

Rental restyle

Why you should revamp your not-forever-home



Backing it up Cork primed for another 'final' in Thurles

Weekend Sport Pages 4-5





Examiner

Saturday, May 18, 2024

## 'She is not the same child... we just have to wait for her'



**Alison O'Reilly** 

The mother of a five-yearold girl who was left fighting for her life after a stabbing that sparked unprecedented riots across Dublin city centre has said she never wanted people to respond with violence because "hate only generates more hate"

In her first interview since the attack at Parnell Square last November, the child's mother said her precious daughter was in the "wrong place at the wrong time'

The little girl remains in Temple Street Hospital but her family is clinging to the progress she has made since being on the brink of

"We don't want any hate over this," her mother told the Irish Examiner.

"Hate only generates more hate. We don't have any time for that negativity. Our daughter is our priority. She is very resilient and has shown us how determined and strong she is; we have to match her determination.

Her daughter is now communicating with her family and medical team

by "using her eyes".
"I know when she does or doesn't want something. she sometimes rolls her eves. Even the doctors can

"The future is unknown,

My heart will ache when you look at yourself and don't recognise who you once were and who you were so eager to be But my heart will mend every time I see how happy you still manage to be

Harry Burton

but it's only been a few months. So for now, our daughter is where she needs to be.

"We are with her, and we want everyone to know we are very grateful for all their support.

"We have to keep going for her because she wants to keep going, and she is

telling us that very clearly. "My husband and I help each other. When he is down, I help him, and he then helps me. She is not

the same child, even

though she is our child, so we are learning to live a new way of life and we know she is in there. We just have to wait for her to

- Land of Memory And Hope, Page 8

be ready to come out." The mother described how her little girl has

started to move her arms. "She is enjoying her Irish lessons with the hospital school and loves watching Paddington 1 and

2 for laughs," she said. The girl was born in the Rotunda Hospital. Her parents are from

South America and Eastern Europe.

"She loves Ireland. This is her home," said her

The family wants people to know how grateful they are for their support, saying: "Thank you for all the love sent our way.

Three children and a creche worker were injured in the random incident on Parnell Square in Dublin on November 23.

Two other children, a boy aged 5 and a girl aged 6,

**Mairead Sheehy and** 

Investigations are under-

were assaulted and ve-

hicles damaged at a site

designated for refugees in

Clonmel, Co Tipperary, on

Several security person-

nel contracted to work on

The Department of Inte-

gration and the Office of

Public Works (OPW) are

planning around 80 modu-

lar homes for Ukrainian

One of the workers

"No arrests have been

required hospital treat-

made at this time," said a

It is the latest in a wave of

public order incidents

across the country as pro-

Garda spokesperson.

the site were assaulted by a

number of individuals.

refugees on the site.

way after security workers

**Cianan Brennan** 

Thursday.

were treated for less serious injuries and returned

Creche worker Leanne Flynn was discharged from hospital earlier this year. Riots broke out across the city that night, with

home shortly afterwards.

shops looted and a Luas set The five-year-old girl was undergoing emergency surgery in Temple Street Hospital while the city was under attack and the family heard the noise

on the streets from inside

the hospital.

"My husband said: 'Don't go out there.' I asked him what is it like, and he replied: 'A war zone.

Riad Bouchaker, aged 50. appeared at Dublin District Court in November, charged with the attempted murder of three children and the assault of Ms Flynn during the Parnell Square incident.

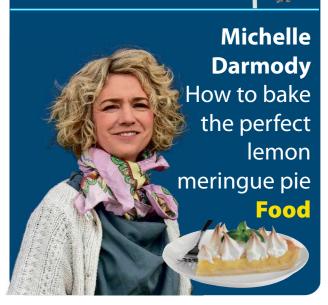
### **INSIDE**

**Press play** Colin Sheridan and Mick Clifford on the woes of GAAGO **Forum** 





Yes to the dress Newbridge shows Princess Diana's couture to mark its 90th year Weekend



## Golfer Scheffler's 'shock Attack on security and fear' after arrest

#### **Phil Casey** Louisville

World No.1 golfer Scottie Scheffler has spoken of his "shock and fear" after being arrested on his way to the US PGA Champion-

Scheffler was detained by Louisville Metro Police after trying to drive into the golf club in heavy traffic caused by an earlier unrelated accident in which a pedestrian died after being struck by a shuttle bus.

