

Free Press Editorial Page

What's your concern?

Probably at no time have Actonians had more things to worry about.

The people have had to band together on a couple of occasions recently to put their case to councils, in particular the 2,000 signature petitions on the saving of the town hall and requesting a review of regional government.

But there are a lot of smaller concerns, too. Like the road work, vandalism, Meals on Wheels, parking. Not to mention tax increases, and the mysterious reasons for them.

The planned improvement for

downtown will affect the whole town.

The Chamber of Commerce has invited the three town councillors to attend a special Public Forum to be held Wednesday, November 2. As well there will be well-informed representatives of various government departments there.

Among them, they should be able to produce explanations for many of the things that are vexing in these days of change.

The people of the town will surely respond to the opportunity and attend this special meeting called especially to provide the people of Acton and area with information.

Back to the leaves

The delightful smell of burning leaves is seldom enjoyed in the late autumn any more. The awareness that it's "against the law" lingers unpleasantly in the mind.

The Department of the Environment decided a few years ago smoke emissions from all sources were too high, and everything possible should be done to eliminate smoke and purify our air.

But up above, smoke drifts cozily from more and more fireplaces in town and district. This old-time necessity has been revived. New homes include fireplaces, and older homes are having them added. The value in heat expense of wood or ready-made logs is a favorite topic of discussion.

Actually, Department of the

Environment, is there much difference between smoke from an October bonfire and smoke from a fireplace?

The joy of raking leaves on a sunny afternoon, like last Saturday, is dampened a little by the effort of bagging all those leaves. And the huge quantity of leaves just adds to the volume and cost of garbage.

Acton produces 60 tons of garbage in one single week now. Those crisp yellow leaves are adding their share.

While composting is the natural route for leaves, many of us don't have the room or time to do it properly.

So where does all this leave us? Back out in the leaves . . .

Kids and smoking

It's distressing to see the young age at which our local young people smoke.

Even public school children think they look jaunty as they walk to school with a cigarette burning in the hand.

They won't likely be the ones to attend the local Cancer Society's film night, dealing with cancer and young people, but their teachers

are all being especially invited to attend.

Children begin smoking at grade three level now. Each year in Canada 5,000 people die of lung cancer, and it is usually fatal. Smoking causes cancer!

The facts are simple, yet so many choose to ignore them.

The more publicity, the better.

Of this and that

The Rat and The Goose by Fred Euringer. That's the first story in an anthology of new Canadian stories that's available in the library.

Fred grew up in Acton, going on to become a playwright and author. He now lives out west. His mother lived here for some years after Fred had left for school and career, and she and Fred were back for a visit not long ago.

The story takes place in Acton, when his father was still alive, and begins "And then another one of my phobias goes back to an affair I had with a rat . . ."

It's dated about 1944 or 1945.

Mentioned in an off-hand way is a classmate who had six toes, and Acton friends verify the fact.

Heroic Germans of many faiths, who suffered and died rather than compromise with Nazism, should be among those honored on Remembrance Day. The United Church Observer says editorially in its current issue.

"We seem to have forgotten that vast numbers of German Christians accepted imprisonment and death rather than give in to Hitler," The Observer points out. At least 4,000 Roman Catholic priests died by "hanging, starvation, lack of medical aid and as victims of medical experiments," it says.

A papal encyclical, to be read from every Catholic pulpit in Germany on Palm Sunday, 1937, called on the people to resist the idolatrous cult of "race and state." Hitler was infuriated by the church's defiance. The Observer says, and from then until 1945 "waged systematic war" on it.

Let's hope the regional review committee hasn't lost sight of the brief from Acton, with its comments on regional government.

Soon children across the country will undergo a mysterious and magical change from child to ghost, goblin or any number of other beings from the imagination in observance of a special holiday just for kids—Hallowe'en night. Therefore motorists, if you must drive on Halloween night, keep a sharp eye out for trick-or-treaters walking in the dark!

