

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

County Clare and environs are a magical playground for our own little leprechaun

BY JON GOREY
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Between the two of us, my wife and I have visited nearly every corner of Ireland. It's where we first met, when our separate travels brought us briefly together as bunkmates in a Doolin hostel. We returned many times in the years afterward, and even lived in Galway for a summer — where we survived on



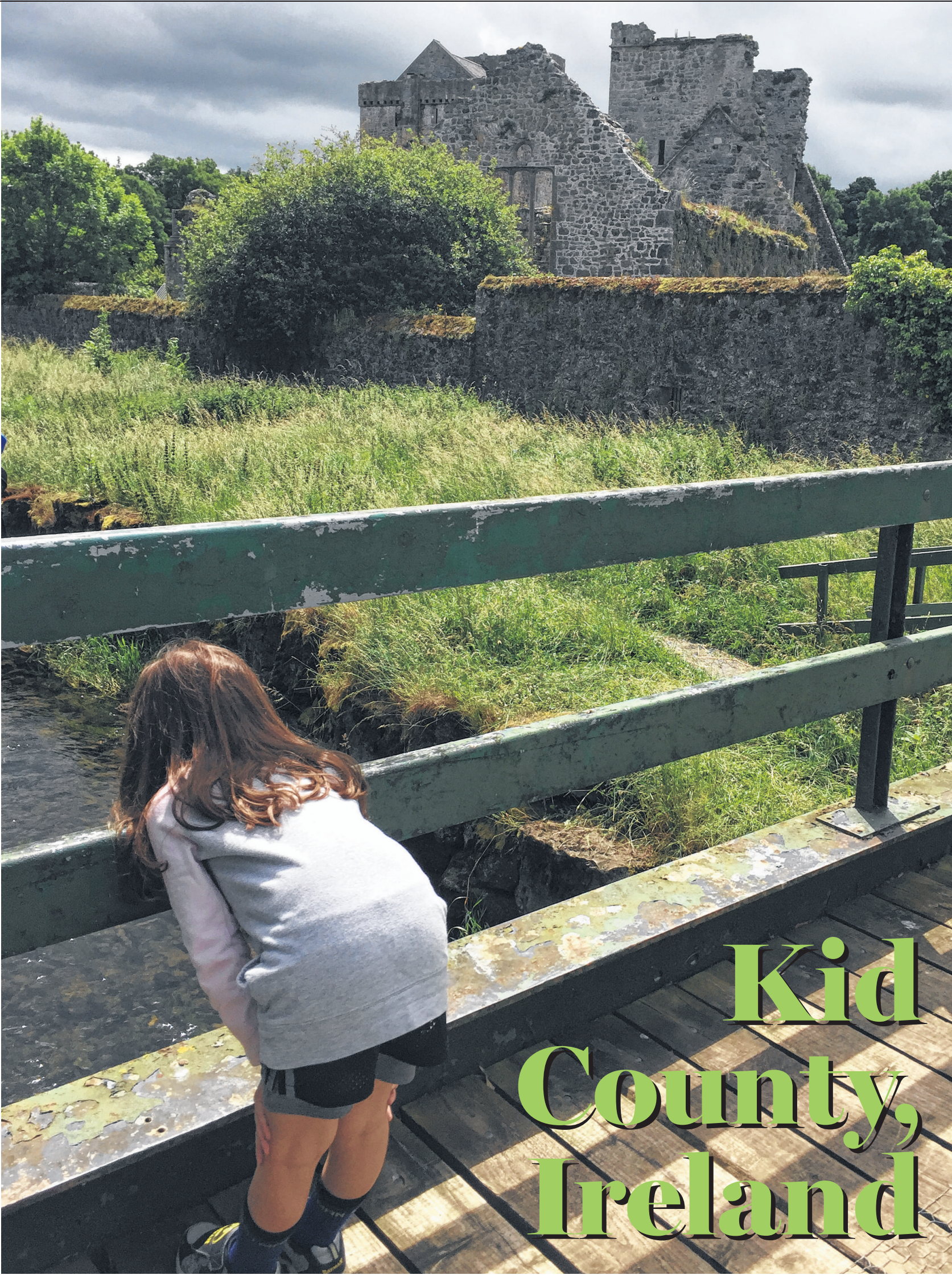
A thatched cottage with gardens provided lodging in Kells.

music and Guinness and watched an already rowdy college town all but explode with energy during the arts festival and the Galway Races.

But now we're returning to Ireland with a very different ambition: finding fairies. We're bringing our daughter for the first time.