Tournament officials said they were "devastated" by the death of local man John Mills, who was working for an on-site vendor at Valhalla.

Scheffler faces charges of second-degree assault of a police officer. thirddegree criminal mischief, reckless driving, and disregarding traffic signals from an officer directing

After his release, he shot a remarkable secondround score of 66 which left him two shots off the clubhouse lead held by Collin

Scheffler began his postround press conference by expressing his sympathies to the family of Mills.



Scottie Scheffler's mugshot after his arrest early yesterday.

"I can't imagine what they're going through this morning," Scheffler said. "My situation will get

handled. "It was a chaotic situation and a big misunderstanding. I can't get into what transpired, outside of my heart goes out to the

Tee times in the second round were delayed by 80 minutes due to the fatal accident, with Scheffler arriving around an hour be-

fore his revised time. A mugshot of the twotime major winner, released by the Louisville Metropolitan Department of Corrections, showed that he had been released after an hour and 12 min-

utes.
"I was pretty rattled to say the least," Scheffler admitted.

'I would say in shock and in fear.

"Coming out here and trying to play today was definitely a challenge, but I did my best to control my mind, control my breath-

ing." Scheffler said he began thinking about making his tee time when he saw himself on television from his According to the police

report, Detective Bryan Gillis stopped Scheffler's car and "attempted to give instruction" "Subject refused to

comply and accelerated forward, dragging Detective Gillis to the ground. Detective Gillis suffered pain, swelling, and abrasions to his left wrist and

"He was transported to the hospital for further medical treatment by emergency medical per-

Detective Gillis' uniform pants, valued at approximately \$80, were damaged beyond repair.'

statement, Scheffler's attorney Steve Romines said the player was proceeding as directed by a traffic officer and is alleged to have disregarded signals from another officer "in the confusion". Weekend Sport: 10

### **Measles alert at CUH**

staff at refugee site

seekers.

#### **Niamh Griffin and David Kent**

A measles alert has been issued to people who were in certain areas of the emergency department or the Puffin Ward of Cork University Hospital on two days last week.

Contact-tracing teams are trying to get in touch with contacts of anyone known to have been there at specific times on Sunday and Monday and warn

them to watch out for measles symptoms.

arising at the site.'

Public health medicine consultant Margaret O'Sullivan said they wish to reassure people that public health measures are being followed.

"Contact tracing means that we will be in direct touch with close contacts,' said Dr O'Sullivan.

"Anyone who is concerned about symptoms should contact their GP."





Star of David drawn on

path outside Cork cafe

## 'The riots were nothing to do with our daughter - it was anger and hate'

In an exclusive interview with Alison O'Reilly, the mother of the five-year-old girl stabbed outside her school on Parnell St, Dublin, last November talks about how 'hate' fuelled the riots that followed in the city, her daughter's slow recovery, and her gratitude to the public for their support

seized streets in the capi- | home and employment in | tal, attacking gardaí and | Dublin and were delighted setting fire to public trans- | when they discovered they |

The riots came about | child in 2018. after a child was sense-

e the narrative of what | the Rotunda hos happened to our daughter," she tells the *Irish* Examiner, six months on

from the day that changed ner family's life forever. "The riots were nothing | to love going o do with our daughter, out in the which was anger and I rain. hate," says the mother of | splashing the "strong-willed little fighter" who remains in a and being Dublin hospital nearly six | out in the

The little girl was left | never really with life-changing injuries | liked too after being stabbed on Par- | much heat. nell St on that overcast No-

city centre quickly de- | national school scended into a violent hell- | She is very sociable scape, as rioters burned, looted, and destroyed. They used the attack on the little girl, two of her | school is full of Irish classmates, and their | children only, but there is |

cuse to rampage across the In her first interview | few months into junior in- | moment my daughter since that dark day, the | fants' class in her new | needed medical attention mother, in a softly spoken | school when the attack | voice, says she does not | happened, shortly after | them work on her. I called want anyone to "respond with hate" to the incident. Her daughter, she says,

place at the wrong time" "The main message we have is that we don't want | Thursday, November 23, any hate over this and that | the little girl was dropped | nate only generates more | off at after-school with all | "We don't have time for | mal hate, we just want to focus on our daughter," she

condition of anonymity. 'I never wanted to receive that call'

