

# Dying bison provoke conservation controversy

(The following information is from the August issue of *Almanac, Canadian Nature Federation's news alert.*)

The struggle to resolve concerns over diseased bison in Wood Buffalo National Park continues. In 1989 Agriculture Canada proposed to slaughter the entire herd because many animals were infected with brucellosis and/or tuberculosis. A federal environmental assessment review panel recommended a modified version of the slaughter proposal in its report one year ago.

The slaughter option drew an angry response from conservation groups and from native communities in the region. Rather than accept the panel's report, the federal ministers of Environment and Agriculture agreed to a proposal by native communities calling for the creation of a 17 member "stakeholders group." Charged with finding an acceptable resolution to the situation, it was to include one representative in the region. A working group was established to develop terms of reference for the stakeholders.

Conservation groups protested that there was no provision for participation of conservation interests in the process. Conservation organizations met with former minister of the Environment, Robert de Cotret, in December 1990 and succeeded in having Kevin McNamnee of the Canadian Nature Federation named as the coalition's representative to the working group.

The stakeholders group, now known as the Northern Buffalo Management Board (NBMB), was established in late June of this year. Jean Charest, minister of the environment, invited the CNF to become a member. The board of directors subsequently appointed Cliff Wallis, CNF regional director (AB / BC / Yukon), to the NBMB with McNamnee as his alternate.

While the group's terms of reference still focus on the elimination of disease, that objective is now couched in a number of conditions that are designed to

## Nature's Way

By  
**KEVIN  
CALLAN**



protect the integrity of the park and its ecosystem.

This has been a tedious process - one that is far from over. From the outset, the CNF has argued that the concerns about disease in the park's bison should not be treated in isolation; and the other species, park values, and environmental concerns must be factors in the decision. Slowly, that message is getting through. In the coming months the CNF will continue to advocate an ecological approach to the situation through participation on the NBMB.

### ELK RANCHING LUNACY

The Alberta government has approved the sale of elk meat in the province, giving a green light to the local game ranching industry. The move, which met with widespread opposition, came right on the heels of a major outbreak of tuberculosis among ranched elk in the province. Critics have lashed the government for potentially exposing Alberta's wild elk population to disease, poaching, and genetic contamination.

It is ironic that Alberta supports the slaughter of tuberculosis-infected bison in Wood Buffalo National Park because of potential transmission of the disease to other wildlife and cattle. Yet, with respect to game ranching, the same government claims that disease poses no threat despite the fact that game ranches have proved to be hotbeds for tuberculosis all across Canada. Stretching credibility even further is a proposal to capture wild elk to replenish stocks in game ranches where ranched elk have had to be slaughtered due to tuberculosis infection!

## Time for your flu shot

The Ontario Medical Association is reminding people who are at high risk of suffering serious health problems as a result of contracting the flu should talk to their doctor about getting a flu shot.

"The influenza virus is extremely contagious," says Marjorie Keymer, a director of the

Ontario Medical Association and a physician specializing in care of the elderly. "Because the virus is so contagious, and because it changes every year, it is important for people in high-risk groups to get immunized annually."

Those who fall into the high-risk category are people over 65 years of age, individuals suffering heart conditions, chronic-lung conditions such as emphysema, asthma or bronchitis, diseases such as diabetes, cancer, anemia, renal or sickle-cell disease, immunodeficiency/suppression, as well as children on long-term ASA treatment. Currently, only 30 per cent of people in the high-risk groups are being immunized.

"Each year, 5,000 Canadians die from influenza and resulting complications, such as pneumonia and kidney failure," said Dr. Keymer. "Influenza-related health complications account for 70,000 hospital admissions, and one million bed-days each year, nationwide."

She added that by reaching the 70 per cent of high-risk individuals who fail to get immunized each year, "we can reduce significantly the incidence of serious illness, and the number of deaths resulting from the flu and its complications."

### Jewellery missing

Residents of a Weber Dr. home returned home last Wednesday afternoon to find \$5,000 worth of items stolen. During the residents' three-hour absence, someone entered the house through a window, police said. The thieves went through the bedrooms and stole an emerald ring, a diamond ring, a ruby ring and a wedding ring. Coin collections worth \$3,000 were taken along with a box of family photographs, police said.

