



Last summer, the Kerryman pub and restaurant created a "garden oasis" for its outdoor diners.

# The greening of an Irish pub

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The first tulips unfolded in the shadowy canyons of the Loop this week, but they were not spring's first outdoor city blooms. That distinction likely goes to the purple and yellow pansies that have been bobbing on the breeze in their wood and copper planter boxes outside the Kerryman, 616 N. Clark, for a month. They've been joined by yellow, lavender and orange ranunculus, another cold weather annual.

General manager Martin Courneane said he was anxious to resume the sidewalk "garden oasis" at Clark and Erie that drew customers to the Irish pub and restaurant last summer, soon after it opened for business in late April.

"We decided having a 'Wow!' was worth it," he said.

Details: "We had hanging baskets, long planters, high and flowing stuff — I don't even know what

it's called. Seventy percent of customers who came through the door said they drove by, saw the display and wanted to see what was going on. We had Tiki lamps, lights — it was a 'Survivor'-type thing."

## A PATCH OF GREEN

An occasional Lifestyles feature that examines the rituals, spirituality and community of gardening.

Orange-red canna lilies and tall grasses created a buffer between outdoor diners and the street. From above, hanging baskets spill sweet potato vines, bidens, nemophila and other flowers. The Kerryman's garden will bloom again as the weather warms, Cour-

neane said.

"It's a great feeling, for me, to be surrounded by growing things," he said. "Living in a concrete jungle, it's so important to be touched by nature. It's amazing to be sitting right downtown, and you don't notice the traffic. It carries people away. Any time you can get some green, it's an opportunity to make somebody feel good, including me."

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