

Long term planning for Acton outlined

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

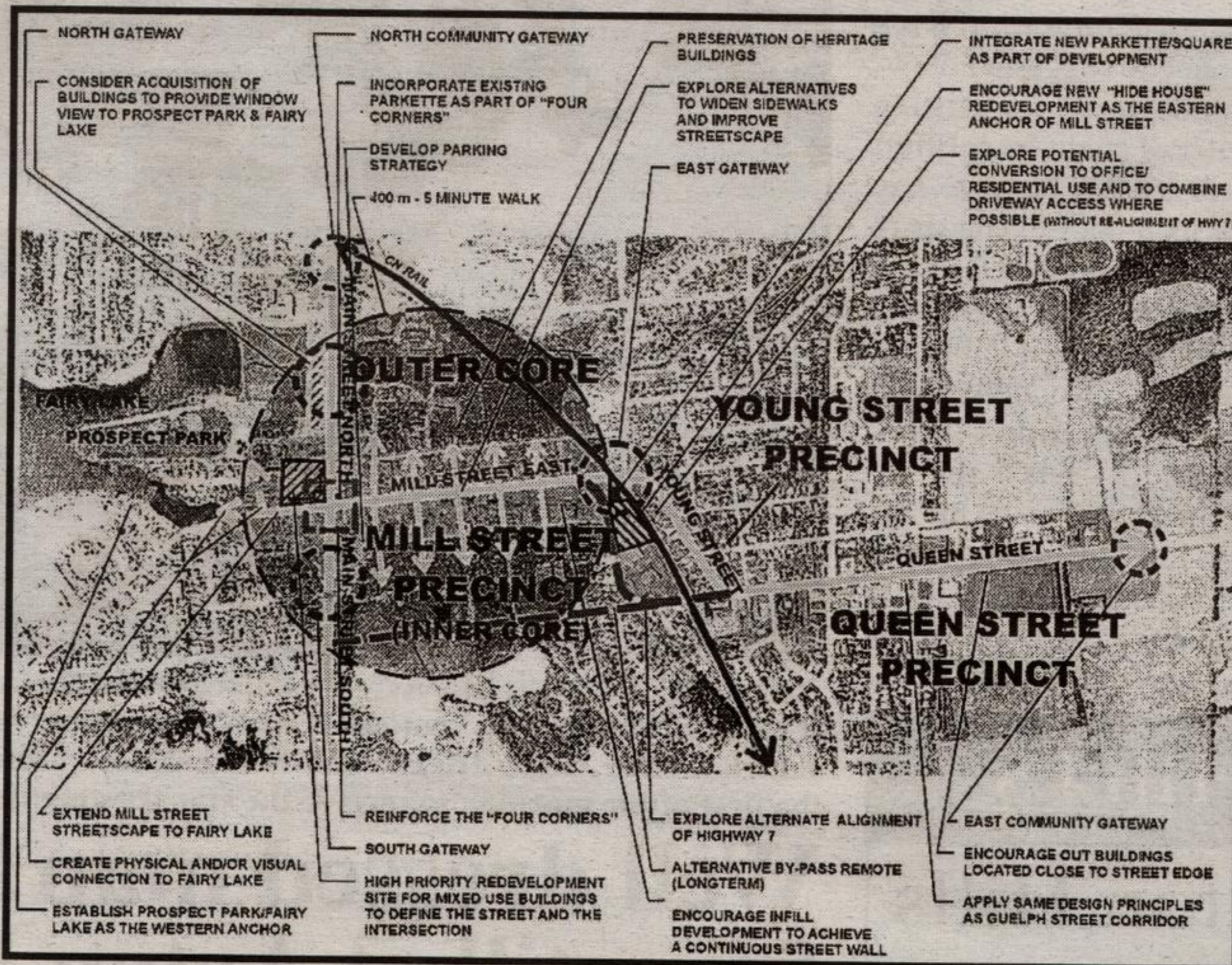
Acton's future could include a Highway 7 diversion, one side only parking downtown on Mill Street and a showcased Fairy Lake.