Flying across the Atlantic with a 5-year-old can be challenging, but it takes just over five hours from Boston to reach Shannon Airport on Ireland's west coast; it's a shorter flight than our trip to California the year prior. And on a flight to Ireland, yours is rarely the only crying baby or squirmy

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PHOTOS BY GINA FAVATA FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

A stroll along the lazy Kings River to Kells Priory was the perfect way to fill an afternoon.



JOHN ATKINSON/SUGARBUSH RESORT

HERE

TAKE AN UPHILL TOUR IN VT.

Don't miss your chance to ski or snowshoe up Mount Ellen under a full moon and enjoy a scrumptious spread afterward. This season's final Tour de Moon, a free event, takes place March 16 at Sugarbush Resort. Skin or snowshoe up Mount Ellen to Walt's at the Glen House, leaving the base at 4 p.m. with a guide, or travel upward on your own (rent alpine touring equipment from the VT North Ski Shop or snowshoes through Sugarbush). Then enjoy Mount Ellen After Dark from 8 p.m. to midnight at the Green Mountain Lounge, located at the base area, where you'll find free pizza, music, and raffles. www.sugarbush.com

OPT TO EMBRACE THE OUTDOORS

Make the most of March with local outdoor adventures through REI, which hosts guided snowshoe outings, winter survival clinics, and full moon hikes in Massachusetts — on land preserved by the Trustees of Reservations. Snowshoe 2 to 4 miles at Appleton Farms in Hamilton (March 5), Noanet Woodlands in Dover (March 12), and Rocky Woods in

Medfield (March 19), followed by food and drinks at The Raven's Nest in Walpole after each event; no experience necessary, but you must be 21 or older (\$55/\$75 for REI members/nonmembers, which includes snowshoe gear, appetizers, and a beverage). Join a full moon hike at Noanet Woodlands (March 20) and at Turkey Hill in Hingham (March 22) and learn a few safety tips along the way (\$30-\$50). Or learn how to assemble a survival kit, make an emergency shelter, and handle winter emergencies during the Wilderness Survival Winter Skills clinic at Noanet Woodlands on March 9 (\$65-\$85). www.rei.com/events

THERE

DISCOUNTED ALASKA CRUISES FOR KIDS

Time to plan that special multigenerational trip: Lindblad Expeditions will let you bring a child or grandchild for 50 percent off and a second child for free on select 2019 Alaska voyages. The company has

launched two new vessels in the past year, including the National Geographic Quest, which launches this year. It commemorates the new ships with a special family deal on the 8-day Exploring Alaska's Coast Wilderness trip that is valid on about a dozen departures between June and August. Rates start at \$5,990 per person based on double occupancy in a Category 1 cabin, with the starting rate for the first child at \$2,995. The fine print: discounts for the first and second child require two full-paying adults and are good for new bookings only (no previous customers). 800-397-3348, www.expeditions.com

FIND BOAT RENTALS WORLDWIDE

Whether you want to rent a kayak, sleep on a yacht, or book a boat for a SCUBA adventure, check out GetMyBoat.com. This online service/app, which calls itself the "Airbnb of boats," lists thousands of boat rentals and water experiences available around the globe, from chartering a sailboat in Greece to swimming with pigs on a

private boat tour in the Caribbean. GetMyBoat currently lists 130,000 boats rentals and experiences in 184 countries. Search by destination or interest. Each listing includes boat specs and information on pricing, what to expect, rental requirements, and more. Ask the boat owner questions and request a booking directly. Download the app onto your Android or Apple device. www.getmyboat.com

EVERYWHERE

DEMYSTIFY YOUR CAR'S WARNING LIGHTS

A simple diagnostic device can let you know whether that warning light on your personal or rental car needs immediate attention. FIXD, a small sensor, plugs into the onboard diagnostic port of your 1996 or newer gas-powered car (a port typically found underneath or on the front of the dashboard — easy enough for anyone to access and use). Download the FIXD app onto your Bluetooth-enabled smartphone and enter the unique sensor



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code. The sensor can then run a diagnostic test, translate error codes, and relay important information to you through the app — and list any consequences of continuing to drive with the issue. The FIXD app can also keep you informed of recalls, recommend general maintenance work with estimated costs, tell you the reasonable cost of needed parts, and relay live data and individual trip information. Choose to receive a notification as soon as the sensor detects a problem. Works with Android and Apple devices. \$59. 925-854-1766, www.fixdapp.com

KARI BODNARCHUK

