

Magic from Messi and hair-raising stuff from Willie

Back in the old days of black and white television, when we only had RTE 1 and 2 and a bit later BBC 1 and UTV, we always seemed to have loads of good programmes to watch. I've told you before that I used to be a Western fan and so I always had a good selection to look at.

It amazes me now when we all have Sky and or Setanta in our homes with hundreds of channels and movies and documentaries and all sorts of news reports how it can be so difficult to find anything that's worth watching, apart from sports. So it was extremely pleasing to come across a birthday bash for country legend Willie Nelson as I was browsing through the listings on Good Friday night.

Now Willie is one of the greatest living country star and he turned 70 in the very recent past and so there was a tribute night held for him somewhere in the United States. Everyone who is anyone, old and young, were there and we had wonderful performances from, among others - Shania Twain, Kris Kristofferson, Toby Keith, Waylon Jennings and one of my own favourites, Elvis Costello.

Willie has had just as legendary a life as he's had a career and between wives, drinks and drugs it's a miracle he's still with us. But with us he still is and he has the most extraordinary head of hair which ends up somewhere below his waist line. I hear the women in my life always giving out about how hard it is to look after their head of hair and how time-consuming and annoying it can be! After seeing the head that poor old Willie has to mind I can now tell them that they will have very little sympathy from me in the future. I suppose he may have an entourage with him to wash and blow dry it and make sure it's nit-free, but anyway on Friday night it was sparkling and he was looking and sounding remarkably well for a man of 70 years.

I'm sure that I heard somewhere since that he's

coming to Ireland in the summer and as far as I know he's appearing in The Traveller's Friend in Castlebar. It will be a great chance to see such a wonderful showman in action. Please God I'll get to see him in person. Anyway it was a great show and a fitting tribute to a great artist and entertainer.

Sticking with the action and entertainment, on Saturday night, I happened to be in Mikeen's for the World Heavyweight boxing title fight between the new English hero, David Haye and some 38-year-old American whom I had never heard of before.

Now Haye, in fairness, is a pretty good fighter and when he absolutely pole-axed his opponent after only 35 seconds you would have felt that all was over. Hundreds of thousands of fans all over Europe must have felt that their day per view fee of €21.95 was pretty much a total waste, but to be fair they reckoned without the raw courage of the American challenger, Ruiz. Somehow he got up off the canvas, cleared his head, and tore into the champion. Now he was never going to win but he performed with such determination and guts, that normally sane people who don't like anything to do with boxing were roaring him on, and hoping against hope that he, as they say, would land a big one. Now it was always going to be beyond him, and he was to hit the deck three times more, before the referee stopped the contest at the start of the tenth round.

For someone who has often been sceptical about fight fixing and all the razzamatazz and ballyhoo that goes with it, I take my hat off to the 38-year-old Ruiz, who could just as easily have stayed down after the early knockdown and collected his pay cheque. He chose however, to make a real fight of it and if he never appears again in a boxing ring, he will have gone out with all guns blazing. Fair play to him and well done.

Talking of all guns blazing, I am writing this

during the first half of the Champions League game between Barcelona and Arsenal, and as the half-time break looms the little Argentinean genius Lionel Messi has already scored a hat-trick. Arsenal took the lead early on, but surely even though I am old enough to remember Pele, Cryuff, Maradona, George Best, Eusebio and even Mick McCarthy, I'm convinced that tonight I am looking at the best there's ever been. He's still only in his early twenties and God help defences all over the world if he continues to play to the level he's now at! I don't know who'll help them if he gets any better!

Anyway, back to our world and once again it's congratulations to our neighbour, James McKeague, who together with St. Ciaran's pair, Eamon Bannon and Niall Kilroy played major parts in helping Roscommon win the U-21 Connacht Final played against Sligo on Saturday evening last. Once again I missed out due to being at work, but I am reliably informed by anyone that was there that James was a strong candidate for the Man of the Match award. He now has an All-Ireland Minor medal, plus Connacht medals at minor, junior and U-21 levels and as his proud mother Kathleen told me the other night, all he's missing now is the senior one! It too, must be on its way. Anyway well done lads, it's a great achievement.

Finally for this week, just a mention of the dance on Sunday night last for the V.S.A. As usual the parish has been extremely generous in its support and Lisa has lodged almost €2,000 to the VSA account. The extra money (she had to raise €1,500) is going to try to buy an ambulance as the hospital she's going to had its own one blown up by a landmine a couple of weeks ago. Everyone was asked to try and raise a bit extra to try to get the ambulance service back on the road.

So it's a huge thanks to all who supported the Table Quiz and the dance, those who gave spot

prizes, Mary D and Bina for selling raffle tickets on Sunday night, Kathleen McKeague, Maria Harris and Mary Kelly for helping with the draw. Thanks to Susan Gannon for having us and finally to John Shannon who put on a most enjoyable show and had everyone dancing and hopping round the place all night. If I've forgotten (on Lisa's behalf) anyone, my sincere apologies, and I am now hanging up my fundraising hat until next September when we will hopefully bring you all out dancing again to support the Cancer Care West and the Lourdes Invalid Fun. Anyway thanks again.



Till next week, bye for now.

Frankly Speaking ...
with Frank Brandon

Do you think you know the Best Granny in Ireland?

THE LOUIS FITZGERALD HOTEL GROUP

is launching a Nationwide search for...

Granny of the Year

& we want you to nominate your Granny!

Grannies all over the country act as minders, carers, advisers, babysitters, cooks and educators. The love and support of a granny is invaluable and we at the Louis Fitzgerald Group want to offer you an opportunity to show them how much they are appreciated.

So if you have a special Granny in your life, tell us about her! In the entry form below, in 300 words or less, tell us why your Granny is the best. You can send your entry directly to entitled 'The Granny of the Year Competition'.

Each month, we will pick a regional winner from each county and in December, we will hold the Grand Final of Granny of the Year at the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel.

Compere RTE's Ronan Collins!

- €3,000 Holiday Voucher with €2,000 spending
- €1,500 Holiday Voucher with €1,000 spending
- €500 Holiday Voucher

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____ E Mail Address: _____
Name of Nominator: _____ Name of Nominee: _____

Why is your Granny The Best Granny (300 words): _____

www.louisfitzgeraldhotel.com

Terms and Conditions
Restricted to one entry per month. Must be willing to travel to The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel. Judges decision is final.
Must be available for a monthly photo shoot. Accommodation for the final will be provided by the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel for 2 persons
all other travelling expenses will be incurred by the individual. Nominees must be available for interview. Must have a valid passport.

Do you have the best Granny in Ireland?

If you do, she could win a holiday worth €5,000!

The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel Group has this week announced the launch of a nationwide search to find Ireland's Granny of the Year. The competition will run in regional papers nationwide from the 5th April until 26th November 2010 and offers grandchildren and family members an opportunity to show their grannies just how much they are appreciated.

"We are very excited to launch this competition which will celebrate great grannies all over Ireland. This is a fantastic opportunity for young people to show their Grannies how important they are to them!" said Louis Fitzgerald, chairman of the Louis Fitzgerald Group.

Each month a regional winner from each county will be selected and in December, the National Final of the Granny of the Year will be held at the fabulous four-star Louis Fitzgerald Hotel in



Celebrity Ronan Collins and guest at the launch of a nationwide search to find Ireland's Granny of the Year.

Dublin. Exciting prizes include a holiday voucher of €5,000 which will be presented on the night by

compere, RTE's Ronan Collins!

So if you have a special Granny in your life, tell us

about her! Entry forms can be found this week and in forthcoming issues of the *Roscommon People*.