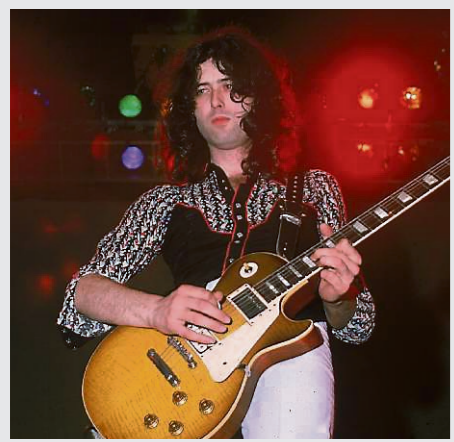


# Cork outsiders



Tribute: Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin.

## Days of Percussion to be held at School of Music

THE Percussion Department at the Cork School of Music has announced that the 2017 Day of Percussion will be held on Sunday, February 5, in the CIT Cork School of Music on Union Quay. The day will consist of master-classes and a concert, covering a wide range of musical styles from Cuban percussion to Timpani, Jazz drumming to a Led Zeppelin tribute. Admission is free. A statement from the Cork School of Music said: "We have a spectacular line-up of performers and educators. Chris Ridley will be giving a Timpani master-class at 2:30pm. Chris has held the top two posts in the timpani world, playing with the orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan for four years before taking up the position of Timpanist at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 2008. All this before he was 30. He has performed under the baton of conductors Papano, Muti, Maazel, Barenboim, Boulez, Jansons & Nelsons."

## Anxiety link to cancer risk

SUFFERING anxiety and depression could increase the risk of dying from cancer, research suggests. Experts analysed data for 163,363 men and women who were free from cancer at the start of the study, of whom 4,353 went on to die from the disease. The results showed that people categorised as the most distressed - such as suffering anxiety or depression - were a third more likely to die from a range of cancers than those who were least distressed. The cancer types included bowel, prostate and pancreatic cancer. Experts published their findings in the British Medical Journal (BMJ). Dr David Batty, the lead author, said: "After statistical control for these factors, the results show that compared with people in the least distressed group, death rates in the most distressed group were consistently higher for cancer of the bowel, prostate, pancreas, and oesophagus and for leukaemia." The researchers said the study did not prove distress definitely caused increased death, and it may be that undiagnosed cancer lowers people's mood.

## Free Travel Pass concern

FIANNA Fáil TD for Cork North West, Michael Moynihan has vowed that his party will oppose any attempt by the Government to place a charge on the Free Travel Pass. He was responding to a Department of Social Protection report, which proposes a €50 annual charge for people in receipt of the Free Travel Pass. Mr Moynihan indicated that the issue could destabilise the government. He said: "The Free Travel Pass is a core social protection benefit, which has ensured that older people and people with disabilities have access to free travel on public transport in their communities and across the country for over 40 years. Fianna Fáil brought in the Free Travel Pass in the late 1960s and we will vigorously oppose any charge. The free travel pass is essential for older people, and people with disabilities, to access local bus services in Cork, but also allows them to visit other parts of the country. This enables people to retain their independence and go about their business without having to rely on family members or neighbours to get from A to B." "There are thousands of people across rural Cork who hold a Free Travel Pass and all efforts must be made to ensure that it remains a free entitlement. A €50 charge goes against the very principle of free travel and would place another unfair cost on older people and people with a disability."

THREE extraordinary Cork people, including a nine-year-old hiker, a paramotor explorer and a dream-chasing Olympian, are in the running for a top adventuring award. The Outsider of the Year Awards, organised by magazine *Outsider*, will be taking place on February 2. While all the nominees are undoubtedly looking forward to the ceremony, no one is more elated than nine-year-old Dillon Lynch from Kildorrery, just outside Mitchelstown.

Last year, Dillon became the youngest person to ever to complete the 32 County High Point Challenge which saw Dillon and his dad, Pat O'Brien, scale the highest peak in each county.

The boy completed the challenge over the course of 14 months, though admits he started the challenge by accident. It all started in June 2015 when Dillon, supported by his dad Pat, his mother Gillian and his sister Rachel, scaled Knockboy, Cork's highest point.

Next up, Dillon successfully climbed all of the highest points in Munster, then kept going.

"Dillon really enjoyed getting to the end of this challenge. Most of the hikes were really memorable in their own way. We saw some amazing views, especially on the timber boardwalk in Fermanagh. It's outstanding to look back at our pictures and remember where we were," said Pat.

Dillon and Pat completed the challenge by setting out on weekends and during holiday periods.

Amazingly, they also found time to fundraise for local causes. The pair raised a grand total of €3,340 for the Cloyne Diocesan Youth Services in Mallow and the Kildorrery Karate Club.

Pat said he was delighted to be able to do something so adventurous with his son and said he would encourage other parents to get their own children acquainted with the great outdoors.

Also up for Outsider of the Year is 52-year-old Cork man Oisín Creagh, a paramotor adventurer. The nominee is a particularly unusual one, considering that a paramotor has an engine. However, Oisín's adventure, in which he piloted a paramotor 3,000km from Ireland to Africa, was a complex one which required a huge understanding of the outdoors.