The girls' parents met in

Brave, compassionate

forgiving. In a word, re-

markable. It was a privi-

nother of the five-year-

jured in the Parnell St

lege to get to meet the

old girl critically in-

attack, and more im-

portantly to relay the

message she wants to

send to the people of Ire-

land — which is one of

gratitude, not anger.

children," says the mother.

this is her wind. She

"We knew she was more After the attack, Dublin | than ready for and a great communi

creche minder, as an ex- | a big mix of pupils from all | ness. I wanted to go to her, backgrounds there."

of her classmates, as nor-It was a typical day. adds, speaking under the

At around 1.30pm, the children, having finished school, formed a line with heir creche minder, when "I never wanted to re- | undergoing emergency ceive a call telling me that my child had been injured,

Throughout our con-

versation, the softly

spoken voung mother

despite the fact their

lives will never be the

"We don't want any

hate over this. Hate only

generates more hate,"

vember day

was neither bitter nor

resentful over what had

happened to her family,

"We decided to remain in was a safer place to raise

The couple decided to

Ireland and

"Most people believe her The little girl was only a | there because that was the

| lunch on a bright winter's | my husband and then I saw She was settling into | the ambulance.' was simply "in the wrong | school well and had made | many new friends On the morning of

Ireland and decided to so we chose Ireland to have our children "But I got that call any- | Children's Hospital and Eastern European, and the  $\mid$  way. It was like something  $\mid$  waited in agony while their  $\mid$  South America.

| mother grew up in South | out of a movie or watching | the Twin Towers collapse.' Like most young couples | says the mother, tears raged as rioters | starting out, they secured a | flowing down her face. phone rang. The creche owner told me my daught-

er was stabbed. lessly attacked earlier in | Ireland because we knew it | to her school. I saw my

As riots raged across Dub lin City centre, the parents waited for updates on their daughter. "We could hear the

Warzone

"Mv husband :here'. I asked him what is it like, and "The riots were nothing to do with

child went into emergency

she had taken her first

breath, just 600m away at

now medics were battling

"We didn't ask for up-

dates even though we

wanted them," says the

o focus on our child who

was in surgery for three

to keep her breathing.

Only five years earlier,

our daughter. They were about anger and hate," says the Her face lights up when she talks about her Scrolling through

dozens of photographs of the beautiful child, with long curly hair in her school uniform and relaxing at home, she says: "She s so full of life, and knows "She is very smart and incredibly determined and

speaks up for herself all and liked her dad's music. "One minute she would be in her princess dress, but it wouldn't be long before her dress was getting in the way of climbing a

jured in the attack but were discharged from hos-More recent photos of pital in the days afterthe girl — who bears a Creche worker Leanne mother — show her sitting Flynn was seriously inup in her hospital bed. jured and wasn't dis-Despite her catastrophic charged until earlier this injuries, the pretty, bright-

eved child showed off her The five-year-old girl beautiful smile for the was critically injured, Her distraught parents quickly made their way to

Angel and a warrior The woman recalls having to relay the dreadful news to her family back home in

attack in Dublin City last November.

going surgery "It was very difficult to | of death. family, at first," she says.

members and friends sent | from surgery, the first their love and positive | thing we told her was that

she is safe, and that we are

"The hospital has been a | we remove the mask?" blessing too. They are \ "Once it was taken away,

close my eyes and I see you see every morning when you would wake up and walk towards me for a hug, even without being able to open your eyes

see your eyes glisten when the swing jn the playground was can picture every laugh, jump, word, tantrum, fall I can feel your hugs, your love, your just for life

Land of memory and hope

The good and the bad The good was just so perfect And so was the bad The temperament, the looks, they were what made you YOU would call you crazy and clown would tell you how brave you were and how much I loved yo

You never liked it when I called you brave But you always believed me when I asked you: 'Do you know how much I love you? My memories are intact, fresh, almost palpable

My hopes are that you manage to, somehow, come out the

other end YOU know that is a big ask My heart will break every time you ask me why do not know why

My heart will ache when you look at yourself and don't recogn nise who you once were and who you were so eager to be But my heart will mend every time I see how happy you still man age to be And how excited you are through all the accomplishments My heart will mend when you look at me knowing who I am

My heart and yours will mend when the gap between memory and hope shrinks nd that we can find ourselves back to where we were will take now as a pause, a timeout With hopes of hitting play soon.

