



## First Annual ICP Golf Tournament!

Come and enjoy a day of golf and fun at our first annual ICP Golf Tournament to be held Saturday, Oct. 1st at Timber Ridge Golf Club in Brockport. (We have had golf tournaments in past, but this one promises to be fresh and different!)

We have a limited number of openings left, so if interested, please contact us ASAP!

**Date:** Saturday, October 1, 2016

**Time:** Registration starts at 8:30am. Shotgun start at 10:00am, lunch at the turn

**Place:** Timber Ridge Golf Course – 7061 W. Ridge Rd., Brockport N.Y.

**Cost:** \$85.00 per golfer - \$340 four-some, \$100.00 for a hole sponsor, \$440.00 for team & hole sponsor.

**Includes** lunch & dinner (provided by Outback Steak House), 18 holes of golf,

cart and beverages.

**Format:** 4-person Scramble

**Contests:** Putting Contest, Men's & Women's Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive, Bet the Green, Chinese Auction, 50/50 raffle, Prizes awarded to 1st, 2nd, and Last Place

Please RSVP as soon as possible, to either Dave Mashewske at [dgmash1972@yahoo.com](mailto:dgmash1972@yahoo.com) or Paul Donahue at [pdonahue70@me.com](mailto:pdonahue70@me.com), or call 683-5961.

Please make checks payable to: Irish Children's Program, Send to Dave Mashewske, 40 Ketchum St, Victor, NY 14564



## Message from Belfast ICP President – Clare Mercer



I first became aware of the Irish Children's Programme in 2002, when I was approached by a teacher at my school who asked if I would like to go to

America for the summer. Needless to say, the answer was yes!! Shortly after, I was invited to an evening of fun where I met lots of other young people who had also been given this amazing opportunity. The weeks passed and we all got to know each other better and learned things we didn't necessarily know about each other, our backgrounds and the communities we came from. Similarities and differences were both identified and accepted quite quickly. Soon it was time for the big trip, and our very excited group left Belfast to head for Rochester to meet our host families. I have such fond memories of my time all those years ago and will always be grateful for the people we met and opportunities afforded to me. I made life long friends and remained in contact over the years; and it was one

of these friends who approached me in 2015 to ask if I would be interested in joining the Belfast board. I was extremely pleased to be asked and was relieved to be reunited with some faces I recognised from all those years ago. The following summer, I had the pleasure of being offered to chaperone the children on their trip to Rochester. This was, for me, a trip of a lifetime, to be able to offer children the experience that I had been lucky to get and to once again see the people who had treated me with such love and generosity. It was a massive honour for me to be trusted by the parents to care for their sons and daughters and accompany them on their adventures. The parents were also encouraged to hear of my own experiences and know that I was once in the same situation and could provide first hand examples of the impact it had on my life. This year was my first as President of the Belfast Board, and what a year it's been! We had six amazing children chosen for the trip who matched perfectly with their host families. I have enjoyed hearing all the tales and viewing all the photographs

Cont'd. on Page 2

## "Peace Through Understanding"

### Special points of interest:

- > Consider hosting a Belfast child in July 2017!
- > Follow us on Facebook
- > Visit us at the Children's Book Fair at MCC on Nov 12 10-4:00



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## President's Message (cont'd. from Pg 1)



from another successful year of the Irish Children's Programme. Thanks must go to the board in America for all of the hard work they do all year long and the wonderful families they find for our children. I will forever be grateful for the chance to be involved back in 2002, now, and in the future.

Let's hope that many more years will follow, more children's lives can be improved by this programme and more families in Rochester can benefit from the great work of ICP !