New urban design guidelines, presented to Council recently, will be used as framework for the Town's updated Official Plan, the blueprint for managing growth and protecting the unique character of Halton Hills.

Planning consultant Jason Wu said in partnership with the private sector, the guidelines would preserve existing natural features, maintain a high quality of public developments like parks, trails and open spaces, and establish "gateways" to help rejuvenate the downtown shopping areas in Acton and Georgetown.

The consultant identified four precincts in Acton including Mill Street, Queen Street, downtown and Young Street. The long-term look for development has it built closer to the road for a more defined street edge, with a continuous and consistent streetscape of wider sidewalks and unified landscaping, lighting and roadways.

Urban design guidelines suggests the Town should capitalize on the existing olde Hide House attractions by developing a square or parkette at the corner of Mill Street and the CN Rail crossing, a gateway area to link the downtown and Acton East Street shopping areas.



That plan is tied to a suggestion to investigate an alternate alignment of Highway 7 from Queen Street along Eastern Avenue to Mill Street, subject to the possible extension of Queen Street to Highway 25, which would require an environmental assessment.

Acton Councillor Clark Somerville believes the realignment would be incredibly expensive.

"I don't think it will fly. I think it would be too expensive right off the bat," Somerville said after the meeting.

He's the Acton BIA (Business Improvement Area) rep on

Council and is pleased the new design guidelines incorporate many of the ideas of a streetscape plan done by the BIA several years ago.

Somerville also predicted which item would bring downtown merchants "out of the woodwork."

"If you ever want to have a meeting that's very well attended...just talk about banning parking on one side of the road," he said.

If Highway 7 were realigned along Eastern Avenue, Young Street would be designated as a residential area, but conversions to offices are the plan if traffic

isn't diverted.

The consultant sees Fairy Lake as one of the anchors to draw people to the downtown area and suggests a unified signage/streetscape program to "marry" them.

It recommends building a structure or water feature that can be seen from Main Street, and buying and demolishing buildings (homes) on Main Street to provide a "window view" to the lake and park.

Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette called the plan "ambitious to say the least," but added the Ton has to start somewhere.

"I don't know how much of

this will come to fruition, but one of the aspects I do like is integrating Prospect Park with the downtown," Bonnette said.

Acton Councillor Dobbie Frizzell also questioned the costs and said he's not in favour of banning parking on one side of Mill Street because it would hurt existing merchants in a

downtown with some empty stores.

The urban design guidelines don't include any costs, but the consultant says a comprehensive cost analysis should be done for each of the recommended initiatives to see how they would affect the capital and operating budgets.

HALTON REGION

THE VETERANS HIGHWAY

Honourary Road Dedication

Regional Road 25 to Halton's Veterans

Everyone Welcome

Sunday, October 20, 2002

Royal Canadian Legion

Branch 197

2:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Concert Saturday in aid of society's building fund

