

# ELI Weekly

## Be Irish for a Day!

Next Monday is St. Patrick's Day. That means you have a week to find something green to wear. If you don't, you might get pinched. Ouch! What is the deal with St. Patrick's Day, anyway? Why is there a big celebration that includes parades, four-leaf clovers, and Irish food?

St. Patrick, who is the patron saint of Ireland, is a somewhat mysterious historical figure. We do know that he was born in Britain to wealthy parents near the end of the 4th century, and that he died on March 17, around the year 460 AD. When he was 16, a group of Irish raiders attacked his family and took him prisoner. He was held captive as a slave in Ireland for 6 years. During that time, he worked as a shepherd and was very scared and lonely. He turned to religion and became a devout Christian. After 6 years of imprisonment, he was able to escape by walking nearly 200 miles from his prison to the Irish coast and got to Britain. However, once he arrived, he claims he had a vision of an angel that told him to return to Ireland and become a missionary. So, he went through 15 years of religious training, was ordained as a priest, and went back to Ireland to minister to the Irish Christians and to convert others. Irish culture is historically centered around oral legend and myth, therefore it is believed that many of the stories concerning St. Patrick were exaggerated.

One of the most widely known legends of St. Patrick is that he drove all of the snakes out of Ireland. He would supposedly stand on a hill and use a staff to herd the snakes into the sea, banishing them for eternity. However, this is recognized as a myth, for Ireland never actually had any snakes. This legend may have been told as a symbolic story, with "snakes" referring to the serpent symbol of the Druids, a polytheist community. No matter the truth, St. Patrick is still one of Ireland's most celebrated figures.

Today, St. Patrick's Day celebrations occur in different parts of the world, by the Irish and the non-Irish. In Ireland, it is a religious holiday (though it is celebrated secularly, as well), and until the 1970's, bars were closed on March 17th. In 1995, however, the Irish government saw St. Patrick's Day as an opportunity to showcase its country and increase tourism. Last year, over 1 million people took part in the celebration in Dublin, with such events as parades, concerts, outdoor theatre productions, and fireworks. There are also major celebrations all over the U.S. in cities such as Boston, New York, Chicago (in fact, each year the Chicago river is dyed green to commemorate the day!), Kansas City, and Rolla, Missouri.

There will even be a celebration right here in Springfield. There will be a parade on Sat., March 15, beginning at 2:00 PM. The parade will begin at Commercial Street, and head south down Boonville to the downtown square. There will be food vendors open at 11:00 AM in the square. At 11:30 AM, there will be an Irish Idol contest (similar to American Idol). After the parade, there will be an awards ceremony at the Patton Alley Pub, and the celebration will continue downtown. You won't want to miss it! Wear your green!!!

For more history about St. Patrick's Day, visit: <http://www.history.com/minisites/stpatricksday/>



St. Patrick



The Chicago River, dyed green

## Activities This Week

**Wednesday, Mar. 12 & Sunday, Mar. 16**

**Movie on Campus: "Enchanted"**

9:00 PM at the Plaster Student Union Theater; FREE with ZipCard

**Saturday, Mar. 15**

**AIS International Dance**

Come learn dances from different countries. It's always fun (and a good workout)!

Plaster Student Union Ballroom; 7-11PM; Free, but donations accepted

For more events and activities, visit: <http://calendar.missouristate.edu/>

**Also, ALWAYS check the Student Activities Board across from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Computer Lab**



## Announcements



• **Academic Lectures THIS week:**

**Tues. (3/11): Levels 4 & 5; room 410**  
*Physical Therapy--The Biomechanics of Human Walking*

**Wed. (3/12): Levels 3 & 4; room 410**  
*Mathematics*

## Did You Know....

**A few interesting facts about Morocco:**

The University of Al-Karaouine, located in Fes and established in 859 A.D., is the oldest continuously operating university in the world, and is recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records.



Morocco's official language is Arabic, but most

Moroccans also speak French, and many are fluent in Spanish and/or English.



Morocco's national drink is mint tea.

Morocco has a very diverse geography, which included mountains, lush river valleys, sandy coasts, and wide expanses of desert. The temperature varies considerably, depending on location and season.



### What's Showing at The Moxie?

The Moxie is downtown's independent cinema located near the corner of Walnut and Campbell.

**This week:**

- The Kite Runner
- Teeth

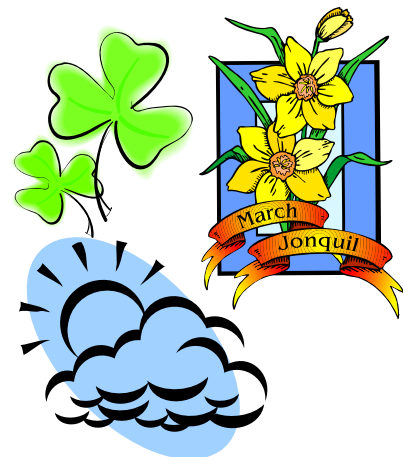


See Schedule on the Student Activities Board

## Weather Forecast

**Degrees: High/Low**  
**Forecast for March 10-16**

	<u>Fahrenheit</u>	<u>Celsius</u>
Monday:	51/29	11/-2
Tuesday:	60/42	16/06
Wednesday:	67/45	19/07
Thursday:	54/33	12/01 — chance of rain
Friday:	55/40	13/04
Saturday:	47/31	08/-1 — chance of rain
Sunday:	55/36	13/02



Weather forecasts are *always* changing, so for the most up-to-date forecast, go to: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com), or watch the local news or weather channel.