



Pictured are Marian Callaghan-Coyne, Christina Cunningham, Sheila McCrorie and Sr. Terry McMahon presenting a cheque of €2,160 to the staff of the Oncology Day Ward, Galway University Hospital. Proceeds from Tea Dance on 6th December 2009 in the Oakland Hotel, Glenamaddy, Co. Galway.

Annette Griffin in concert in Church in Cloverhill

Internationally acclaimed vocalist, Annette Griffin with accompanist Brendan O'Beirne will perform in concert in aid of Cloverhill Church Building Fund in St. Patrick's Church, Cloverhill on Easter Sunday 4th April 2010 commencing at 8 pm.

Original tickets, purchased by patrons

are valid for the event. A small number of tickets (€25 each) are available and can be got from Donnie Gunning on (087) 2303779 or from any member of the Parish Council.

This will be a historic occasion, in that it will be the first time ever for Annette to appear in concert in Cloverhill Church.

€450,000 upgrade of Elphin fire station planned – Finneran

€450,000 has been provided by the Government for the upgrading of Elphin Fire Station, a fact welcomed this week by the Minister concerned, Minister Michael Finneran TD, Minister for Housing and Local Services.

"I am delighted under this year's programme to announce that the station in Elphin is to be substantially upgraded, with €€450,000 committed for this purpose in 2010. The present fire station was purpose built in the 1970s and is now in need of

refurbishment. The response capacity of the fire service in Roscommon has benefited from Government investment in recent years.

COMMITTED FIRE FIGHTERS

"In 2008, I opened a modern headquarter facility in Roscommon Town in 2008 and the station in Ballaghaderreen was completed in 2004."

In conclusion, Minister Finneran said, "We all hold our brave and committed fire fighters in high regard. This investment underlines the

commitment to provide fire fighters with modern facilities in which to train and work. It is Government policy to continue investing in the productive capacity of the economy and to create construction jobs in local communities.

"The total funding package of €€18 million covers a broad range of measures which I am confident will contribute to making the necessary improvements in the development and maintenance of a quality fire-fighting and rescue service."

Housing adaptation funding welcomed

Funding of €2.7 million for mobility and housing adaptation was welcomed this week by Cllr. Paddy Kilduff, right.

"I want to welcome the recent financial allocation announced by Minister Michael Finneran of €2.7m for mobility and housing adaptation grants throughout the county. This is a significant increase on last year's allocation. The scheme is of immense benefit to senior citizens and disabled persons and also serves as a stimulus to the local economy.

"I want to thank Min-



ister Finneran for ensuring the county has received year-on-year financial increases to the scheme. I was particularly saddened at the March meeting of Roscommon County Council when, during

the meeting the proposed housing policy went before the council for approval. The proposal document had already been reviewed and considered in depth by the Special Policy Committee, a bipartisan committee of councillors who scrutinised the proposal and made supplementary recommendations. Despite this bipartisan scrutiny and recommendations, eleven councillors chose to reject the initiative outright. The reasons for this can be nothing other than political expediency and it is very irresponsible poli-

tics. "The proposal however was carried and it will serve to eliminate waiting lists for housing throughout the county. With significant numbers of people waiting to be housed throughout the county and an inadequate supply of houses available to the local authority, this new initiative will provide the means to eliminate the waiting lists while at the same time reduce the number of unoccupied dwellings in the county. It makes perfect sense. I cannot understand how some members could decide to reject it."

Beirne reminded of 'communist Russia'!

■ Seamus Duke

A heated debate on a new social housing policy initiative took place at this week's monthly meeting of Roscommon County Council, held on Monday last. The policy document had been referred to the Housing SPC (Special Policy Committee) at the February meeting.

This week the chairperson of the Housing SPC, Cllr. John Keogh, reported that they would be recommending that the document be accepted with a few amendments, changes which would make it easier for people to own their own houses in time as the new policy is mainly based on a leasing arrangement whereby the Council would lease out vacant houses from developers and builders.

There was however fierce opposition from the Fine Gael side of the chamber. Cllr. Michael McGreal said that the policy was "deeply flawed" and that it was "a disgraceful attempt by the government to 'make up' to greedy developers and builders."

He continued: "The lease arrangement proposed under this agreement simply will not work. The council



will be responsible for repairs at the end of a five-year lease and that will not work. I propose that we reject this document outright and send it back to the Department until a number of flaws are sorted out."

Fine Gael Cllr. Sean Beirne, above, said that the document was "a very sad document. It's like something that one saw in the worst days of communist Russia. It will mean that people will not be able to aspire to own their own home. There are

300,000 vacant houses in the country at the moment. The whole thing is daft" he said.

Fianna Fail Cllr. Paddy Kilduff said that he would be proposing that the document be accepted in full. He said that it was an excellent document and was government policy. "You're wasting your time even discussing it" he said.

Fianna Fail Cllr. Orla Leyden said that she would favour the acceptance of the document with the amendment as agreed by the SPC which should address the concerns with regard to house ownership.

After a long wrangle over the procedure of a vote and whether one was needed at all, Mayor Cllr. Tony Ward said that he would be in favour of the policy document because as far as he was concerned he wanted to try and look after the 300-plus people that he was aware of on the housing list in his area alone.

Eventually a vote was taken on Cllr. McGreal's proposal that the document be rejected. 11 voted for his proposal, 12 against, with 2 abstentions and 1 absent – therefore the document was accepted by the Council.

Roscommon Mini Marathon 2010

Crawl
Run
Waddle

Toddle
Walk
Amble

www.carersireland.com

The Carers Association provides practical and emotional support to carers looking after seriously ill children, frail older relatives, or other incapacitated members of their families. We help you help your carer. Carers are not alone in facing the challenges of what can sometimes be a stressful and isolated life.

The Roscommon Mini Marathon takes place over a 4.1km route and will be a fun, family-friendly day out. Registration Fee €12

Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May 2010 at 3pm from Hannon's Hotel, Roscommon

Show your Support for Ireland's 161,000 Carers - people who give their lives to caring for others.

Roscommon People
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