



**milwaukee
irish fest**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kathleen Iverson
414-459-3946
publicrelations@irishfest.com

Irish Fest Summer School announces new schedule
Classes and experiences as rich as Ireland's history

MILWAUKEE – July 21, 2009 – Irish traditions are known the world over, and now you can capture the culture at the Milwaukee Irish Fest Summer School August 10 – 14 at the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE). Pick up a tin whistle, learn Celtic calligraphy, put on your dancing shoes, get fluent in simple Irish greetings, or experience a Northern Ireland cultural sampler and more—and enjoy all things Irish for all ages.

Now in its 23rd year, Summer School classes complement the 29th annual Irish Fest, which takes place August 13 – 16 at Henry W. Maier Festival Park on Milwaukee's lakefront.

This year's Summer School features a few new twists, such as evening classes and one-day music workshops. "Participants have a rare opportunity to learn from expert performers from all over the globe," said Jane Walrath, coordinator of the Irish Fest Summer School. "Whether students are new learners or advanced, they'll gain experience in Irish instrumental technique—and have fun doing it."

Other courses include:

- A Friday morning sampler for children, which features a craft class, a culture class, and a concert given by legendary Northern Ireland singer/songwriter Tommy Sands
- Three genealogy topics in three days, showing participants the many records available in church-related sources, how to use deed indexes, and resources to help solve naming problems
- Intermediate and advanced Aran knitting, led by Rosaleen Hegarty, who formed Cranaknits, a major supplier of hand knits to Irish stores such as O'Maille's
- Irish social dances, including ceilis, sets, figures and country dances of Ireland
- Beginning Irish language lessons, taught by Ray Mac Mánaís, the principal of Gael Scoil in the Dublin area and speech writer and Irish language advisor to Ireland's president, Mary McAleese
- An assortment of beginning, intermediate and advanced music classes in bodhran, fiddle, flute, guitar, tin whistle, Sean Nós song, and percussion.

In past years, Irish Fest Summer School's guest teachers have included Eamon O Cuiv, Ireland's minister of the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs; Tommy Graham, editor of *History Ireland* magazine; author/actor Malachy McCourt; fiddle virtuosos, Liz Carroll and John Doyle; Grammy Award winning whistle and flute player, Joanie Madden; and acclaimed *Riverdance* performer, Jean Butler.

- more -

For more information visit irishfest.com or call Barb Breed-Heidt at (262) 227-6538.

About Milwaukee Irish Fest

Milwaukee Irish Fest is the world's largest celebration of Irish music and culture, showcasing more than 100 entertainment acts annually at the four-day, 16-stage event at the Henry W. Maier Festival Park on Lake Michigan. Passionately committed to igniting a love of Irish culture in all people, Irish Fest teaches Ireland's music, dance, drama, sports, culture, children's activities, and genealogy at the festival and through year-long programming. For more information, visit irishfest.com.

###