

The Irishman who lives in Pittsburgh: John Monroe

One of John's favorite quotes . . .

"Here's a man who lives his life like a pint of Guinness – always surrounded by great friends and family."

Forty-four million Americans proudly share an Irish ancestry, and Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium SSA HR Manager John Monroe is one of them.

With the Irish gift for charm and gab, John explained his love of most everything Irish.

◆ *His favorite holiday is St. Patrick's Day.*

◆ *His favorite drink is Guinness, which is Ireland's most popular drink.*

◆ *His favorite book is THE PRINCES OF IRELAND, which weaves historical research with the stories of Ireland and its people.*

◆ *He has a strong desire to discover Ireland. He claims his first European trip will be to the homeland, even though his wife would rather go to Rome.*

◆ *He enjoys playing golf when he has time, a game developed in nearby Scotland.*

◆ *He likes to fish on the Pennsylvania western shore of Lake Erie and*



A true Irishman . . . John Monroe.

its famous steelhead tributaries. And Ireland has amazing fishing opportunities as well.

◆ *His favorite food isn't corned beef and cabbage, but corn on the cob.*

There's more to John than just a love of everything Irish. He loves sports: football, hockey, even baseball and volleyball. Sports in Pitts-

burgh have been played dating back to the American Civil War. Baseball, hockey and the first professional American football game had been played in the city by 1895.

However, John didn't share what his favorite colors are. But they're probably yellow and black. Pittsburgh is the only city in the United States in which all professional sporting teams share the same colors. They are the colors of the flag of Pittsburgh, that are based on the colors of William Pitt's coat of arms.

Another love of John's is his wife, Susan. They were married in 2009. She's also a Pittsburgh native, and the pair met while attending a fundraiser that involved a pub crawl and scavenger hunt. Their dog named Guinness is a black lab mix with white paws.

While John may be fanatical about Pittsburgh sports, he's equally fanatical about the Dave Matthews Band. The band is



The Irish consider shamrocks a symbol of luck; and John was certainly lucky when he met his future wife at a fundraiser.

known for their annual summer-long tours of the US and Europe. In fact, John has seen 36 shows; at one point he



John had a front row seat while volunteering at the 2007 Open at the Oakmont Country Club.

attended seven shows in eight days. Luckily each concert is slightly different as the band performs lengthy improvisational renditions of their songs that are accompanied by an elaborate video and lighting show. Coincidentally his wife also enjoys the band's eclectic sounds.

John attended Slippery Rock University and got a rock solid education in resort and recreation management. The university is located in the rolling hills of western Pennsylvania, about an hour north of Pittsburgh.

Except for time working as catering manager for Aramark while in college and being a paper boy at a young age, John has always worked with SSA at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium. He started in 1992 as a bus boy on the patio.

As the Regional HR Manager, John now views himself as a coach or mentor. He said, "I like mentoring these young professionals and seeing them succeed." One of his biggest business accomplishments was when SSA was nomi-

nated and won the Power of Work Award, which was sponsored by Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania to recognize employers who help people with special needs overcome barriers to employment.

John shared that few people probably know that he was a starter on his college volleyball team. His love of sports and competition has made him a competitive person, which is good as he uses this willpower to accomplish weight loss goals or other challenges in both his personal and professional life.

This trait, along with John's love of life and laughter, makes him a "goonie." By definition, a goonie is anyone who understands the meaning of *The Goonies*, a 1985 American adventure-comedy film and John's favorite. The film features a club of seven friends who go on a treasure hunt below the earth to find a buried treasure, and through this journey, the friends demonstrate the principles of friendship, adventure and awesomeness. Traits that John certainly displays on a regular basis.