

GRAPEVINE



Leahy fundraiser

You can bet toes will be tapping as fiddler Frank Leahy – cousin of the Canadian Celtic group Leahy – makes two performances next Saturday (October 19) at the John Elliott Theatre in Georgetown as a fundraiser for the Acton Agricultural Society's building fund.

Leahy, a former national fiddle playing champion and his Hot Hot Band will present a "hip, new" show according to his PR, with music showing Latin, jazz, Celtic, swing and classical influences.

Leahy will also perform traditional tunes on a violin owned by the late, famous Maritime fiddler Don Messer.

For show times and ticket prices call the box office 905-877-3700.

Buggy boys

Don't be surprised if a well-scrubbed boy in an Acton Tanner hockey sweater offers to help bag and take your groceries out to your car tomorrow (Friday).

With the support of the Acton IGA, the Novice Nelles Construction rep team of seven and eight-year-olds, who want to work for some money and not just ask for donations, will accept tips from customers who accept their help.

The boys, with parental support, will be at the store from 9 to 11 a.m. and again from 3 to 6 p.m. Money raised will help pay for tournaments and other team necessities.

Lock up procedure

If an unannounced stranger or intruder enters Acton High School, a message over the PA system would say, "Go to lock up – immediately," sending students to the closest classroom to report to a teacher and be locked in.

The school practiced the new lock down system, which augments existing first aid, fire drill and power failure procedures yesterday.

Classrooms, the library, the cafeteria servery, north end of the soccer fields and north end of the neighbouring street are designated as gathering areas and everyone is urged to move quickly to the safe areas to avoid being caught in a potentially "vulnerable position."

In a note home to parents, Principal Bill Taylor said the lock down procedure would be activated if a visitor/intruder didn't check in at the office as required, and their behavior or presence was deemed to be potentially injurious to students or staff.

Halton police monitored yesterday's lock up exercise and their comments will be used to refine the procedures.

Harmony closes

Touch of Harmony, the holistic treatment haven on Mill Street is closing its doors at the end of the month after four years in Acton.

Owner Joyce Grozier said her husband's heartstrings have been pulled by the sound of a bagpiper and they are moving to the Fergus area.

Grozier said requests from her faithful clients convinced her to stay past the end of September and she hopes someone will come in, buy the business and take over.

"I'm willing to train somebody if there's someone to take over," she said, adding leaving her clients without care "really tears me up."

While Grozier offers a wide range of services – ear candling, reflexology and massage to name a few –

lately she's had a lot of clients from Milton, where tough new smoking rules are in place, who want to use hypnosis to try to stop smoking.

While it looked like a Filipino couple from Mississauga were going to rent the Touch of Harmony location on Mill Street for a nail salon, sources say they balked last week at signing a long-term lease and are now reconsidering opening in Acton.

The building in question, owned by the Wong family in Acton, is for sale.

The former Déjà Vu consignment shop next door at 16 Mill Street, also owned by the Wongs, has been repainted and will officially open on October 15 as the new Acton BIA (Business Improvement Area) office.

After years of using a donated office at the old Hide House, space now needed for that growing business, the BIA board of managers voted to relocate to the downtown area.

The former part-time BIA coordinator Josey Bonnette has been contracted to fill a new full time position of coordinator/ maintenance person as of January 1.

Bonnette said she hopes the move will give the BIA more of a presence downtown and become more accessible to its 84 members.

The BIA is a geographic area in downtown Acton whose members are property owners and business people within that area.

The elected board of management has a two-fold mandate to improve, beautify and maintain land and buildings within the BIA, and to promote the downtown as a business and shopping area.

Walk-a-thon challenges

Acton's Helen Dubeau, president of Halton Hills Community Support (HHCSI) has signed up some far-flung friends (from Pennsylvania and B.C.), in her quest to gather more pledges than United Way of Halton Hills president Brian Clark for their upcoming joint walk-a-thon in Acton next Sunday (October 20.)

Dubeau plans to walk in Acton and Georgetown and while the challenge is good-natured, it will be the community that benefits, she said.

Acton's Dean Haughie better be in top form for the walk-a-thon. The chair of the United Way's campaign west in Acton has been challenged to raise the most pledges by his daughter Joanne, the new Miss Acton.

The walk-a-thon begins and ends at HHCSI's Mill Street HQ at noon and will feature refreshments.

Schools, groups and individual walkers raising the most pledges will receive prizes, at a later date.

Walkers rule

Congrats to the 260 students at Robert Little School, three-quarters of the school's population, who walked to and from school last Wednesday – for their health and that of the environment – as part of an international Walk to School day.

Blood clinic

Local residents are asked to give the gift of life at the blood donor clinic next Thursday (October 17)

The clinic, at the Legion on Wright Avenue, runs from 4 to 8 p.m.



