

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Top County winners of Fáilte Ireland Irish Welcome Awards announced...**

20 October 2006

#### **Nominations for 2006 up 50%**

The 26 county winners in the Fáilte Ireland Irish Welcome Awards were announced today at an event in Knappogue, Co. Clare. The county winners, who were all nominated by visitors, were recognised as having made a difference to a holidaymaker's experience. The winners include members of the general public as well as tourism professionals.

Aidan Pender, Director of Enterprise and Skills Development said: "This year has proved to be a great success with an overall increase of 50% in nominations received. I think this substantial increase shows that the traditional Irish Welcome is alive and well across the country. Irish hospitality is one of the top three reasons visitors choose to holiday in Ireland and so it is extremely important that it is recognised, rewarded and encouraged. Stories of goodwill, kindness, compassion and thoughtfulness demonstrated by each county winner go far and beyond visitors' expectations", he added.

The Fáilte Ireland Irish Welcome Awards were set up in 2001 and have grown significantly each year. The Irish Welcome Awards encourage visitors to nominate someone who has made their stay in Ireland more enjoyable, someone who has taken a little bit of personal time or give an extra bit of service that made a difference. The county awards will be presented today at a regional event in Knappogue, Co Clare.



"Irish Welcome Award County Winners Presentation in Ennis"

#### **FEEDBACK FROM OUR NOMINEES...**

Dear Janet,

We are so thrilled you won the County Award. We had been wondering what the result of the competition was – you certainly deserved it. Your kindness and service to us was outstanding. We enjoyed all the B&Bs we stayed in in Ireland, but yours was just that big bit extra.

*Joan and Max Beckman, Mount Waverley, Victoria, Australia*

#### **CONGRATULATIONS JANET**

We are really pleased that you are COUNTY WINNER.....YIPEEEEEEEEEEE WELL DONE

Its well deserved, we never had any doubt that you'd win, so glad you enjoyed the reception and hope you didn't have a bad head in the morning!!

*Des (and Claire) O'Donovan, - Southampton, England*