



# Glanmire Area News

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## ELEVATE CREDIT UNION ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH ENERGY SAVINGS SOLUTIONS COMPANY SE SYSTEMS

The partnership will allow Elevate members who secure green loans from the Credit Union to save up to €37,500 through SEAI Grants on green home products.

Elevate Credit Union has announced a partnership with SE Systems, a leading provider of energy saving solutions. The partnership will allow Elevate members to avail of a grants package up to the value of €37,500 to undertake a deep energy upgrade of their home, seeing their Building Energy Rating (BER) increase to a B2 or better.

The partnership means that Elevate Credit Union members will be able to avail of services such as the installation of solar PV panels or a deep retro fit, all at their credit union. Elevate will be offering Green Loans also to people interested in the scheme.

Gary Hanrahan, Business Development and Marketing Manager at Elevate Credit Union said: "We are basically creating a one stop shop for our members who want to go green. This partnership with SE Systems will take the hassle out of undertaking green energy upgrade works on a property."

...continued on page 5



Gary Hanrahan, Business Development and Marketing Manager at Elevate Credit Union with John O'Leary, CEO of SE Systems and Jason Collins, Technical Director at SE Systems at the launch of a partnership between Elevate Credit Union and energy savings solutions company, SE Systems. The partnership will allow Elevate members to avail of a grants package up to the value of €37,500 to undertake a deep energy upgrade of their home. Photo: Brian Lougheed

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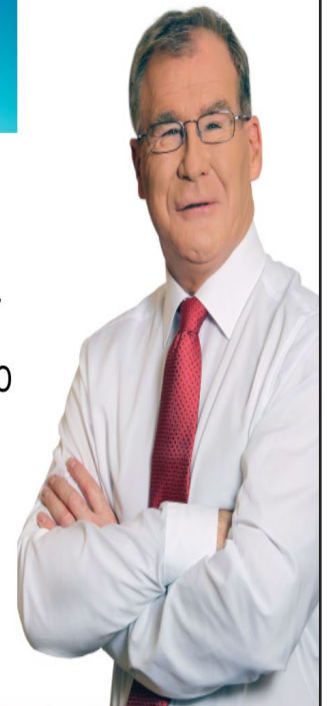
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*Colm Burke*



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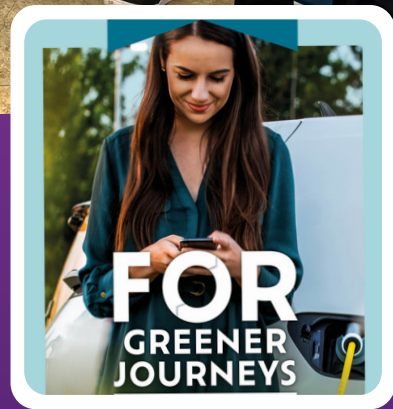
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Our Lady Crowned Credit Union Limited is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Loans are subject to approval. If you do not meet the repayments on your loan, your account will go into arrears. This may affect your credit rating which may limit your ability to access credit in the future with all financial institutions.

# Glanmire Macra

Glanmire Macra has been keeping busy since our last update. With festive events, a big national title win and plenty more events planned over the next few weeks.

We kept it festive over Christmas with a trip to Wonderlights in Fota. This was a great experience for everyone who attended, walking along the magnificent light trail. We went to the Marina Market too, where our members did some ice skating followed by food in the market. Everyone had a great time, but some of our ice skating skills might need a bit of improvement. To ring in the new year, some members heading to the Macra Ball in Clonmel and others to the Macra Ball in Portlaoise. Both events had great food and entertainment and it was a brilliant way to start the year out.

2025 has already started off well. With John Lonergan and Zara Long both from Glanmire Macra, representing Cork in the Aurivo Northwest Kings and Queens competition on the 18th of January, representing Glanmire and Cork excellently. With Zara ultimately coming 3rd! This was a brilliant way to start the year and We are now looking forward to plenty more competitions and events in 2025.

We will also be keeping busy over the next few weeks, with a walk planned for the 2nd of February and a new members night in February too where you can try out Axe Throwing! To shake off the winter cobwebs we will also be organising a couch to 5k in March. Keep an eye on any of our Social Media accounts for updates on these. If you are interested in coming along to any of these events feel free to reach out to us on any of our social media accounts or by contacting us at [glanmiremacra@gmail.com](mailto:glanmiremacra@gmail.com). We would love to see you there.

Our weekly social sports night continues in Little Island Sports Complex every Wednesday from 7.30-9pm. Where we play a range of sports. Everyone is welcome, entry is €5 but your first night is free.