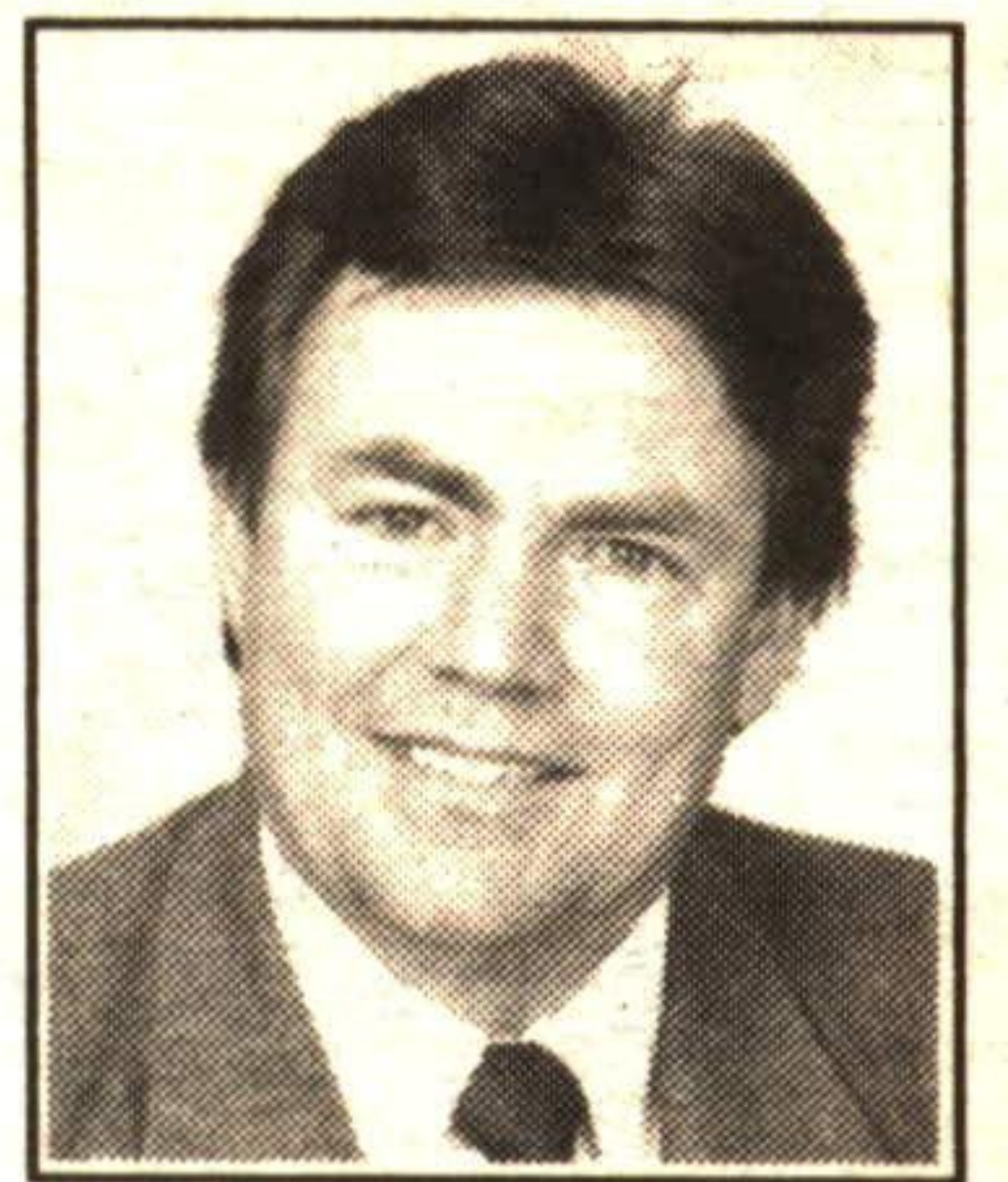
### Volunteers needed

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Halton Region Branch is always looking for creative volunteers who are interested in adding to their marketable job skills. We have a number of opportunities available-call us at 845-5044 to see if we have something for you.