## Summer Fun!



DONATIONS CAN BE MAILED TO  
ADDRESS ON LAST PAGE OR  
ONLINE AT OUR  
WEBSITE: [http://  
www.irishchildrensprogram.com](http://www.irishchildrensprogram.com)

Rochester Irish Children's  
Program

## TESTIMONIALS FROM FORMER HOST FAMILIES:

### Betty Motroni:

After I retired from teaching, I was missing children. My only daughter lived in California. I responded to an ad in the Democrat and Chronicle about an organization that hosted children from Belfast, Northern Ireland for a period of time in the summer months. That organization is "The Irish Children's Program of Rochester". My father's people came from County Armagh, just south of Belfast. I was curious about the program and the link it held to my family's past.

Because I no longer had children living at home, I was given two lovely girls. One is Protestant and the other is Catholic. As soon as we met one another, it was a home run!! We called ourselves the three amigos. They enjoyed my home and my activities. I learned a lot about their country and their lives. I had them return the following year and one of them even came back for a third time. We visited many places together. They met all the hard working, fun loving people in the program along with my neighbors, family, and friends. They became their neighbors and friends. The two of them also became close girlfriends. They discovered they had everything in common.

That was in 2005. We are all still fast friends. I have been to Belfast many times to visit and even stayed with one of their families. Their families and friends are mine, too. This past summer we all went to Dublin together. They were twelve years old when they came and now they are in their early twenties. If it hadn't have been for this wonderful program, my life and theirs would not have been so blessed. So if you are thinking about taking a child from Belfast to give love, room, and board to, you will get it back one hundred fold.

### The Kipp Family:



We decided to host a child through ICP because as a young girl, my family hosted a child through a similar program in Buffalo, New York. It was one of the best experiences of my life. It was also one of the best experiences of our Irish child as well, and I know that because 28 years later, as adults, we are not only still in touch, but close friends. She came back over for my wedding and we visited her a few years ago and met her family. Our lives are forever connected by that one summer.

Now, as parents and an ICP host family, we were thrilled to welcome a child from Belfast into our home. Our daughter absolutely loved the experience of having an "Irish sister" for five weeks. We were able to show our Irish child so much and let her experience an American summer. It was not a one way street however, and we also learned a great deal from her. She taught us about her life at home and her school and ultimately that children are children no matter where they are born or where they grow up.

I would recommend this program to any family - and I have! Five weeks goes by in a blink but you'll have memories for a lifetime.



## Our Program from Belfast Point of View

### INTERVIEW WITH BELFAST CHAPERONE HOLLY BURNS

by Angela Zale

**Q. We are all thankful that the violence in Northern Ireland is over. So, when people ask why we continue to bring children from Belfast, here to Rochester, what would you want to tell them? How relevant is the program for the kids at this time?**

A. It's a fabulous opportunity for kids at any age to come over and experience a different culture. It's particularly important how you're getting kids, who are separated into either Catholic or Protestant schools and neighborhoods, to bond over a period of time with each other. It's good even developing them socially because you don't necessarily have this opportunity until they're much older—if even.



Holly (on far right) with children from Belfast

Definitely for personal development it's beneficial. It's been going 34 years, has it? Keep going or it would be a complete waste; you're only doing good. What you're doing is very positive in both communities, in Rochester and in Belfast. So, I think it would be a great shame to stop. I say, let it continue as long as possible. It's great to see, as many of the ICP board members back home, came through the program as kids, and then came back as chaperones, and to see kids have the same experience they did. They're not the kid anymore, and they're seeing how the kids are benefitting from it.

When I'm meeting up with the kids here once a week, it's great to hear what they've done that week, what new things they've tried... it's been such a positive experience. It's very well done. The families have been absolutely brilliant, and well matched to the kids they've gotten, and they've all bonded brilliantly. There may be cultural differences, but it's not interfering.

**Q. How do the Belfast kids feel about each other now that they've gotten to know one another through the program? You said they never met before being chosen to come here, they attend different schools, and come from segregated communities. Have any of them spoken to you?**

A. They've done brilliant. I learned today that two of the kids that don't attend the same school, met up twice this week, and today's the third time in one week. When there's been no planned activity today, they've taken it upon themselves to arrange meet-ups. They've bonded so well, and they're making and developing further plans. It's great to see another of the kids, who is particularly more reserved, putting them self out there, and getting involved and planning activities with the others.