Aurivo Northwest Kings and Queens competition. Zara Long left who came 3rd and John Lonergan right



Post Skating chat at Marina Market

## Elevate Credit Union announces partnership with SE Systems

...continued from page 1

John O’Leary, CEO of SE Systems said:

“We are delighted to partner with Elevate Credit Union on this venture. As part of the partnership, SE Systems will manage all aspects of the energy upgrade work for a member from design, grant administration, project management, through to project completion.”

Elevate Credit Union is introducing additional financial incentives for neighbours who undertake three or more energy projects together, offering a special community interest rate. This initiative aims to encourage collaborative efforts for sustainable home upgrades. Further details can be arranged directly with Elevate Credit Union’s loans manager.

Jason Collins, Technical Director at SE Systems added: “There are huge savings to be achieved by installing solar PV panels. For example, a two bed semi-detached house facing south with 10 solar panels could generate enough electricity a year to save €1,150 off your electricity bills. With those kinds of savings, the system will have paid for itself in just under four and a half years.”

Elevate is holding two information evenings on Tuesday, 28th January in Douglas GAA Club and Thursday, 30th January in Sarsfields Hurling Club at 7pm. The loan that members can avail of will be on a green loan rate of 5.99% (6.19% APR).

Elevate Credit Union offers members access to a wide network of branches and a broad range of financial products including

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SE Systems is a leading provider of energy solutions, dedicated to reducing energy costs and delivering customised energy-efficient projects across Ireland. The Cork-based company retrofitted 1,200 homes in 2024 with the average grant to homeowners being €21,600.

# WINTER STYLING 2025

**Lynda Di Blasi**

IMAGE CONSULTANT, PERSONAL STYLIST, PERSONAL SHOPPER [www.lyndadiblasia.ie](http://www.lyndadiblasia.ie)



## This month lets discuss male styling tips:

Layering different textures from a smart polo shirt or shirt, good quality knitted jumper to a smart polished overcoat can be your wardrobe essentials that will result in you looking smart for the season ahead.

Invest in a tailored overcoat or a wool blazer this time of year a bargain can be picked up. Looking at the tags for good quality, wool percentage, merino lamb's wool, neutral tones like navy, charcoal, or camel are timeless shades for any age. Pair it with a classic cashmere sweater or a half zip collar to add texture and warmth. Layering not only keeps you comfortable but also adds depth to your outfit. Be aware chunky knits can add volume to your body so chose a fine knitted jumper if this is more flattering.

## 2. Revisit Your Denim Game

If you're still wearing the same jeans from a decade ago, it might be time for an upgrade. The brand of Levis 501 are still as popular as ever and have proved a worthy investment in terms of fit and quality. Consider cost per wear, if a pair of jeans is 130euro and you wear them thirteen times that three euro per wear. Straight leg and dark wash are always a popular option with my shopping clients.

These styles are flattering, versatile, and age-appropriate, whether you're dressing up with a blazer or keeping it casual with a sweater and sneakers.

## 3. Shoes That Make the Man

A good pair of shoes can elevate your entire look. Swap worn-out trainers for leather sneakers, Chelsea boots, or brogues. These options strike the perfect balance between style and functionality and work well with both casual and semi-formal outfits.

### Matching Shoes to Outfits:

#### Quick Tips

**1. Formal Events:** Black or dark brown Oxfords are your go-to for black-tie events and formal business settings.

**2. Business Casual:** Brogues pair seamlessly with chinos or tailored trousers.

**3. Smart Casual:** Loafers or Chelsea boots with dark jeans and a blazer strike the perfect balance.

**4. Casual Outings:** Pair light or dark sneakers or suede loafers with chinos or jeans for a laid-back, stylish look.



## 4. Accessories with Purpose



Accessories can make or break an outfit. A quality leather belt, a sleek watch, or a well-chosen scarf can

instantly elevate your style. These can be investment pieces that will last a lifetime. Having a working day to day watch and a more expensive alternative adds a sense of elevation to your look.

## 5. Declutter and Rebuild Your Wardrobe

This is the perfect month to declutter your closet and make space for quality pieces that truly serve you. Let go of outdated, ill-fitting clothes and invest in versatile staples like crisp white shirts, tailored trousers, and timeless knitwear.

### Final Tip: Confidence is Key

Take pride in your appearance and choose clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident.

February is your opportunity to elevate your outfits and your wardrobe. Step into the month ahead with a look that truly represents who you are. Express your personality through your outfits. Confidence in your image will radiate into your personal and professional goals also.