■ This is a poem written by the girl's mother that she posted, among other inspiring updates on the GoFundMe page Barróg do Chailín Beag (A Hug For A Little Girl)

The parents rang relativ- | ment, she describes her

"My father became emo- | but is now in the rehabili tional and took his time to tation phase of her jour strong resemblance to her | speak with me over the | ney, and the family say "My brother made and | covery day by day. eceived calls for me when couldn't, they gave me a  $\mid$  that she was in hospital. ot of help. Other family | When she first woke up

> Her mother has now with her. come to Ireland to help her. "I'm happy my mother is | for her at first, but reassurhere now.

es from the hospital while | daughter as an "angel" and their daughter was under- | a "warrior", who has fought back from the edge break the news to my | She remains in Temple Street Children's Hospita

"We had to explain to he

I can almost touch you... that is how much I remember of you

The family are in hospiby their child's bedside. watching her in pain," says her mother.

How you would look at me and trust that I could make it all better

tors said they wanted to re- | the ward. she would manage.

A burning bus on Dublin's O'Connell Bridge during riots in Dublin city centre last November. The mother of one of the children has stated that the riots were not justified and wasn't done in her daughter's name. 'We do not want hate to be the narrative of what happened to our daughter,' she says. The girl was born in the nearby Rotunda Hospital, pictured below.

Picture: Alan Betson

said, and we agreed.

doing all they can. But you | she settled down and has are still the mother, and | been breathing on her own

you have to be there to since then. help them understand | "She is nonverbal right what my daughter is sig- | now and there is no prognosis. It is too early to say, As she wipes away the | but my daughter is not tears, she says: "It is good | someone who goes backto cry. I allow myself to cry | wards, she keeps moving

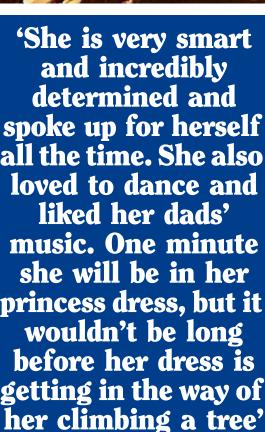
Her daughter is now tal every day, taking turns | communicating with her "The hardest part was | "using her eyes" to tell them what she wants

"I know when she does or doesn't want something. now and has gone through | she sometimes rolls her eves. Even the doctors can "When she was in inten- | see that."

ive care and on oxygei for her, you feel helpless. | care unit for pain manage-"After three weeks, doc- | ment. She is now back on move the tubes to see how | The family are in a more

settled routine now that "We have to try", they | their daughter is out of immediate danger. "They placed an oxygen | "I've gone back to work mask over her nose and | for a few hours every week

and incredibly determined and spoke up for herself all the time. She also loved to dance and liked her dads' music. One minute she will be in her princess dress, but it wouldn't be long before her dress is getting in the way of her climbing a tree'



ittle warrior; she has | want to put on any pressure. It is a lot to deal with. orally yet) and moving her Everyone deals with things arms a good bit. in their own way.' "She is enjoying her Since her daughter's ad Irish lessons with the hospital school and loves watching *Paddington* and 2 for laughs. These are huge achievements. "The future is unknown, but it's only been a few months, so for now, our daughter is where she needs to be. We are everyone to know we are very

grateful for all their sup-"We have to keep going for her because she wants

to keep going, and she is telling us that very "My husband and I help each other. When he is

