



Welcome



Pdraig Brady,
CEO, PTAA

Welcome to the launch issue of **Pioneer Matters**. The primary purpose of this publication is for me, as your Chief Executive, to communicate with all PTAA members on the work the Association is undertaking as a result of the recommendations made by the PTAA's Implementation Group.

As together we face unprecedented opportunities and challenges, I feel it is time to develop a new communications tool to help the Association inform as many PTAA members as possible about recent internal events and happenings.

This newsletter focuses on the more corporate aspects of the Association. The publication aims to fill a communications gap on the ongoing strategic work of the Association.

The contents of this launch issue and of forthcoming editions of **Pioneer Matters** will provide useful and accurate information on key developments within the Association, as recommended by the Implementation Group, and acted upon by the Board of Management.

While we have a clear editorial approach in this publication, we are actively committed to developing this newsletter with the Pioneer membership. This is *your* newsletter and it is essential that its contents cater for the needs of the Association and its members. As a result I welcome any feedback, suggestions, recommendations which you might have to offer us on this newsletter. You will find our Feedback contact information on page 3.

Pioneer Matters will initially issue twice a year – once in September/October and again in April/May. The newsletter will be distributed to members via the Pioneer magazine as this is the most cost-effective method of issuing it to you. For members who use computers, please note that a PDF version of the newsletter will be available from the CEO's section of www.pioneerassociation.ie

I hope you find this publication to be useful and informative.

Don't forget, your feedback is always welcome. I look forward to hearing from you and meanwhile I wish you good reading!

Padraig Brady, CEO, PTAA

Regional Conferences

One of the key recommendations made by the PTAA Implementation Group was that the Association would host a one-day regional conference in each province. By June work on this initiative was underway with the conferences due to take place in autumn/winter.

The primary purpose of the conferences is for members to meet and discuss the Association's role and function and to explore possible new directions and opportunities for the PTAA.

In June the recently-appointed Advocacy and Communications Manager, Orlaith O'Callaghan, and I visited each province to brief them on their role in the organisation of the conferences.

A broad working agenda for each conference will cover the following issues:

- The PTAA Implementation Review Group and the background to the renewal of the Association
- The vision for the Pioneers
- Roles within the organisation
- What we need to support the vision – finance
- The PTAA and The Charities Act
- Feedback from the PTAA Constitutional Review Group
- Questions and answers.

During the briefing sessions we invited members to make a number of suggestions that could also be considered for inclusion in the conference agenda.

It was also highlighted at the pre-conference June meetings that at least one active member from each centre should attend the conference to ably represent their centre and its needs and aspirations.

Each conference will be self-financing and will be organised by PTAA members from each province. At the briefing sessions PTAA members received a copy of an Event Organisation Template to assist them with the timely and smooth running of their conference.

It is of critical importance that each province appoints its own conference organising committee as a priority. Each committee will ensure that the workload for the conferences is shared and that the organisation of these events is kept on schedule over the summer months. I would encourage as many Pioneers as possible to play an active role in the organisation of their conference and to attend the event itself as well informed contributors.

An outline of each conference will be sent to each organising committee during the month of September.

Child Protection

Copies of the PTAA's Child Protection Policy are now available from my office.

We will implement a communications plan for the dissemination of the policy during this coming September.

In the meantime should you require a copy of our policy document then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Constitution Review

At the PTAA Board meeting in April, chairman Fr. Joe Dargan S.J., proposed that a working group be established to review the Constitution and how our structures fit with good governance and best practice including the provisions of the Charities Act. He proposed that an initial Group of the President, Robert Shannon, myself as CEO and P.J Farrell, the Delegate of the Provincial be established. Some of the ideas coming out of a preliminary review might be put forward to the proposed provincial meetings in the autumn for their views. A more detailed update from the Constitution Review Group will be covered in the Spring 2010 issue of **Pioneer Matters**.

PTAA Golf Classic 2009



On 3 July last it was my pleasure to visit Clontarf Golf Club, Dublin for the Association's 2009 Golf Classic. Pictured are the overall prize-winners l-r: Seamus Keating, Denis Byrne, Padraig Brady (host), Dermot O'Dwyer and Frank Reynolds.

Paddy Higgins' team of Art McGann, Alex McGill and Cyril Freaney came in at second place while Jimmy Gray's team of Joe Rowley, Bill Casey and Danny Kenny took third place.

We are very grateful to everyone who helped make this event such a success be they sponsors, members, friends and staff.

The PTAA were delighted to welcome Pat O'Donnell & Co. on board as the 2009 Golf sponsor. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pat for his generosity and support particularly during these challenging times. The interest he has always shown in the Pioneers is very encouraging and much appreciated by us. O'Donnell's are the first corporate sponsor for our golf classic. Pat O'Donnell & Co are Ireland's leading suppliers of Volvo Construction equipment for almost 30 years. Through its four purpose-built branches nationwide it offers the complete Volvo after-sales package: spare parts, workshop repairs, service contracts, field service and technical training.