**Contact me on 086 -2599539 if you would like to discuss style, wardrobe declutter, make up, color analysis, personal shopping**

Email: [lyndadiblasia@yahoo.com](mailto:lyndadiblasia@yahoo.com)

Check out my website [www.lyndadiblasia.com](http://www.lyndadiblasia.com) for various packages.

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Lynda Di Blasi

Fifty-two years after presenting the Billy O'Neill Cup to the Munster Council, Sarsfields Hurling Club reclaimed the trophy on 1 December 2024 when they won the AIB Munster GAA Hurling Senior Club Championship Final, defeating Ballygunner. Sarsfields have a long, rich tradition on the GAA pitch stretching back to the last decade of the nineteenth century. Although narrowly missing out on the 2024-25 All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship on 19 January 2025, the team's determination will enable this group of players to make another attempt next year.

The club was officially registered in 1896 but the clash of the ash reverberated around the Glashaboy valley long before and well before the establishment of the Gaelic Athletic Association in November 1884. Billy O'Neill of Sarsfield's Court was instrumental in the club's foundation. O'Neill was a talented sportsman, playing Gaelic football with O'Briens and rugby with Cork Constitution. Indeed, local folklore suggests that Cork Constitution jerseys were borrowed for early matches and the colours of blue, black and white remain today.



Figure 1: Billy O'Neill (courtesy of Sarsfield's GAA)

Billy O'Neill was born in Sarsfield's Court in August 1876 to John and Margaret (née Goulding). He was a skilled athlete who frequently competed in and triumphed in the

440 and 880 yard races. In fact, at the Riverstown sports held in August 1899, he easily won the 880 yards, with thirty yards to spare over the man in second, D. Duggan of Blarney. His speed and agility meant he was a regular on the rugby and Gaelic fields. On 7 December 1901, he played with Cork Constitution at their grounds at the Lough. According to newspaper reports, rain fell during the match, making the ball quite slippery. Despite this, Billy managed to score an unconverted try, helping Con secure an easy victory with a result of eight points to nil. Billy also won All-Ireland medals in hurling in 1902 and 1903. In the 1902 final, he played on the Cork side (Dungourney) against London-Irish where they were successful winning 3-13 to no score.

In 1903, an article in the Cork Examiner noted that Sarsfields had secured an enclosed field at Riverstown from Mr. Canavan. To defray the expenses incurred in the preparation of the grounds, 'a very interesting concert' was held in the local schools. The opening act consisted of children of the Irish class, under the conductorship of Jeremiah Neenan. The youngsters regaled the audience with a rendition of Fainne Geal an Lae.

Billy O'Neill continued playing with Sars, having rescinded his rugby career with the introduction of the 'foreign sports' ban. Though, it was on foreign shores that he played in 1910 when

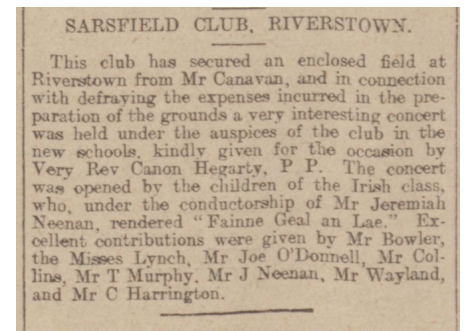


Figure 2: Cork Examiner, 20 February 1903

Cork hurlers participated in an exhibition of 'Irish national pastimes' during the Pan Celtic Congress in Belgium and Holland, even though he may have been dismayed to note that Sir James Murray's Dictionary defined hurling as 'In Ireland the same as hockey!' Nevertheless, the hurlers of Tipperary and Cork ensured that the difference between hurling and hockey was highlighted when they went to war on 30 August 1910 on 'the historic battle-field of Fontenoy'. Cork, with the aid of Billy O'Neill, were the victors by a point.

Billy O'Neill married Catherine Deasy on 24 November 1914 in Glounthaune and remained a loyal supporter of Sars right up to his death on 24 April 1963, as do his ancestors. Billy and all the other stalwarts of Sarsfields GAA, including Teddy Mc (the club will honour Teddy by naming their club grounds in Riverstown after him, on Saturday, 5 April 2025) will surely be urging the current crop of hurlers to show resilience to go again for the 2025-26 campaign.



Figure 3: The iconic Teddy McCarthy.

February is one of those months where you want to start gardening again, but the weather may not cooperate. The evenings are getting longer and the birds are singing, and hopefully St Bridgid has smiled upon us.

One of the biggest mistakes we can make is to walk on a waterlogged garden. This can cause drainage problems later on and also lead to excess Moss on lawns.

From the middle of this month, I tend to start sowing all my seeds.