"She is very resilient and has shown us how determined and strong she is. We have to match her de-"We talk to her and ask her things and she can definitely hear and under

guided by her. "The questions regarding her future and ours are there. Despite all the mights and maybes, we have to believe in her. mainly because she does. Even with all the heartache, there was not the slightest hint of anger or resentment from the par-

While no one can truly magine the pain endured by the family, the child's mother says that, at times support they have received

She says there have been ents. I haven't spoken to

Street, the family have redown, I help him, and he mained in regular contact with her school, which

they described as "exremely supportive". "They are very helpful and have given regular updates to the families there. I am in contact with some stand us, and we are being

"At Christmas, I went to the school with gifts for the children from my daughter. I felt that was import-"I did also speak to the Deliveroo cyclist, Caio Benicio. A number of Go-

FundMe pages were also set up including one called Barróg do Chailín Beag (A Hug for A Little Girl).' Róisín Fitzgerald, a family friend, runs the page, who is helping to raise funds for the little girl

and her family Despite the devastating trauma they have suffered the child's mother is deeply mindful that wellwishers across the world wanted to know how her daughter was doing in hos-

graffiti has a limited the right side of the conand educate themselves owner spoke of the kind-

began to write inspiring

updates on the GoFundM

page, including a beautiful

poem called 'Land of mem

ory and hope' (see panel on

It includes the words: "I

see every morning when

you would wake up and

walk towards me for a hug

even without being able to

open your eyes properly. I

when the swing in the

can picture every

layground was free,

augh, jump, word

antrum, fall, I can

love. vour iust for

ouch you... that is

nember of you, I re

life. I can almost

nember every-

During our two-

hour conversation.

this remarkable, com-

passionate woman dis-

plays a powerful sense

of empathy for others.

children." she savs.

eel your hugs, you

posite page).

mission to

Strength of naval service falls to new low

**Security Correspondent** 

and is just three fewer than in 2023.

service recruitment campaigns for the De-

fence Forcesnaval service there are eight

direct-entry competitions for the naval

cruitment age has been increased to 39 for

A Star of David marked on the path outside a Palestinian restaurant in Cork City has been condemned as an attempt to intimidate

Mr Alkarajeh came to Ireland in 2016 with his Jordanian wife Eman and

"I do not know if he is

someone related to Israel or not," he said of the person who made the mark. Speaking to 96FM' gan. Mr Alkarajeh said the

incident, while unfortu nate, was nothing compared to what is being done

"This is not war, this is

"Occupation is not ac-

"Genocide cannot be performing a live genocide.

more on the matter, Mr ness he and his family

not something acceptable

and it must end." he said.

to people in Gaza.

their children.

the owners and staff. Yesterday morning, the graffiti was found outside Izz Cafe on George's Quay. It was first discovered by a neighbouring business owner, who then alerted owner, Izzeddeen Alkara-

He said that, from last January, the pa trol duty allowance has been doubled The strength of the Irish naval service has (from €65 to €131) for those at sea longer fallen to a new low of 722, official figures

drawn on the pavement outside their business vesterdav

"It is a flag that repre- karajeh's wife and asked to

was crying," Mr Alkarajeh

sorry for what is going on

not abiding by inter- her solidarity with the

beings, they would dis- said. "She said: 'I don't sup

have witnessed since the and did not support geno-

national law and they are people of Palestine.

state that they can express

"If they are real human

cover that they are not on

The popular restaurant

than ten davs. In addition rates of pay for new recruits The figure suggests the staffing crisis in had also improved, starting at €39.321, ris the Naval Service could be levelling off ing to €42,005 by year three Figures revealed by Tánaiste and Min-

ister for Defence Micheál Martin show that the strength of the naval service has attended interviews for the Defence collapsed in the last five years, dropping Forces in 2023 and to end of March 2024 from 936 in 2019, to 875 in 2021 and to 798 in

and that so far 563 have been inducted. different parts of the country as part of its recruitment campaign and the LE George Bernard Shaw was docked on Albert Quay in Cork city over the May bank holiday

service and three naval service cadetship Of the six navy patrol vessels, two are In response to a question from Sinn operational, with one on patrol at any Féin's defence spokesman, Matt Carthy, given time and a third ship is on standby the Tánaiste said a marine recruitment specialist company has also been con-

