

Hello Dolly it wasn't nice not to see you

ON Saturday, March 31, I headed to Millstreet with some friends who had travelled down from Castlebar, Co. Mayo, to attend the sold-out concert by Dolly Parton. On arrival at the Co. Cork venue we were stopped at the entrance to the car park and told by a member of the security staff that the show had been cancelled. When I enquired who I could speak to regarding the cancellation he said the show had been cancelled due to 'technical difficulties' and that was all he could tell us.

For a venue which has staged some of the biggest shows in the world such as Riverdance, the 1993 Eurovision Song Contest, Kenny Rogers, Don Williams and good ole Willie Nelson, it's hard to understand why it couldn't accommodate Dolly Parton's act, especially now that she has

returned to her country roots and is mainly recording bluegrass. The show was cancelled at 4pm, just four hours before the legendary country star was due to perform, and I find it difficult to understand that the technical crew would wait that long to inspect the venue and then declare that due to technical difficulties the show would not go ahead.

I have no doubt that it is common practice to check out these venues well in advance and to iron out any difficulties beforehand. Telling people they can collect a refund on their tickets at the point of purchase is of little consolation to the many people who had travelled long distances, arranged babysitters and accommodation etc, let alone the disappointment at not seeing the star perform.

Roger Ryan, Cork.



Dolly Parton played Belfast and Dublin, but no show at Millstreet.

Destroying our amenities

YOUR SAY

I AM appalled and disgusted to hear that our beautiful Tank Field, in Montenotte, is being considered as a site for the building of a school.

The Tank Field has been a recreational amenity for the residents of the area for at least 70 years. It is a very safe place for children to play in as it is overlooked by lots of houses.

In my 43 years in the area I have never heard of anyone being molested in or near the Tank Field. I also use it myself for walking, as do lots of people, including those who like to exercise their dogs and chat with their neighbours.

In the *Evening Echo* (March 27) under the heading 'Council Vow to

Keep City Green Areas' the City Manager, Joe Gavin, stated that the Council would not allow recreational land to be used for other types of development other than recreation.

In the *Evening Echo* three days later, under the heading 'Tank Field Sale,' the City Manager stated that 'The sale of the Tank Field will generate a net income of €669,000 for Cork City Council.'

To me this seems to show total disregard for the wishes of the local residents.

If the proposed development is allowed to happen, Cork City Council will become the laughing stock of Europe

as there is not another city in Europe that would get rid of their green areas for the sake of monetary gain.

Name and address withheld on request

● I WAS interested to read Joe Lignane's comment about apartment blocks having empty 'units.' (March 29).

A councillor told me they'd carried out a brief survey of apartment blocks and were surprised at how many flats were empty when permission was being sought to build even more. Why is permission being given to developers to build more apartment blocks when clearly they aren't needed?

In any case, with the length of the housing queue increasing and no social housing being built last year, isn't it about time the Corporation demanded that developers build council houses if they want to build anything at all in Cork city?

**Brian Abbott,
Glencairn,
Bishopstown Road,
Cork.**

Because I climbed the gate... a poem for Easter

*Because I climbed the gate,
I could not wait.
Duty called.
I could not hesitate.*

*The sun was low,
the blackbirds, hi!,
their little bellies full,
of snails pie.*

*It was cool,
beneath those sunny
eyebrows,
in the shade,
the promise of another
glorious day.*

*Touching trees,
touching spires,
touching me.
Glory to the Lamb,
who was slain,
He who made,
the sun and the rain.*

*Glory to the Lord in
pain,
Glory to the Lord,
who rose again.
Because I climbed the
gate
He could not wait.*

Amen and Amen.

**Eileen Cronin,
Lower Belvelly,
Cobh, Co. Cork.**



IN THE Coen brothers' film *Oh! Brother Where Art Thou*, lead actor George Clooney has a catchphrase that goes: "Gee! We're in a tight spot."

If you have not seen the film then you won't understand quite how funny this gets each time he repeats it.

It was a refrain that came to mind last week on hearing that six Government ministers were trapped in a lift in Leinster House.

If you missed the story, Brian Cowen, Dermot Ahern, Noel Dempsey, Mary Harney, Mary Hanafin and Mary Coughlan spent a half-hour trapped between floors at the Dáil after leaving a Cabinet meeting.

Now, you might expect us to laugh at this harrowing tale of claustrophobia, and we did, but don't immediately leap to the conclusion that we did so because the misfortune befell politicians.

Au contraire, when silly things happen to journalists we find it just as funny, eg when Charlie Bird fell down a manhole while trying to interview someone a few years back, we guffawed just as heartily, despite RTÉ's 'chief' correspondent cracking a few ribs.

Eventually, Willie O'Dea was called on a mobile phone and the Minister for Defence called in the Army to perform a rescue operation to save the six ministers from almost certain boredom.

As the temperature rose in the lift, and with not a drop of Ballygowan between them, Minister for Education Mary Hanafin suddenly realised that she always kept some sweets on her. She rummaged in her handbag but there were none to be found.

Soon the Army had the six ministers out and the situation came to a happy conclusion without anybody resorting to cannibalism.

After the incident, one of the ministers involved said that it was lucky it had happened early in the day before any refreshments had been taken: "I cannot begin to imagine what it would have been like if anyone of us had been to the bar."

Yes, you sense the Fianna Fáil-PD partnership might have suffered irrevocable damage if one of the guys involved had peed on the Minister for Health.

Indeed, the only shame is that all those involved in the incident were

in Government. What would have offered a bit of spice to the occasion would have been a couple of members of the opposition stuck in there too.

In fact, perhaps getting two intransigent parties deliberately stuck in a lift together might be the answer to some of politics more difficult conundrums.

Would we have had such a long wait between the Good Friday Agreement and the setting up of power-sharing in the North if the British and Irish Governments had somehow trapped Gerry and Ian into a lift and forced them to spend some hours together a few years back?

And wouldn't the trapped lift be an ideal location for the election debates this year.

Enda and Bertie, and then Michael and Pat are locked in a lift with John Bowman for an hour as the nation watches how they perform in such a pressure-cooker atmosphere through hidden cameras.

Of course, being a politician means you need to have the ability to get out of more tight corners than Michael Schumacher.

To finish up tonight, we look at some more tight spots in political history. Of the following examples, only one is true.

If some reader correctly identifies which one it is, he or she will win an opportunity to spend a half-hour stuck in a lift with the minister of their choice.

● When Winston Churchill was trying to escape from a Boer prisoner camp in South Africa at the beginning of the century, he hid inside a boiler on a train for two days, where he wrote the first part of his memoirs.

● Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, whose assassination in 1914 triggered World War One, was so vain about his appearance that he insisted on being sewn into his clothes for a crease-free effect. After being shot in Sarajevo, he bled to death while his aides searched for a scissors to cut him out of his suit.

● During the Great Depression in California, Richard Nixon's parents were hit as hard as most and, as a child, he and his family spent six months living under a boxing ring in the city of Fresno.

Answer probably next week if I remember to include it.