This year I am hoping to use all organic seeds from Irish suppliers. I am going to grow several different types of tomatoes, from cherry types right up to the beefsteak type. I will also be sowing and growing lots of salads and herbs as well as onions.



The one crop that I will grow is Potatoes. You cannot beat fresh new potatoes straight from the pot with butter and salt. There are many different varieties of potatoes, but I think the tastiest early potatoes are British Queens.

You can also buy blight resistant potatoes. If you plant early potatoes then they should be harvested before blight strikes.



Nowadays I only grow what my family like to eat.

I also sow a lot of flower seeds as well. Mainly bedding plants, like Geraniums, Bissie Lissies, as well as Lobelia and Marigolds. All these seeds germinate quite well given a little heat and light.

When sowing any seeds I use a propagator with a clear lid and germinate them indoors, but out of direct sunlight, and keep an eye open for dampening off. This is caused by too much moisture in or around the seedlings, and inadequate ventilation and the seedlings being too leggy or weak.



You do not need to sow all your seeds at once, but do it over a period of a few weeks. Time is still on your side. Just make sure you have enough space to keep all the seedlings once they start to grow, and you need to pot them on.

In the fruit garden finish all your pruning and dispose of any diseased stems. It is also very easy to take cuttings of the pruned stems like Gooseberries and all the Currant family. Each cutting should be about 25cm long and cut below a bud. Insert the cutting into a large pot of compost or into good garden soil, and leave them until October. Then you can plant them where you would like them to grow.

All Raspberries should be tied up to wires or stakes and mulched for the coming season.

In the shrubbery finish any pruning that needs to be done (Roses) and look for any damaged or diseased wood and remove it. Now is a good time to mulch your shrubs and remove any obvious weeds. If possible try and do this from a path, or lay down a plank on the soil, and walk on that to avoid compaction.

In the Herbaceous bed remove any old foliage from plants that have died down. This will allow the new shoots free reign. This is also a good time for lifting and dividing those Herbaceous plants, that have either got too big or have spread out too far. Plants Like Hostas, Michaelmas Daises, Phlox etc.

### Jobs for February

1. Sow flower and veg. seeds.
2. Mulch your shrubs.
3. Finish pruning your fruit.
4. Divide Herbaceous plants.
5. Keeps paths clean from Moss and Algae.
6. Wash and clean any pots that you will be using this season.
7. Buy good quality seeds and plants.
8. Buy your seed potatoes and chit them.
9. Enjoy your garden.

Chris Troy



# Glashaboy Flood Relief Scheme

**SORENSEN**

On behalf of Sorensen Civil Engineering, we would like to wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Thank you to all residents, shoppers, and businesses in the area for their patience and cooperation throughout the year.

We wish you a happy and prosperous New Year.

Please see below update on the works being carried out by Sorensen Civil Engineering for the Glashaboy Flood Relief Scheme.

## Hazelwood Road and Shopping Centre

- Two-way traffic will continue on Hazelwood Road and R639 until the New Year.
- Please note that there will be three-way stop/go traffic management in place from Thursday 2nd January, with two flagmen on the R639 and one at Hazelwood Junction, for approx. four weeks.

## New Line & Copper Valley Vue

- The New Line Road is now open, and traffic is no longer being diverted through the Copper Valley Vue estate. Please note that STOP signs are in place when exiting Copper Valley Vue to join the New Line Road.
- From Thursday 2nd of January, there will be two-way stop/go traffic management on the New Line Road, adjacent to Brooklodge Culvert, for approx. three weeks.

- The temporary bridge will be in operation until the New Year.
- The L-2964 New Line Road, Brooklodge East Road (by O'Connell's Transport) will remain fully closed until March 2025.

If you have any questions on the work being carried out by Sorensen, contact me directly on 086 032 6171.