Oisín made his incredible journey last year, which included 100km of sea crossings. It even required him to navigate the airspace above the Pyrenees mountain range.

## 'Outsider of Year' recognises people's personal battles

NOT every 'Outsider of the Year' nominee has climbed Mount Everest, but every one of them has "climbed their own personal mountain", says *Outsider* editor, Roisin Finlay.

Year after year, staff at the magazine think the calibre of nominees just can't get any higher. Every year, they are proven wrong.

"We always think they couldn't be as good as last year. Then, you read the stories and you think 'Oh my God'. Every year, people come out of the woodwork who have just done extraordinary things and they continue to surprise us," says Roisin.

"These people are a real inspiration, showing that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything. I am blown away by the extraordinary things that often very ordinary people achieve."

"These kinds of sports people are often overlooked in favour of soccer, hockey, or GAA, but



The Outsider of the Year Awards are fast approaching. This year, three adventurous people from Cork are up for the prestigious accolade, writes Kelly O'Brien.



Dillon Lynch from Kildorrery pictured on top of Mount Leinster, a 796-metre-high mountain straddling the border between Counties Carlow and Wexford.

His mode of transport, a paramotor, is a paraglider with a motor attached to the person flying it.

"While you're flying, you're constantly calculating to see how high you need to be, checking the wind and any turbulence, looking for spots to land if you need to, and also avoiding controlled airspace so you have to stay below certain heights," explained Oisín.

"If the engine stops, you don't just drop. I can safely glide to the ground to land. For every 100m you go up, you can glide a distance of around 600m. I also have a reserve parachute if both the engine and the 'wing' fail for some reason. I did plenty of research into water landings and wore a survival suit. I knew I had to land outside shipping lanes for safety, but I could come down near a smaller fishing boat for example if I was in trouble."

The Cork man used his journey, which took two-and-a-half weeks,

to raise funds for Gorta Self-help Africa and to highlight the connection between Ireland and those he was trying to help. He flew an average of 200km a day at a speed of around 70km an hour.

Oisín drew on his experience as a yacht master and off shore sailor to navigate across the English Channel and other sea crossings. He's been a pilot for around 10 years, and is also an experienced climber and hillwalker.

The third Corkonian up for Outsider of the Year is notable triathlete Bryan Keane. The 36-year-old, who hails from St Luke's in Cork City, realised his Olympic dream in Rio last year having come back from a major injury in 2010 that led doctors to warn him he'd never race again. Bryan was training to qualify for the London 2012 Olympic Games when he was hit by a car in 2010, a collision that shattered his kneecap and his Olympic dream along with it. He spent 14

weeks in a leg brace, lost all of his muscle mass on that leg and was told his sporting career was over.

"But I was dogged and determined enough not to let that accident define me. I didn't know if I could do it again and get up to that level of fitness, but I kept tipping away. I got back to competing at a high level and I qualified for Rio. I've always had a good work ethic and I worked my ass off for it and there's huge satisfaction in that for me and for the people that helped me get there," he said.

Bryan came 40th in the men's triathlon, after a technical problem with his helmet cost him a few places.

"That's frustrating, but I'll get over it and move on. To my family, I'm still a hero for getting to the start line of the Olympics. I fulfilled a lifelong dream of going to the games. I got there after coming back from two knee surgeries and I'll always be an Olympian."

"Without our sponsors, we wouldn't be able to have these awards. Just Eat and Great Outdoors have been on board with us for several years now, and, this year, Columbia are on board, as well. It means we can hold the awards and can give the recipients lovely prizes. It's a great night."

# up for awards



Paramotor adventurer Oisín Creagh, from Cork, on a flight in County Kerry.



Cork's Bryan Keane in the Men's Triathlon at the Rio Olympic Games.

Picture: INPHO/Dan Sheridan

## 41 nominated for Outsider awards

THIS is the fifth year of the Outsider of the Year Awards, run by Ireland's only adventure magazine, *Outsider*.

This time around, 41 brave people have been nominated for accolades. Some of them are extreme adventurers and others are ordinary people or groups that went the extra mile to help someone else.

Nominees include runners, climbers, sailors, swimmers, mountain bikers, rowers, wakeboarders, skiers, rescuers and cavers. Rob Mortell, a 26-year-old from Limerick, has been nominated for becoming the youngest person to climb Mount Everest last year, while 29-year-old John Tobin from Galway/Roscommon is nominated after he became the first wheelchair user to scale Croagh Patrick. Other nominees include barefoot walker



Concern over weight of school bags. Picture: PA

## Heavy school bags a concern for 89% of parents surveyed

UP to 89% of parents of primary school children are concerned that heavy school bags could be injuring their children's backs, according to the National Parents Council. The weight of school bags was the "single biggest issue that parents contact the NPC about," said National Parents Council director Paul Beddy. Nearly a third of the 3,000 parents who responded to the NPC (Primary) survey said their children's schoolbags were so heavy the children couldn't walk with them on their backs. The NPC told the Joint Committee on Children and Youth Affairs that parents were extremely concerned about the bags' weight.

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