Television violence is getting clobbered!

The report on violence in the media finally forces people to consider the fact that there are more important things to consider in programming than which program will sell the sponsors' products best.

A medical study, also released recently, has found that television violence can even make people physically sick. Doctors recognize the relationship between television watching and problems related to violence.

Parents are beginning to realize they must be discriminating.



FALL MEANS falling leaves, and a Free Press photographer captured the feeling in this shot of a tree surrounded by its summer foliage.

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press October 25, 1967

A walkathon to raise money for U.N.I.C.E.F. is being arranged this week by an eager group of Robert Little students. Other groups are also planning other special events to raise money.

On Saturday morning at 8 o'clock a group of energetic R.L. students will set out from Orangeville to walk to Acton, with sponsors.

Peter Morrison is chairman of the group of youngsters who are pledged to wash windows of stores for two dollars the day after Hallowe'en.

An old fashioned pancake social is the project of grade eight classes.

Official opening of the \$300,000 nine room addition to Brookville Public School in Nassagaweya Township will take place Friday evening.

Again this year Acton Firefighters will be calling door-to-door for donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada. On the campaign committee are Herb Dodds, Hilliard Price, Don Van Fleet, and Alf Duby.

The Lions Club of Acton decided to sponsor a public speaking contest for high school students with first prize a trip to Chicago, U.S.A. during Easter week, at their regular dinner meeting Monday.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press October 31, 1947

With Remembrance Day on November 11, the Acton Branch of the Canadian Legion have been busy arranging for Poppy Day and the Remembrance Day service.

In this issue of the Free Press Mayor E. Tyler has proclaimed Monday, November 11, as Remembrance Day in Acton.

Bruce Andrews, 17, of Acton added another feat to his running accomplishments Saturday at Hamilton. Competing in the two and a half mile race at the Canadian Cross Country championships, Bruce crossed the finish line 31 seconds ahead of the previous record.

Proceeds from the sale will go towards buying equipment for the Y, states Y secretary Dave Docherty.

In the summer of 1956, a Toronto Scout saved the life of a Rockwood boy and when thanked for his deed remarked, "All I would like in thanks is to see the young boy become a Cub Scout." On Monday of this week, the Scout's wish became a reality when Douglas Robbins, 9, of Rockwood, was invested into the First Rockwood Cub (Grey) Pack.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, October 27, 1927

The town's new high school was opened for public inspection Saturday. Students started using the classes Monday. A neat portico was erected over the doorway. A beautiful stained glass window is at the head of the stairway and enhances the building's appearance. Most of the floors are of birch throughout.

The new school boasts nearly 600 feet of black board in four rooms. Special attention was given to the school's forced air ventilator.

Council sanctioned the purchase of 100 feet of fire hose and necessary hydrant wrenches.

A \$5 fine and costs were laid in police court at Georgetown because a milk dealer tried to evade a bylaw concerning pasteurized milk. The man separated the milk, sold the cream, and gave away the milk.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, October 25, 1877

We learn that several of our young men have organized themselves a company for the purpose of building a large skating and curling rink in the village. The proposed location is on low ground opposite M. Speight's barber shop. We have no doubt that the investment can be made a profitable one if properly managed.

After a long rest, the Village Council met for business Thursday. The minutes of the last meeting in June were read and adopted. Approved for payment for the year were the assessor's salary \$20, collector's salary \$20, streets and sidewalks accounts of \$350, county rate, \$115, charity \$34 and uncollectable taxes \$25.

Mr. Christie introduced the subject of the great need of something being done toward procuring a site for a new cemetery. He referred to the delapidated condition of the burying ground and injurious effects of continuing to inter the dead in so close proximity to the centre of the village.



Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

It's a pretty good idea to stop once in a while and give thanks. It doesn't have to be Thanksgiving Day, but it's a good time as any. It's a day to take stock, look around, be glad you're alive, and if you have anything at all to be thankful about, perhaps mutter "Thank God."