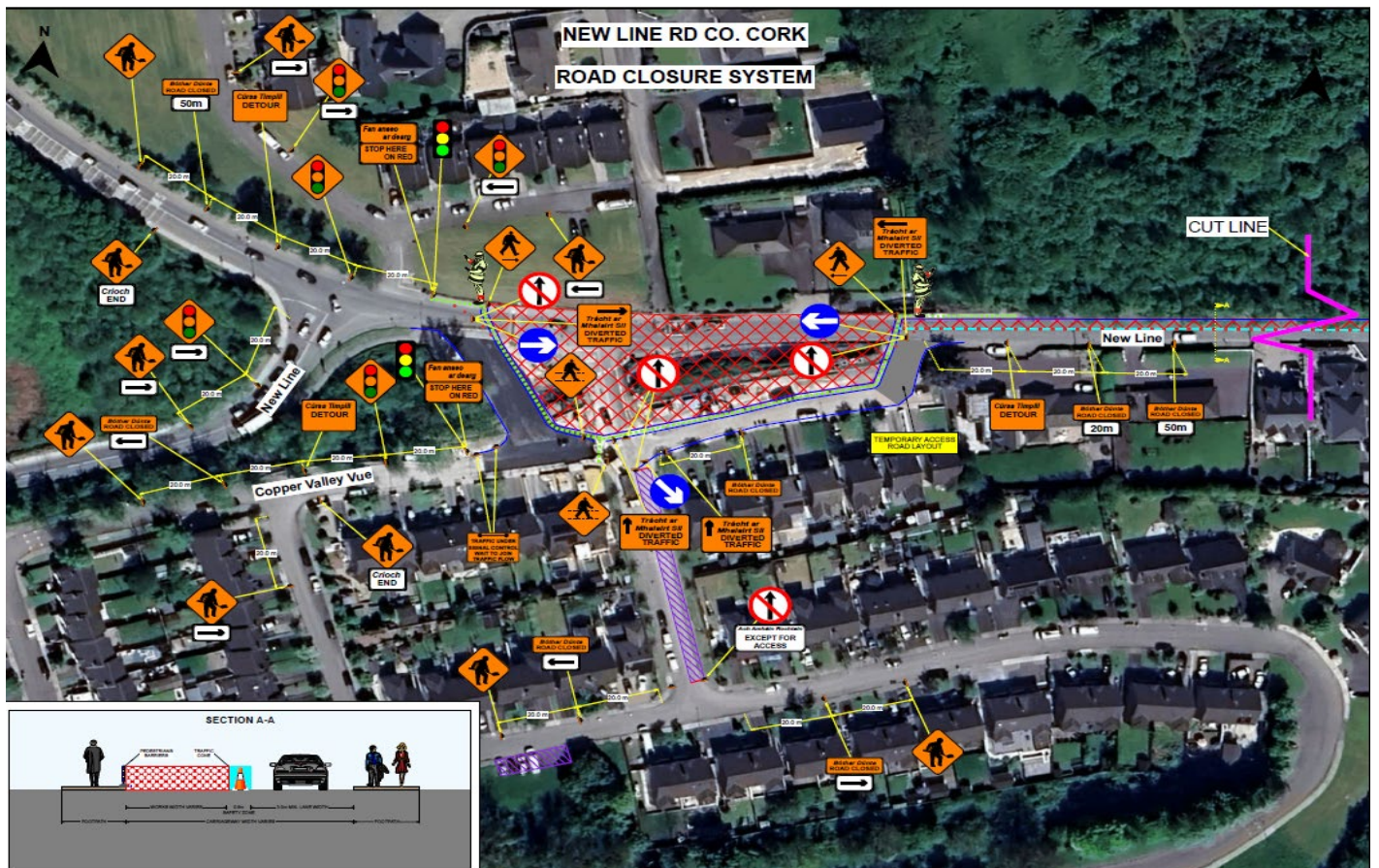
**This information is subject to change, and I will update you again if there are any changes for the coming month.**

On behalf of the entire Sorensen team, I would like to thank residents, businesses, pedestrians and motorists for their continued patience, support, and cooperation.

If you would like to be kept informed, we would encourage you to sign up to our FREE Text Alert service.

You can do this by sending : GFRS to 50015.

If you would like to join a Facebook group to receive GFRS work updates, please click the below link, and hit the Join Group button: <https://www.facebook.com/share/S1ZNir1EDfV3147a/>



# Glanmire Library



At Glanmire Library, we run Lego Club for all ages every Saturday morning, from 11.30am - 12.30pm

This is a free play hour, so children can express and build what they wish, it also gives them the opportunity to meet other children and boost their social skills.

It is open to all ages, Lego is provided and it's a free to attend.

Hoping to see you there!



**NEW YEAR  
NEW READS!**



## What's on in Glanmire Library

- Crochet.....1st Thursday of the month at 10.30
- Knitting .....3rd Wednesday of the month.11am
- Sallybrook Seniors .....1st Wednesday of the month..10.30.
- Scrabble ..... Thursdays at 10.30
- Lego & chess. ....Saturdays at 11.30
- Music Morning.....3rd Tuesday of the month at 11am
- Book Club .....4th Tuesday of the month.

Why not come along on Saturday morning and join our chess club who had a great showing in this years "Festival of Chess "in the city Hall in December. Well done to all who participated!

For more information please enquire at the desk.



glanmire\_library@corkcity.ie



# UPPER 1979 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION GLANMIRE



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A talk outlining the origins and some stories of the townlands of the area

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A table quiz in aid of Marymount Hospice will be held in the Boothouse bar on March 7th. Tables of 4 are €50.

