at the front of their premises in Tullamore, listed some multiple benefits of volunteering. It helps counteract negative feelings and anxiety, meet people with similar interests, boosts self-esteem,



Deirdre Fox, Manager, Offaly Volunteer Centre with Ciaran Mullooly and Rebekkah Keaveny, Green Offaly at the Offaly Public Participation Network (PPN) Plenary meeting.

makes use of one's special interests and talents, ultimately making a difference in your community. She said succinctly that, "no one makes it through life without someone else's help" and that volunteering opportunities are endless, ranging from working in a charity shop to being on a board of an organisation. Check out the OVC website for info: <https://volunteeroffaly.ie> Ciarán Mullooly, ex-RTÉ, spoke at length with impressive videos to back up his intensive local community involvement especially since his recent retirement, giving invaluable advice to all present, especially in relation to securing of essential funds for community development projects. He spoke in some detail of restarting

community activities after the slumber of Covid-19 with five community groups he is actively involved with along the Longford-Roscommon border. Referring to local communities throughout Offaly, with many volunteers from areas within the county present, reinvigorating their commitment he said, "everything is possible and it doesn't have to be this way" and that, "more than ever now is a time for leadership in communities." He added that, "if you wait for government...you will be waiting." He said "the arrival of Ukrainians is the most positive thing to happen in Ireland in a long time" and that it will prove to be an "absolute positive for our community."

In concluding he advised, "look around your community and ask: what do you want to change?" There followed a captivating Questions & Answers session with lively participation, discussing issues such as fuel poverty, South Offaly Special Olympics and the updates of Offaly PPN. A draw with a multitude of fabulous hampers provided by Hereford and More, Tullamore, ended proceedings on a high note with winners hailing from every corner of the county. A positively life-affirming event for those who are passionate about improving their communities, the next Offaly PPN Plenary meeting is planned for November 2022 (with details to follow later).

Ballinagar GAA

DIVISION 4 RESULT: Ballinagar 2-9, Kilcormac 2-9. Ballinagar: 1) Ryan Kinsahan 2) Brian Malone 3) David Mcelduff 4) Eoin McGuinness 5) Ryan Dunne 6) Declan Crombie 7) Kevin Beirne 8) Adam Joyce 9) Jack Shell 10) Ray Daly 11) Ronan Crombie 12) Jack Gorry 13) Michael James Pierce 14) Jacob Beatty 15) Robbie Gallagher. Subs used: Jamie Ballesty, Steven Dwane, Adam Mangan, Conor McGuinness.

DIVISION 5 RESULT: Ballinagar 4-10, St. Rynagh's 2-4. Ballinagar: 1) Michael James Pierce 2) Ross Colton (0-1) 3) Eric Martin 4) Ben Colton 5) Conor McGuinness (0-1) 6) Aaron Gorman 7) Shane Fineran 8) Dean Pierce (0-2) 9) Barry Crombie (2-2) 10) Shaun Martin Pierce 11) Garry Martin (1-3) 12) Barry Daly (1-0) 13) Jamie Ballesty. Subs used: Eric Sutherland(0-1), Leo Stafford, CJ Murphy.

ONLINE BINGO: Ballinagar online bingo continues every Wednesday night beginning 8pm. There is prize money of to €5,000 on offer. Books can be bought through the links on Ballinagar GAA Facebook page or the Instagram page. Books can be bought at the local shop. All books must be bought 2pm on Wednesday. We wish to thank everyone for continued support

Daingean Development Association's 'New Beginning'

Daingean Development Association began its restructuring with a successful meeting on in the Town Hall, well attended with representatives from many leading organisations in the town and surrounding areas.

As per Daingean Development Association's Action Plan 2021 (Launched in January 2021) and in response to Covid-19, a committee was made to address the needs of the community. The following areas were selected: Towns Group, Committee, Youth and Older Adults, Representatives. Representing these committees are the core of the Daingean Development Association. This will be a journey that will take time to achieve.

To date over 100 people have indicated interest in being involved. You can add your name

Charles a Spotify podcaster
in January 2020 and said at that time it was clear that history was repeating itself and that seems so evident now.
Offaly Topic reporter Ray Lucey interviewed him for two magazines, Changing Ireland and Travellers Voice. Charles allows interviewees ample time to tell their stories and all are worthwhile listens any time.
Daingean's second goal after the well worked move went the length the pitch, the final score 2-14 to 0-05 with Charlie scoring 2-03.
Players Used: S Daly, S Cocoman, C Brophy, R Duffy, J Kelly, R Conway, L O'Reilly, S Milne, D Mangan, C O'Reilly, J Hayes, C Hayes, C Evans, S Tierney, Connolly, A McCourt, C Carey, S Wright, J Duffy, R Marsh.
BINGO: Daingean GAA continue to run their weekly bingo this Sunday, April. It's €7 for entry with a total of €7,500 to be shared across all six games. A prize of €1000 in all games, get your books early and don't forget out. Bingo cards can be purchased from the link on our social media pages, and the Bingo can be streamed live on Facebook and Zoom.
ON GAA
pending nuptials of Conneely. Keep an eye on our social media updates.
Bingo every Sunday in Kilmurry, Kilmurry Common 8pm. A guaranteed! from Tullamore. Contact Eugene