tracted to target individuals with specific shore patrol vessels. skills required by the naval service, such Zealand at a cost of €32m, will become operational next month. Mr Martin said that the maximum re-He said €20m was spent refurbishing ac

commodation at naval service HQ at Haul-

# below that and to 50 for direct entry officer come on stream in 2026

those roles that had a recruitment age bowline. Cork, with a new €6m gym due to

#### "It's about pain, we are all feeling pain over our CYCLE THE RING OF KERRY FOR Adjusting to a new way of life has taken its toll on the family. "She is not the same child even though she is our child, so we are learning to live a new way of life and we know she is breakthrough n there. We just have to wait for her to be ready to research "It's just going to be a Saturday 6th July, 2024 days, but she has made a A 50-year-old man, Riad Bouchaker, appeared in Dublin District Court in

The 170km Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle will take place on Saturday, 6th July.

or to take part in a phenomenal experience then this is the event for you.

Why not gather a group of friends or colleagues and experience something extraordinary together?

This event is not a race, you can cycle at your own pace with time to savour some of the most breathtaking scenery that Ireland has to offer.

Registered Charity No. 20077945

Find out more here bit.ly/ROKCC2024 or contact Eoghan on 021 422 66 55

## We could all learn a powerful lesson from this what she was like before

same after that dark No-Fitzgerald which has raised over €90,000 to Like so many people across the world, I spent a lot of time thinking

focus on our daughter". the mother through the do Chailín Beag (A Hug For A Little Girl), run by her friend Róisín

for hate, we just want to I first got in touch with GoFundMe page, Barróg

the nearby Temple Street

"I stood back and let

her being taken away in

Two of the girl's school-

mates, a boy aged 5 and a

girl aged 6, were also in-



after the attack and vigils, and messages of goodwill towards her. wondering how she was progressing, if she would be OK. In the middle of the chaos, the rampaging and looting across the streets of the capital, this precious child was ındergoing emergency

She was in everyone's

Picture: Niall Carson/PA thoughts while prayers,

were flooding social I attended those vigils, not just because I am a journalist, but also be cause I am a mother. I wanted to show the family some support. I read her mother's beautiful messages on the GoFundMe page and wanted to know more

she ended up fighting for her life. Through the Go-FundMe page I sent the mother a message, say

ing I would like for her to tell me about her daughter. And to my surprise, she responde and agreed to meet. As our meeting date came close. I thought many times that she

I would have completely and videos of the little understood if she did because she was dealing with such pain. But almost as soon as we met, I understood why she wanted to speak

publicly. It was simple; she wanted to help bring some peace to a such a traumatic situation and to say thank you to the people of Ireland. She showed me so many beautiful photos

girl who is clearly the heart of her family, "an angel and warrior", a child who is filled with love, adventure, curiosity and kindness. Up to then, to most of us, she was the innocent five-year-old child stabbed on Parnell St. But now her mother has

generously shared so

much of her daughter's

personality with us — a

woman and her family

who dresses in princess clothes but also loves to climb trees and splash in puddles. A little girl who wanted to make new friends in her new Irishlanguage school, in the home that she loves so much. She is the image with gorgeous long hair and big bright eye. A little girl who has

determined young girl

bravery over the past six

agonising months. Her mother is so softly spoken, but shows compassion, empathy, and love for those around her with no hint of any resentment or anger. We spoke for more than two hours, and sometimes she let the tears come silently, other times she continu-

us about her daughter and again to say thank family has received. bedside, as she does

tremendous courage and them, determined to tell

ot of progress.

December, charged with

the attempted murder of

three children and the as-

sault of the creche worker.

you for the support her As she left to visit her daughter and sit by her every day, we hugged and said goodbye and as I left, I felt we could all learn a powerful lesson

from this woman and

erv slow road and we don't know what will happen. We have moved to a more adaptable house for her, and we are just taking each day as it comes. We take all the help we can get, we can't afford not to. "She was always a positive child. My mother is in the hospital now with her

and I'll go shortly. There is always someone there. Life has to go on, we have no choice, and it is very early

If you're looking for a new challenge, to beat your record from last year