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Entries are now being accepted for our St. Patrick's Day Parade.

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## UPPER GLANMIRE

# BINGO

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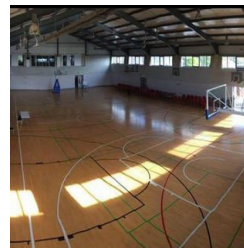
## BOOKING OF SPORTS HALL/CONCERT HALL

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# Glanmire and Sarsfields Healthy Clubs



## Every Step Counts

### What are the Benefits?

Participating in Every Step Counts gives you a goal to achieve for yourself, and for your community. Getting active, with healthy eating, can help to improve overall health. Collaborating with others, can create a sense of pride, as well competitiveness when neighbours nearby are tracking ahead of us on the Munster Leaderboard 😊



### What are the Prizes?

According to Irish Life, being active deserves to be rewarded. This year, they will donate €30,000 to club funding. In each province, there are 3x€2,500 donations available. If our Glanmire & Sarsfields team tracks >4,000km on the MyLife app during Every Step Counts, our clubs will be entered into the draw in Munster.

### How to Register?

Download the MyLife app in the App Store or Google Play. Search MyLife by Irish Life. To join Every Step Counts 2025, tap My Challenges > Available Challenges > Select Your Province > Search your club team

## Ireland Lights Up

Our Healthy Clubs team will host our 3rd Annual Ireland Lights Up walking challenge every Weds from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Jan. Join us in GCC at 6.45pm where we will warm-up and walk loops of the walking track. Get those steps in!



## GOAL Mile

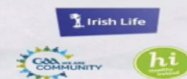
On the 27th of December, we hosted our 2nd GOAL Mile. We are very grateful to our community who raised €630 online & donations in the collection bucket on the day



All of our Club Members and our Community are welcome to our events.



Health is at the heart of every club



### Sarsfields Camogie Club Notes

Congratulations to Niamh Fennessy, Abbey O'Connell, Ruby Allen, Rebecca Dwane and Kasey Harris O'Brien who are part of the Imokilly U14 Development panel for 2025.

Fr Pat & Fr Martin welcomed our six Cork Senior & Intermediate All Ireland winning panellists with the O'Duffy & Jack McGrath cups to 10.30am Mass in Springhill recently. This was a lovely occasion and many thanks to Fr Pat for facilitating.

Molly Lynch appeared on the Late Late RTE Gaa Special recently representing Cork Camogie and winning All Ireland captains. Well done Molly, you did the Club & County proud.

Sars had four Reardens All Stars Camogie Stars Team of the Year recipients (Ava Fitzgerald, Lucy Allen, Lucy Kelly & Orlaith Mullins) and two hurling awards (Luke Elliott & Daniel Hogan). Congrats to all.

Niamh Quirke is flying the flag on the Cork U16B team and performed very well in recent Munster Semi Final win over Clare. Best of luck to Niamh for the rest of the campaign.



Niamh, Abbey, Ruby, Rebecca & Kasey



Springhill Mass



Cork Senior & Intermediate Cups



Molly and Family



Late Late Show GAA Special



Sars Reardens Recipients



# Sarsfields Camogie Club



# Erin's Own Ladies Club



## Intercounty Players

Congratulations Megan, Niamh, Orlaith, Eabha, Saoirse and Jenny on making the Cork Minor Football Team for 2025 and also well done to Saoirse on making the Cork Minor Camogie team. Aimee Corcoran continues to represent us on the Cork Senior football panel again this year. We wish all the girls every success in the coming months and are delighted to have so many girls representing us at such a high level.

## Imokilly Players

Well done to Caoimhe who was selected for the Imokilly U14 Hub Panel and to Zoe and Lydia who were selected for the Imokilly U15 Hub Panel. Zoe and Lydia played v Carrigdhoun in a challenge match recently. We wish all three girls the best of luck as they head to the Cork Hubs for training which is coming up shortly.



## FIONA TWOMEY SOLICITORS

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## Playing Matters

The month of January is the quietest month of the year in terms of playing matters. Presently there are no matches and none of our teams have yet to return to training. Our adult teams are delaying their return this year as the season is now so long. They plan to start training in mid-February with the first round of the City Division leagues scheduled to take place on the first weekend of March.

The under 21 football championship is likely to take place in February. However, at the time of writing, no draw has taken place and no fixture or dates have been announced.

Underage games will also commence from the start of March onwards.

## Championship Draws

The City Division board have made their championship draws and for the first time in their history the opening rounds will be played in a Round Robin format. This is replacing the open-draw and backdoor format that has been in place since 2001.