There are a few—a very few—who haven't one single thing in the world to be thankful about, and my heart goes out to them. But most of us, if we are honest, can find all sorts of things if we dig around in the detritus of our lives.

For example, my wife is inclined to get bags under her eyes on the slightest provocation. I never get them, which makes her furious, because she is five years younger than I and infinitely better looking.

"Why do you never get bags?" she snarks at me.

"Because I have a pure heart and a

clean mind," I retort, which doubles her fury.

She is the one who does Yoga exercises and goes on diets. And gains weight. I am the one who never does anything more strenuous than take the cap off a bottle of beer, eats anything in sight, and has a waist like a wasp.

You see, there's lots to be thankful for. Just being alive is one thing. Millions of people aren't. And while things may be pretty groovy in heaven, and pretty gruesome in hell, I doubt seriously that either has as much to offer as being a human on this rotten earth.

I have bursitis in my shoulder, arthritis in my foot, disintegrating discs in my spine and a tooth that falls out every time I bite anything more substantial than a banana.

But on the other hand, I don't have cancer, a bum heart, high blood pressure, diabetes, or the crud. I can still hobble around 18 holes of golf, catch a fish, and

stay up till four o'clock in the morning and put in a good day's work. Boy, am I thankful.

I'm happy to be a Canadian, although it gets a little harder each year, what with inflation, unemployment, pollution, separatism and a Liberal government that is trying to get every nickel out of me before I die so I can't take it with me.

But even the government can't destroy our delight in a Canadian fall.

I've been in England, Belgium, Holland and Germany in the autumn. And believe you me, baby, none of them is within 1,000 light years of our wild and glorious October, when the Mad Artist starts throwing the colors on His palette.

I am delighted to have two grandsons, although I would be enchanted with a granddaughter, and have spoken seriously to my daughter about this. And I am deeply grateful that the little one, who went into hospital with meningitis last spring, suffered no lasting effects and is about as sturdy as a Sherman tank.

I am quite thankful that only three of the shutters are missing from my house. Instead of three, they could all have blown off in those terrible storms last winter. And I expect to have the three back on any year now.

This year, I am thankful to have a Grade Nine class to teach. What a pleasure their bright minds and faces are after coping with the blasé apathy of senior students for several years.

The boys are naive and eager. The girls haven't yet decided to become sexpots. They haven't really formed yet the masks they will present to society in a year or so.

In fact, I'm exceedingly thankful to have a job I like. Many, many persons don't have a job at all, or hate the one they're doing.

I can take keen young minds, and within a year or two have them writing and spelling like this: "The squirrel wich was in the tree leaped onto the fence were he seen several aykorns redly to be ate." It's fascinating, how one can mold young minds.

Another thing to be extremely thankful for is the ability to sleep. My wife has insomnia. A lot of my friends have it. I can lie down after any kind of a hellish day and flake out like an old rubber boot, to rise, fresh and dewey-eyed (no bgas remember), for the next day's fray.

