

VOLUNTEERS AT THE DOUBLE

Twins make it an emergency service first!

■ **Aisling and Andrew work side by side with Civil Defence**
 ■ **Castleisland siblings have same EMT qualifications**

TWINS AISLING and Andrew Foran have made Kerry history - they're the first twins with the same emergency medical technician qualifications working as volunteers with the Civil Defence.

BY MAJELLA O'SULLIVAN

The 31-year-olds from Castleisland serve side by side in the Casualty Unit with Kerry Civil Defence.

Andrew joined the volunteer organisation in 2016. He is also one of the founder members of the Castleisland First Responder Group of which he is the scheme coordinator.

Beautician Aisling joined the

Civil Defence this year but already had been involved as a volunteer with the Castleisland First Responder Group, encouraged by her twin.

Now an emergency medical technician (EMT) with the National Ambulance Service (NAS), Andrew says he would never have found his way to a job he loves if it wasn't for his involvement with Kerry Civil Defence.

"When I joined first, I had zero

First Aid skills," Andrew said. He completed his training as a CFR (cardio first responder), then FAR (first aid responder) advancing onto ERF (emergency first responder), before qualifying as an EMT - the standard required to apply to the NAS.

"I would not be in the job I'm in if it had not been for the experience I gained with the Civil Defence and the help I got from Tom Brosnan (Kerry Civil Defence Officer) and the other instructors. Tom has been exceptionally good to us," he added.

When the salon she worked in closed down during lockdown in 2020, Aisling put her time to good use and completed her training with the Irish Ambulance Training Institute in Galway, qualifying as an EMT in November.

She had been bitten by the bug from her involvement with the Castleisland First Responder Group, which she describes as

being like a 'little family'. "Because I was in the Castleisland First Responders, I was used to calls. The first few are difficult but you do get used to it and when you're responding to a situation everything you've learned comes back to you and you feel so competent that you can do this," Aisling said.

Both Aisling and Andrew say they get an enormous amount of satisfaction from their voluntary work.

"We're often at the scene before an accident and you can just see the relief in someone's eyes," Aisling said.

Andrew agrees. He added: "It's very satisfying and I have no hesitation giving any hours they require of me. People generally do it because they want to give something back."

He also says there's plenty of variety within Civil Defence to suit everyone including its Auxiliary

EMTs: The Foran twins, Andrew and Aisling, from Castleisland who have both qualified as Emergency Medical Technicians with the Kerry Civil Defence.

Fire Service, Welfare Service, Drone Unit, dedicated Search and Rescue Unit, the Boat Unit and of course the Casualty Unit.

Kerry Civil Defence attends all major festival and events in the county and also provides back up to the emergency services.

Kerry Civil Defence Officer Tom Brosnan confirmed the Forans were the first set of twins to volunteer together in the emergency response organisation.

He said: "We've had siblings before alright and members of the same family - but never twins and both with the same qualification as well."

"Andrew really looks out for Aisling and they make a great team," he added.

COURT REPORTS

Teen assaulted pensioner outside graveyard

A TEENAGER who assaulted a 71-year-old man outside a graveyard in Tralee will face jail time if he doesn't positively engage with probation services, a judge has warned.

At a special sitting of Tralee District Court on Monday, Francis O'Brien, 21 Chapel Street, Tralee, pleaded guilty to assaulting John McEvoy at Ballinorig Road, Tralee on January 30 last year, contrary to Section 2 of the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act.

Garda inspector Gary Thompson told the court that there had been an interaction between O'Brien and Mr McEvoy at Rathass Cemetery before O'Brien pushed the injured party, causing him to fall backwards and hit the back of his head.

Mr McEvoy had been driving along the road when he asked O'Brien to 'get off the road' due to his behaviour on the road, the court heard.

O'Brien subsequently 'took issue' with being asked to get off the road, according to Inspector Thompson.

Both men were unknown to each other prior to the incident, the garda inspector confirmed to the court.

Inspector Thompson told Judge David Waters that O'Brien had 'just turned 18 at the time' and 'attacked a 71-year-old man'.

"Mr O'Brien was heavily intoxicated and he has no recollection of the incident," he said.

Asking Inspector Thompson if O'Brien had any previous convictions, Judge Waters said that on the face of it, 'this is a custodial sentence'.

O'Brien had no previous convictions, the court heard.

Defending, solicitor Brendan Ahern told Judge Waters that his client is 'very apologetic'.

"Mr O'Brien had consumed a lot of alcohol," he said. "He drank a full bottle of vodka at his friend's house".

"It had an awful affect on him, for an 18-year-old who doesn't drink often."

Noting that O'Brien had no previous convictions, and had pleaded guilty, Judge Waters said he was seeking a probation report from the probation services as he couldn't 'just let him off with this and walk out the door'.

"If he had previous convictions, he'd have been looking at a custodial sentence," the judge warned.

Adjourning the case to May 11 for a full probation report, including O'Brien's suitability for community service, Judge Waters said he'd look at an alternative outcome to a jail sentence if there is a positive report.

"If not, he is looking at time in prison," said the judge.

They're ready to Run for the Rock again!

■ **Hundreds expected for Paul Lucey memorial event**

HUNDREDS OF runners and walkers are expected to take part in the return of a popular community event held in honour of well-known Austin Stacks man Paul Lucey.

BY AUDREY REIDY

The 2022 Paul Lucey Run/Walk 5k/10k is back this May Bank Holiday for the first time since 2019.

2018 and 2019 saw over 400 participants each year in what was an amazing community event and a fitting tribute to Paul, who passed away in December 2017.

Paul was a member of the Stacks All-Ireland winning Club Championship team of '77, and trained many under-

age and senior teams down through the years, notably the 1986 and 1994 teams, who he coached to county success, as well as being involved with training the ladies football team in his later years.

This event will take place on Monday, May 2nd at 11am and is the fourth Paul Lucey Run for the Rock - but perhaps the most significant, as the importance of freedom, exercise, and friendship over the past three years have been



The late Paul Lucey

very much restricted due to the pandemic.

Registration is via www.eventbrite.ie by searching Paul Lucey Run or through Austin Stacks Facebook or Twitter or on the morning of the event between 9am and 10.30am.



RUN: Members of the Austin Stacks GAA Club launched the Paul Lucey Run for the Rock, which will be held on Monday, May 2nd (Bank Holiday Monday).