Our Junior A hurlers have been drawn in a three team group with Passage and Blackrock. We had a memorable game against Passage in the 2024 championship where, after dominating the game for long periods, we ended up losing by the narrowest margins after conceding four goals in the final quarter. Our previous championship match against Blackrock was a Junior B final in 2017 where we won by three points.

The Junior A football championship is played for the Joe O'Callaghan Cup named of course after our former club president. Here we have been drawn against Douglas, the championship winners of 2024, and St Michaels, a team that have regraded from the premier county junior championship.

Our second adult football team, having won the Junior C championship in 2024, will make the step up to play in the Junior B championship. Again, we have been drawn in a group containing the champions of 2024; namely Douglas as well as Nemo Rangers.

All of these games will take place from the month of August onwards.

## Puc Fada

A record number took part in our annual puc fada on St. Stephen's Day. This year all funds raised were donated to Marymount Hospice. We also had a Puc Gearr for our junior members on the club grounds. The winners of the primary competition for the John Hickey Perpetual Cup were Adam Dunne, Chris Dunne and Aaron Lehane. Kathleen Hickey and other members of the Hickey family were present. John's grandson PJ O'Donovan presented the cup. Juliann Hayes, Niamh Collins and Annette Magner won the Ladies Competition. The Juvenile Girls Competition was won by Olivia Looney, Ruby Forrest and Abby Forde. The Rowan O'Connell Perpetual Cup was presented by the late Rowan's father Don to the overall Juvenile Winners. The

winning team here comprised of Joe Cuglan, Tommy Forrest and James Linehan. It was great to have so many attend and to enjoy it so much. However, the competition does not organise itself. Thanks to all those that organised, marshalled, helped make soup and sandwiches, promoted etc. Happy New Year to all!



White's Cross GAA Puc Fada winners from St Stephen's Day



# Tell me a Story with Eleanor O’Kelly-Lynch

Storytelling is one of the oldest and most powerful ways of connecting with others. From ancient cave paintings through to the 21st century, people have always wanted to share their experiences, ideas, and emotions through stories. Whether you’re writing a book, a play, a poem, or a speech, storytelling is a skill worth cultivating and can help you communicate effectively with others.

This month, I’ll break down the basics of storytelling and how to begin your own creative process. At its heart, every story contains a few basic elements that form the building blocks you’ll use to craft a compelling tale:

- **Characters:** The people who drive your story forward should have desires, motivations, and flaws. Readers need to care about what happens to them for the story to be effective.

- **Setting:** The setting creates the world your characters inhabit and provides context for the plot. A strong setting can add depth to your story.

- **Plot:** The sequence of events that unfold in the story. The plot is typically driven by a central conflict—something challenges your characters and forces them to change or grow.

- **Conflict:** The central problem or challenge that drives the plot. Without conflict, there’s little to push the characters forward, and the story risks feeling flat. Conflict can be internal (a character’s inner struggle) or external (a challenge posed by another character, the environment, or society).

- **Theme:** The underlying message or lesson of the story. The theme reflects the deeper meaning of the story and often addresses universal human experiences such as love, loss, identity, or hope.

**1. Start with an idea.** Every story begins with an idea. This can come from anywhere: an image, a line in a newspaper, a question, or even an event from your own life. Inspiration often strikes when you least expect it, but once you have that initial spark, the key is to let your imagination take over.



Ask yourself questions like:

- What if...?
- How would someone react to this situation?
- What if something unexpected happened?

For example, if you’re inspired by a news story about a scientist discovering a new breakthrough drug that, you might ask, ‘What effects could this have? This question could be the starting point for a dark or hopeful story.

**2. Characters** are the heart of any story. To begin, think about who your main character is and what they want. What stands in their way? Consider the supporting characters—those who will challenge or interact with the main character. Characters should feel like real people with emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and flaws.

**3. Conflict.** Every good story needs conflict – it makes the plot exciting. Conflict can be physical (danger), emotional (overcoming self-doubt), or relational (facing hassle from a friend or colleague).

**4. Build a Structure.** Structure provides a useful roadmap for ensuring your story has a clear beginning, middle, and end. For example, the ‘Three-Act Structure,’ breaks the story into three distinct parts:

- **Act 1:** This is where you introduce the characters, the setting, and the conflict.
- **Act 2:** The Confrontation – The

main part of the story, where your character faces trouble and struggle, leading to moments of tension and crisis.

- **Act 3:** The Resolution – The climax where your character confronts the challenge head-on.