BUGGY BOYS: Members of the Acton Novice Nelles Construction Tanners hockey squad plan to earn some tips for their team by helping IGA shoppers bag and carry out their groceries tomorrow (Friday). The team includes: **BACK ROW;** Defensive Coach, Dave Butson, Ass't Coach, Randy Wells, Trainer, Craig Banks. **MIDDLE ROW;** Holden Carachi, Dylan Agnew, Gavin Ragan, Tyler Christopher, Mitchell Brake, Jeff Curry, Ryan Dunlevy, Brett Banks. **FRONT ROW;** Scott Garvie, Eric Butson, Joshua Tremblay, Coach Bill Curry, Walter Kirkness, Mitchell Christopher and Gregory Wells. – Submitted photo

Considering Canadian values

Let's see now; convicted murderers live in very comfortable rooms with access to steak bar-b-ques, birthday parties and modern conveniences. Who cares? The federal government shovels out money to cronies and loses track of over a billion dollars in a HRDC boondoggle. Yawn! Our Prime Minister spends a hundred million dollars on executive jets while our search and rescue helicopters are held together with a spit and a prayer, heavy on the prayer. So? Ron MacLean didn't get a raise and he quit. What? How can that happen? This atrocity must be put right! All of Canada in enraged.

Don't get me wrong. I love hockey and am a fan of Ron MacLean. I seldom miss Coach's Corner. It's a great act. But that's all it is – it's entertainment – it's an act. It's not important.

This is a great country but sometimes I wonder how we have our collective head screwed on. We become outraged when we learn that a TV personality has to scrape by on a lousy half-million dollars a year. "That's not respectful," we cry. If cable companies increase our rates we go nuts. When soldiers, who risk their lives for us, have to resort to food banks the country gives a collective shrug.

We have some serious problems as a nation. Our political masters play us like a cheap guitar but we don't seem to have the sense to resent it. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say we don't have the resolve to resent it.

Meanwhile, the CBC folded and re-signed Ron MacLean to a big contract. Many seniors live on or below the poverty line. Our health care system is imploding. University/College students graduate with a crushing debt. But Don Cherry has his straight man back.

All's well in the great white north.

I heard a radio commentator recently defending Martha Stewart by saying her dumping ImClone stock was no big deal. His premise was that, in her overall portfolio, this deal was such small potatoes she would scarcely have noticed it.

I disagree. I think people are fed up with senior executives enriching themselves at the expense of the rest of us. Recent revelations of corporate wrong doing at companies like

**The Way
I See It**
with
Mike O'Leary



Enron have us all wondering just how rotten things are at the top.

In Canada we have Northern Telecom. A year or so ago the stock traded at \$120. These days you can pick it up at the dollar store since it hit 80¢. Most of us had shares in our retirement funds. How many think the decision-makers that precipitated this disaster face the same financial consequences we do?

If Martha is guilty, I hope to see her carted off in handcuffs during the six o'clock news. This scandal is part of the reason shares in her company have lost sixty percent of their value. The little investor who put their money in her company takes it in the ear again. You can bet that Martha baby has her millions stuffed in a very fashionable sock.

Corporate executives used to feel a responsibility to their employees and their stockholders. These days there's too many of them whose obvious greed is obscene. We must be careful not to tar all senior executives with the same brush. The majority of companies are still well run. It's the high flyers who need to be brought down.

As for the corrupt ones; I say clap them in irons. That would be a good thing.

It appears the provincial Tories are feeling the heat over electricity prices. The government is investigating recent increases in electricity and natural gas prices. There doesn't, however, seem to be any relief coming anytime soon.

I'm suspicious about this "extraordinary demand" caused by our hot summer. Supposedly this demand drove up prices. Air conditioners were blamed for a big part of the increase.

While many homes and businesses are air-conditioned, not all are. So what's going to happen this winter? All homes, businesses and factories are heated and those furnaces run constantly. Our lights are on longer and we use stoves and ovens more in winter. Does it not follow, therefore, that electrical demand in winter will be even higher than in summer?

The government is trying to tell us

that over the course of a year our electrical bills will even out. How? Do they expect demand to go down over the next six winter months? Are we to expect brownout alerts all winter?

I fear we've been sold down the river with this de-regulation. They can't blame the hydro debt because we're paying that off by way of a special levy. Our hydro bill is now so complicated you get a headache figuring it out. That bothers me because of the old saying "Bull#@#! Baffles brains."

Friends, we're being "baffled" here.

It's no secret that I have, for the most part, supported the provincial government. Their handling of the Toronto tent city squatters is causing me to reconsider that support.

I heard about the plan to give those people first and last month rent deposits, and a six-month subsidy, while driving home from London. I was so furious it's a miracle I got home in one piece. Why should 110 squatters be the recipients of such government largesse?

It's not the money involved, purported to be \$400,000 over a year, it's the precedent. If you want free rent just illegally occupy someone else's property and uncle Ernie will bail you out. It's preposterous. It certainly isn't the policy of the government I supported.

And what happens after six months? Are these people, many of whom had squatted for years, suddenly, going to be transformed into hard working, rent-paying citizens? More likely, we'll be on the hook for their rent forever. If these apartments suffer any damage (look at the tent city pictures) who pays for that? The Premier or the taxpayer?

I agreed with Mike Harris that some belt tightening was necessary. I didn't support all his policies but believed we'd be better off in the long run. I still do.

I will not support a Premier who throws taxpayer money around in a fashion Bob Rae would not even dare. There are so many people who could use some rental assistance more than this particular group. I find this decision disgusting and totally unacceptable.

If this is how Premier Eves intends to use Ontario tax-dollars: Count me out!