Orlaith O'Callaghan, new Advocacy and Communications Manager

New Communications Manager

Orlaith O'Callaghan was recently appointed to the post of Advocacy and Communications Manager with the Pioneer and Total Abstinence Association.

O'Callaghan is one of Ireland's most experienced communications experts. A specialist in corporate PR, media relations, and change management, Orlaith has worked with some of Ireland's leading PR agencies.

Her crisis management work stems from her role as communications manager with the SDLP, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

She previously held posts in the public sector and has headed-up the communications function of the semi-state body, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, The Irish Sea Fisheries Board.

She was formerly Director of Public Affairs with University College Cork.

Commenting on her new post Orlaith said:

"I am very pleased to work with the Pioneers. The creation of this communications post is a first for the Association. Never before in the history of the organisation has it employed an in-house communications professional. There is a lot of backroom work to be done to set up a professional, efficient communications function that will serve the needs of the Association and its target audiences.

Every member of the Association has a role to play in helping us communicate the Pioneer messages. I look forward to working with the PTAA as together we build on the work of the Association."

Arrivals and Departures

The staff at the Association's Head Office will be sad to see Marion Ashcroft-Jones leave her post as the PTAA's accountant.

Marion made a very valuable contribution to the organisation and it is with regret that we see her go. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Marion for her hard work and professionalism at all times. I know the staff from Head Office will join with me in wishing Marion all the very best for her future plans."

Marion will be replaced by Ken Rue, who is currently Accounts Manager with *The Sacred Heart Messenger*. Ken will take on his new Pioneer role in addition to his part-time work at the Messenger. Ken is currently preparing for ordination in the Church of Ireland.

The Association welcomes Ken on board.



Spirituality Needs Audit

The PTAA Implementation Group was tasked with conducting a *Spirituality Needs* audit. The Implementation Group agreed that the audit findings should be given to the PTAA Spirituality Committee for their consideration. The Group suggested that the Committee identify three actions that they believe are achievable given the issue of existing resources within the PTAA. A brief implementation plan for each of these actions will be developed by the Committee. I will liaise with the Spirituality Committee on the agreed actions, and an update on same will be covered in the next issue of **Pioneer Matters**.



We welcome your feedback on any of the articles covered in this edition of *Pioneer Matters*. Please send your comments, suggestions or recommendations to Padraig Brady at email: pioneerceo@jesuit.ie or ring him on Tel: 01 8749464

New Charities Act

Ireland's new Charities Act has been passed into law. The Act's primary aim is to regulate the charity sector and to increase public trust in the management of charities. The Act will also ensure accountability to donors and to other members of the public.

The new Act will impose new levels of accountability and responsibility on the PTAA. One of the Act's most significant consequences for us is that any funds we collect in the name of the PTAA must now go directly to the Association. Therefore, the Pioneers' traditional approach of distributing funds raised to other worthwhile causes or charities is prohibited under the Act.

The Act's implications will be assessed by the working Constitution Review Group which was appointed by PTAA chairman, Fr. Dargan, earlier this year.

Commenting on the Act, Province Delegate, P.J. Farrell said

"The Charities Act is now law but there is a transition period of 12 to 15 months in order to allow charities to comply. The Act imposes a high standard of governance and professionalism and the working group Fr. Dargan has appointed will need to ascertain the structures that could best cope with the new system required by the Act."

The Group is due to Report to the Board by late 2009 after which a PTAA-wide communications plan explaining the Act and its implications will be implemented by the Communications and Advocacy Manager.

Web update

Members are aware that we revamped our website earlier this year. Now the challenge we face with the site is to ensure that it is kept current with PTAA news and events.

Our plan is that there will be a PTAA webmaster from each province. Webmasters will receive training in how to update the events section of the Pioneer homepage with information on happenings planned by the Association for their province.

Until our webmasters are trained, staff from Head Office will update the site with any province-based event updates PTAA members wish to publicise on the Pioneer website. Orlaith O'Callaghan, our new Advocacy and Communications Manager will be the main point of contact for website briefing. Orlaith is contactable on Mobile: 087 6385942.

Orlaith will oversee website updating for PTAA national events. Again, if members are organising a national event and wish to publicise it on the Pioneer website then please ring Orlaith at the given number. Events should be briefed at least two months in advance of their due date.

Orlaith will supply PTAA members with contact details for their local webmaster once web training has been completed.



DATE *for your* DIARY

National Ploughing Championships

The PTAA will host a stand at the 2009 National Ploughing Championships. This year's event will take place in Athy, Co. Kildare from 22-24 September



Our presence at the forthcoming show gives us an opportunity to target thousands of potential members. We look forward to unveiling the Pioneers' revamped website at this year's event where I am sure it will be seen by members of the public as a useful information tool that provides accurate information on the Pioneers. Of course each year the show is a great attraction for existing PTAA members. I look forward to seeing members at the 2009 PTAA stand.

Staff from the Association's Head Office will be on hand for the three days of the event.

For more detailed information on the National Ploughing Championships visit www.npa.ie or Tel: 059 8625125.