**5. Revise and Refine.** The first draft is about getting the story down. Afterwards, you can come back to it with fresh eyes. Revising is an essential part of the writing process. This is where you’ll fine-tune characters, strengthen dialogue, make any changes, and ensure the plot flows smoothly. Top authors all say: revise, revise, revise.

**6. Experiment and Find Your Voice.** Storytelling is a creative endeavour, and there’s no one ‘right way’ to do it. As you begin, feel free to try something new and push boundaries. Most importantly, find your own voice as a storyteller—the one that feels like the real you.

**7. Share Your Stories.** Share your work with others. Whether through blogging, writing groups, or submitting to magazines or literary journals, sharing your stories allows you to receive feedback and connect with an audience.

Just remember this: storytelling requires practice, patience, and passion. By mastering the basics—the elements, structure, and characters—you’ll be well on your way to creating powerful stories that resonate with others. So, pick up your pen and let your imagination lead the way.

Happy February and keep writing

Eleanor

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Eleanor O’Kelly-Lynch is an author, living in Glanmire. Her novels, ‘The Girl with Special Knees’ and ‘The Girl with Stars in Her Eyes’ are available in Silver Bow, Glanmire, Middleton Books, Fermoy Books, Easons, Mahon Point, Vibes and Scribes, on [www.eleanorokellylynch.ie](http://www.eleanorokellylynch.ie), Amazon, Kindle and [www.buythebook.ie](http://www.buythebook.ie)

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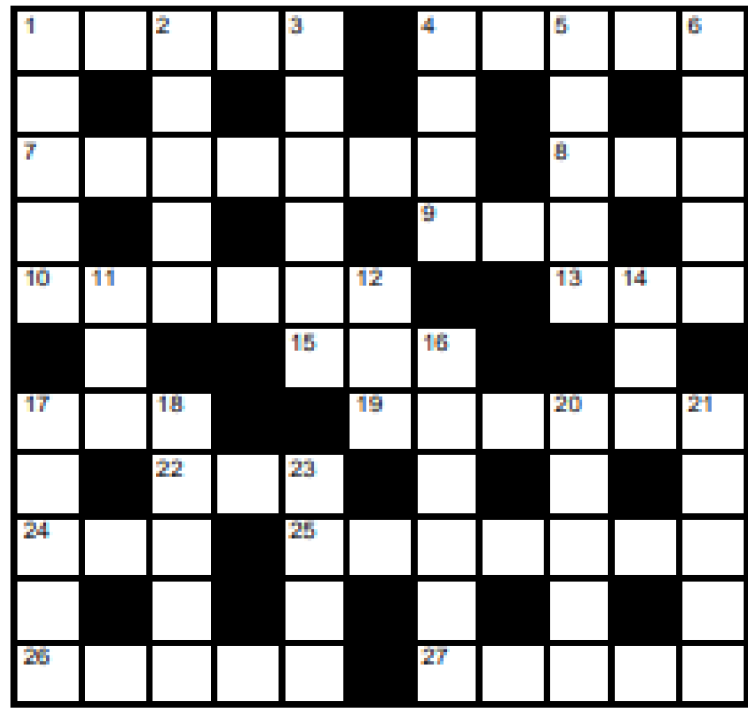
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# Crossword Puzzle



### Across

1. Unexpected stroke of luck (5)
4. Biblical twin brother of Esau (5)
7. Triggers immune response (7)
8. Large, flightless Australian bird (3)
9. Conclude or finish (3)
10. Lacking adult sophistication (6)
13. Spherical celestial object (3)
15. Matter with no fixed shape (3)
17. Mischievous little devil (3)
19. Flashing light device (6)
22. Country with 50 states (3)
24. Parcel of land (3)
25. Single attempt or try (3,4)
26. Unit of weight (5)
27. Very small or tiny (5)

### Down

1. Former French currency (5)
2. Up to a certain time (5)
3. Festive holiday drink (6)
4. Sixth month of the year (4)
5. Set of beliefs (5)
6. Brief promotional description (5)
11. Limb with a hand (3)
12. Past of "is" (3)
14. Curved bone in the chest (3)
16. Public road in a city (6)
17. Eskimo snow house (5)
18. Feigned or pretended (3-2)
20. Earthy yellow pigment (5)
21. Act of entering (5)
23. Of the highest quality (1-3)

Crossword sponsored by **BOOTHOUSE**



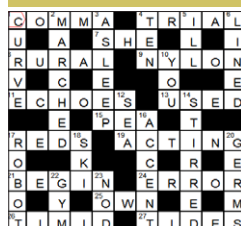
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January Crossword Winner: **Claire O'Sullivan, Riverstown, Glanmire**



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