By Janis Fread

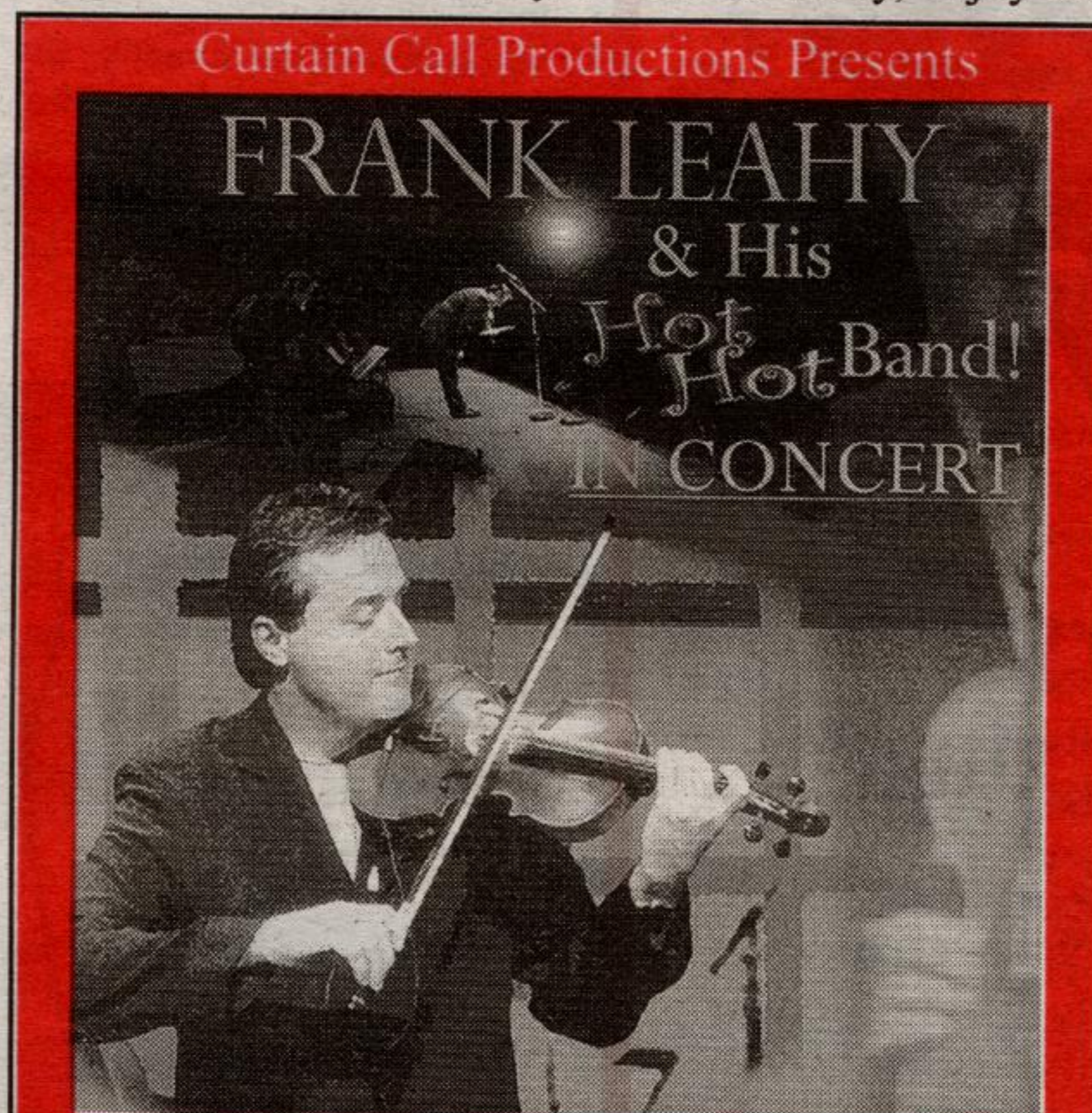
The John Elliot Theatre will be rockin' this Saturday when Frank Leahy and his Hot Hot Band perform at 4 and 8 p.m. This will bring back many good memories for Acton Fall Fair visitors of 20 some odd years ago, who will remember when the entire Leahy family performed - that's Mom on the piano and all the youngsters playing their various musical instruments. They really got toes tappin' with their energetic talent during the Friday evening entertainment program that was always held in the old Acton Arena during the Acton Fall Fair.

What a fitting tribute then, to bring a Leahy back to town, alas not to play in the old Acton Arena, but to perform a concert in support of the fundraising efforts

of the Acton Agricultural Society whose goal is to build a new building for the Society.

The atmosphere won't be the same as the fair concerts, no strains of the midway in the background, but the acoustics in the John Elliot Theatre are superior. Call 905-877-3700 to reserve your tickets today, enjoy the

concert and lend your toe tappin' support to the Acton Agricultural Society.



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& His
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Saturday, October 19, 2002

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