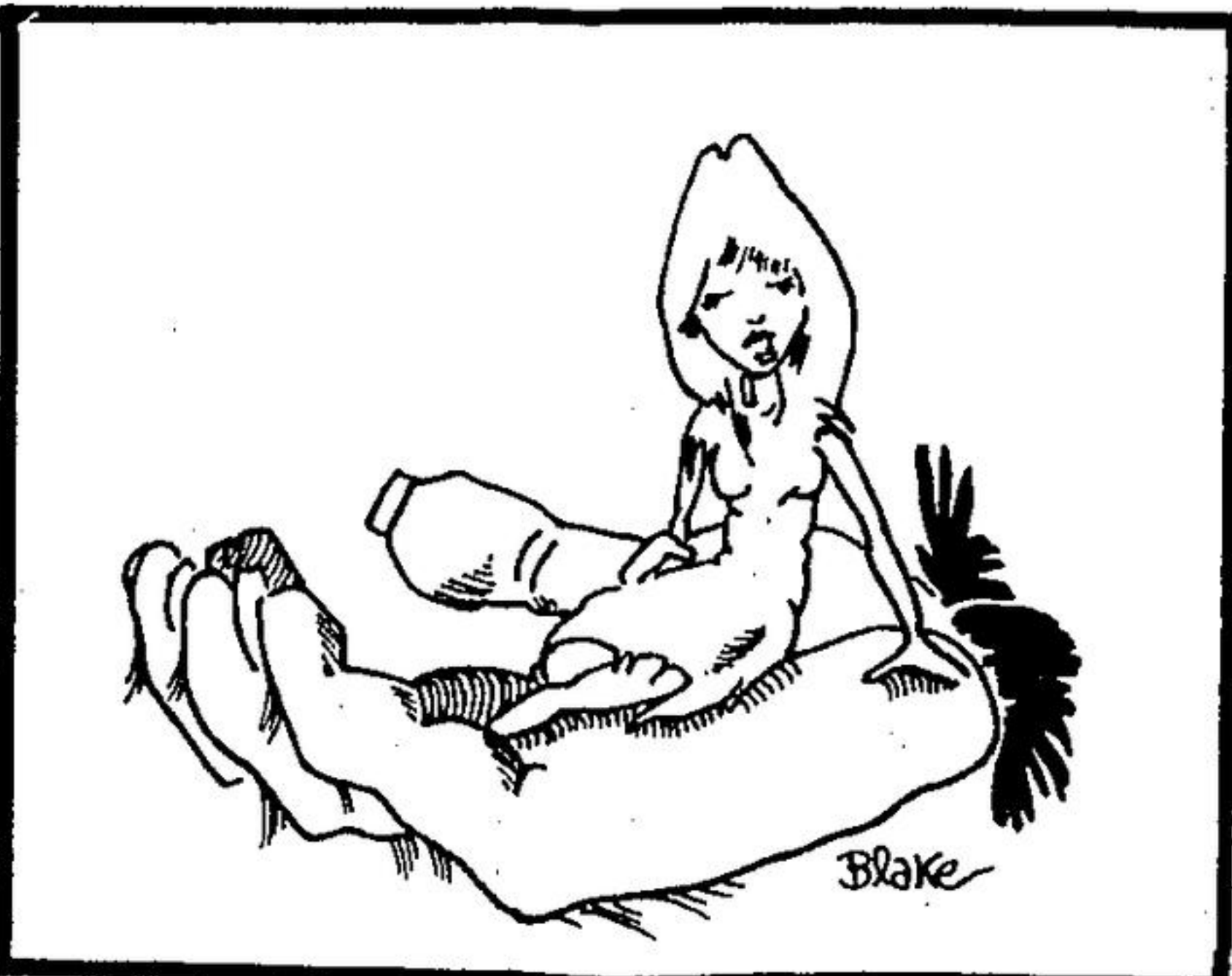
I'm glad I'm not ugly. I am far from handsome, but I don't scare little children. Hell, if I got my teeth capped, dyed my hair and had a face-lift, I could pass for 58, which I will be next June.

I'm thankful that I have a few friends, and doubly thankful, that they are all in worse shape than I.

My nose has been broken so often I can't smell a thing. This detracts a little from enjoyment of food. But it also means I can't smell onion breath, whiskey breath, body odor or dead mice between the walls. That's the good old silver lining.

I'm a little resentful that my wife is so young and vibrant. But at the same time, I'm thankful. When I get old and miserable, and start dribbling down my front, I'll have a built-in nurse. Provided she doesn't run off with the mailman. If he isn't on strike.

Finally, I'm sincerely thankful that our cat has taken off for greener pastures; my garage hasn't fallen down; my wife tolerates me; and I have nearly finished this column. Thank You, God.



I'M SORRY, KONG. I WAS SURE YOU'D MAKE 'PET OF THE WEEK'

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