For the talent show today, two of the girls choreographed and practiced dance routines to perform. So the fact they've come up with that, on their own, it's great to see. And then the two Belfast boys, who came to stay with the two American host boys, didn't know each other outside of this, and they've gotten on so well, you'd think they were brothers. They're a really good match with the two American boys as well. They're so similar. The older one said of the younger, more energetic two, "They're like the same person, but one with an accent." So it just goes to show you, put kids the

same age together, it doesn't matter what religion they are, it doesn't matter what gender they are, or race even. It doesn't matter. They're kids. They have similar interests and want to share them. They want to share experiences. So, they leave everything at the door, and they just go ahead and take part. I don't know if it's naivety- I think it's just genuine happiness, like drive, to actually take part having fun.

**Q. *Do you think this is something you can keep alive back home in Belfast?***

**A.** I'm hoping there'll be a couple reunions, because I work in only one of their schools, and I want to see the other kids. It will be good to see kids in my school, and see if they've been interacting together. They're obviously the same age group, and it'll be great to see if they keep that relationship going. It would be wasteful not to.

**Q. *What do you think is still keeping the division alive?***

**A.** Its different for every family, but it does exist, and the kids hear it, and sense it, and maybe they can be biased in their viewpoints, or steered toward a certain direction of viewpoints. It's different in every case, whether they're going to take it on board or not.

**Q. *What could we, here in the Rochester ICP, do to help the Belfast ICP maintain the goal of "Peace Through Understanding, One Child at a Time."?***

**A.** It would be great to have more host families, so we can bring over more kids. 15 would be a good number to work with. Use word of mouth, social media and traditional methods, schools, parishes, to get the word out. I was out with Gina Michener and someone noticed her car magnet that said, "Ask Me About Hosting a Child from Belfast".

Keep up the good work, keep the program going. The project's brilliant. It's been a great experience, and it was fun to be part of it and see Rochester and meet different families and board members and learn the culture. And it's been great to take kids that weren't necessarily close, and weren't friends, but became friends because of this program. I feel any work you can do with kids is positive.

*"We cannot thank you enough for the generosity, experiences and opportunities you so kindly created for us, and we look forward to making future memories together.  
All our love from Belfast"*

*Still Have Questions?  
We've Got Answers...*

### **HOST FAMILY INFORMATION MEETING:**

**Sunday, Oct. 16**

**2:30—4:00 pm**

**Spiegel Recreation & Community Center**

**35 Lincoln Avenue, Pittsford, NY**

**(CHECK OUR WEBSITE & FACEBOOK PAGE  
FOR FUTURE DATES TO BE ADDED)**

Visit us on the Web: <http://www.irishchildrensprogram.com>  
and on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/irishchildrensprogram>



**IRISH CHILDREN'S  
PROGRAM**  
*of Rochester*

E-mail:  
[president@irishchildrensprogram.com](mailto:president@irishchildrensprogram.com)

**=> COME VISIT US AT OUR INFORMATION TABLE AT THE  
ROCHESTER CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL AT MCC ON NOV. 12  
<http://www.rochesterchildrensbookfestival.com/>**



**ICP Rochester Board Members—**

**Seated:** Bob Tucker, Kathy Salvati, Gina Michener (President), Kathy Danzinger, Cindy Storage. **Middle Row:** Stephanie Cassidy, Angela Zale, Sue Flanagan. **Top Row:** Tim Attridge, Paul Donahue, Dave Mashewske, Dave Kalbfus.

**Missing:** Tim Cassidy and Suzanne Donahue

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS BEING  
RECRUITED!**

**DONATIONS CAN BE  
MAILED TO RETURN  
ADDRESS BELOW OR  
ONLINE AT OUR  
WEBSITE**

Irish Children's Program of Rochester  
PO Box 22983  
Rochester, NY 14692

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