

# The land of clover with Amazing Irish Tours

By Dominique Garcia

When Julie Wise first traveled to Ireland about a year ago, she was so fascinated by it that she decided to form her own tour guide company to share her experience.

The Corpus Christi native's company, Amazing Irish Tours, LLC, was founded in March 2009 and offers a week-long tour guide of Ireland each month.

When organizing a tour group, the 51-year-old likes to make sure that the group is not any larger than 20-35 people to prevent overcrowding in the bus while traveling.

"I want it to be the way I would want a vacation to be," Wise said.

The idea of traveling to Ireland was stirred up about five years ago when Wise learned that Robert Parks, a Carroll High School history teacher, was organizing a group of students for travel to Europe.

That year, a group of high school students, including Wise's son, took a three-week long trip across Europe organized by Parks and chaperoned by Wise, along with other parents. Wise later questioned Parks, who is now retired, if he would ever be interested in guiding a group of adults to travel abroad.

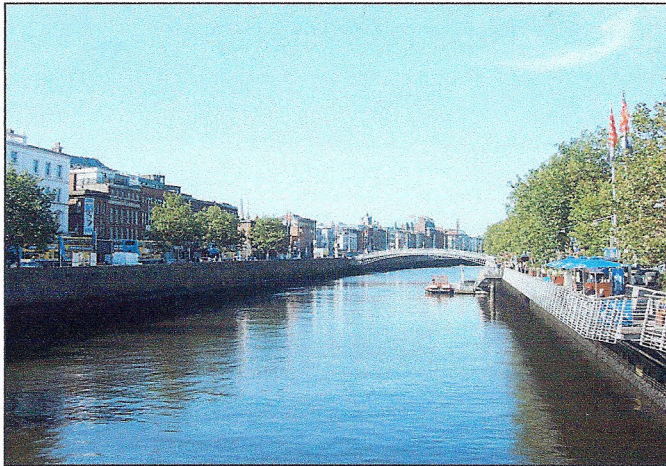
Last year, her wish was granted.

Parks organized a local group of six adults to go to Ireland and Scotland.

"It was like going home," Wise said. "It's a very peaceful and very laid-back country."

However, Amazing Irish Tours' participants are not limited solely to the South Texas area customers. Wise has customers who book tours from as far as Nebraska and Wisconsin.

The tour package includes: 10 nights at three and four-star hotels, 10 breakfasts, six dinners, private deluxe



Julie Wise, owner of Amazing Irish Tours, created a tour guide company to share her love of Ireland with the world. She takes tourists to places such as the views of River Liffey in Dublin, Ireland. *Contributed photo by Julie Wise*

coach, licensed tour guide and trips to Aran Islands, Cliff of Moher, Ring of Kerry, Rock of Cashel and Kylemore Abbey, according to the company's Web site. Airfare is not included.

Once a group is registered for a tour, the group meets up in Newark and together continues onward throughout the trip.

Wise notes that each trip is not the same.

"If a group wants to tell me where else they would like to go, then that's fine with me," Wise said.

Sometimes some members of the group want to visit the different golf courses throughout Ireland, where golf originated, Wise said, while others

want to do more sight-seeing or shopping.

Ireland gets a lot of rain, Wise said. She noted that they receive about 14 inches of rain a month, which is why a majority of the land

there is so green.

Wise says that what she loves the most about Ireland is how friendly the people are and how they welcomed Americans.

"I just fell in love with it," Wise said. "The people there are so friendly."

Wise's plans for the future of her company are to convince more church groups to participate in the tours.

She has already begun to work with her minister, Mark Salmon, of Grace Presbyterian Church, to organize a group and tour Ireland and Scotland in September and October 2010.

Salmon, 60, notes that he they have already started to advertise throughout the church and will be signing up and registering those who are interested any day now.

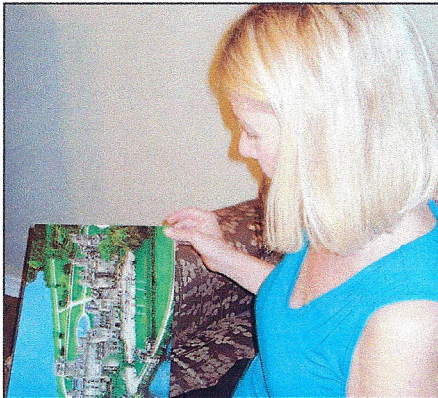
"It won't be just limited to the church," Salmon said.

Salmon said that he was very excited and looking forward to the trip. He said that he has been to other countries through his church and on his own, but has never been to Ireland.

He said that Wise's passion for Ireland shows that she is not just a person who owns a company and who simply takes people to Ireland.

"Julie has a great passion for this," Salmon said. "You get so much more out of it from a person who knows (Ireland) and loves it the way that she does."

For more information about Amazing Irish Tours, LLC, call Julie Wise at 361-442-9377, e-mail [julie@amazingirish-tours.com](mailto:julie@amazingirish-tours.com) or visit [www.amazingirish-tours.com](http://www.amazingirish-tours.com)



Julie Wise, owner of Amazing Irish Tours, created a tour guide company to share her love of Ireland with the world. *Contributed photo by Dominique Garcia.*