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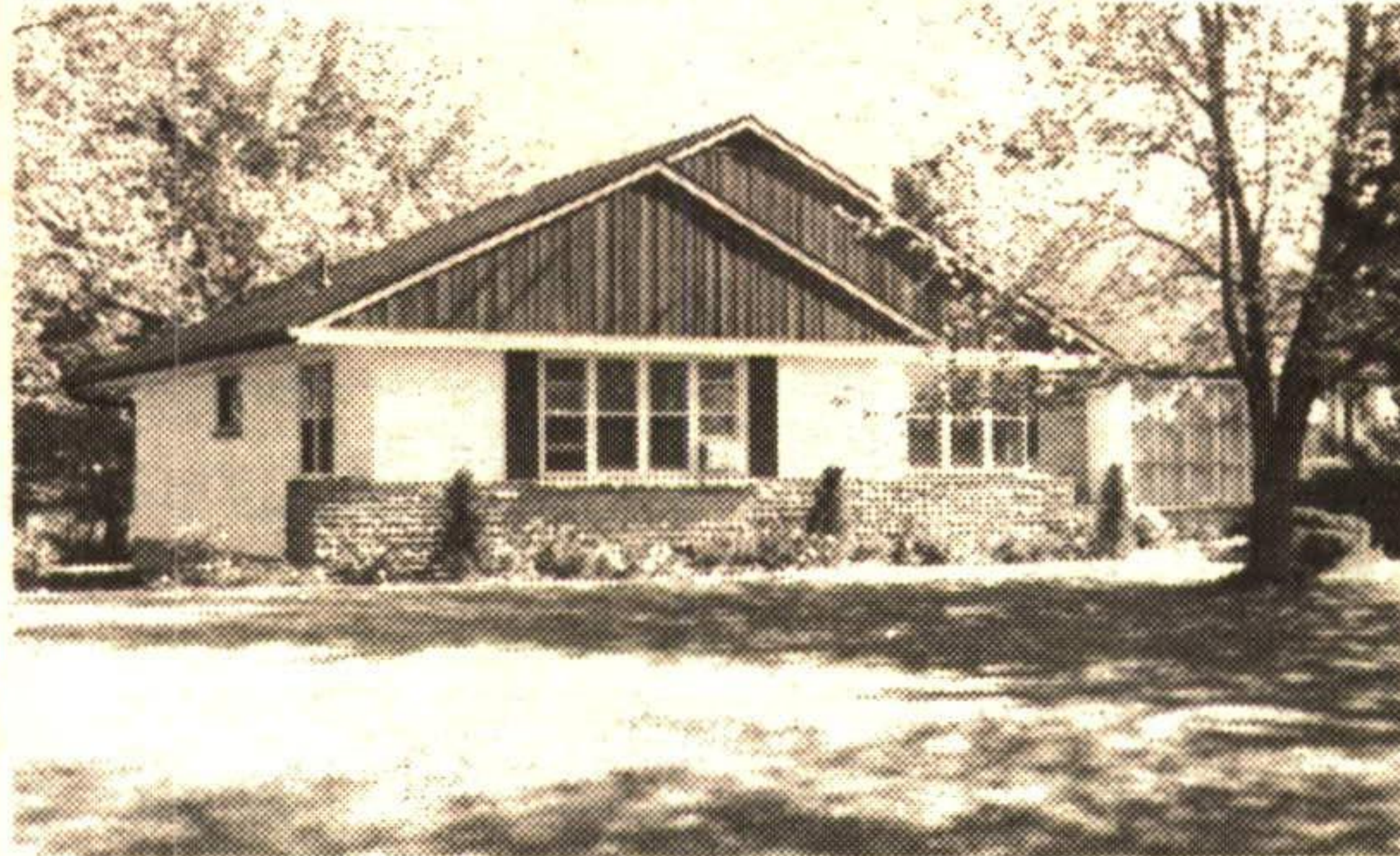


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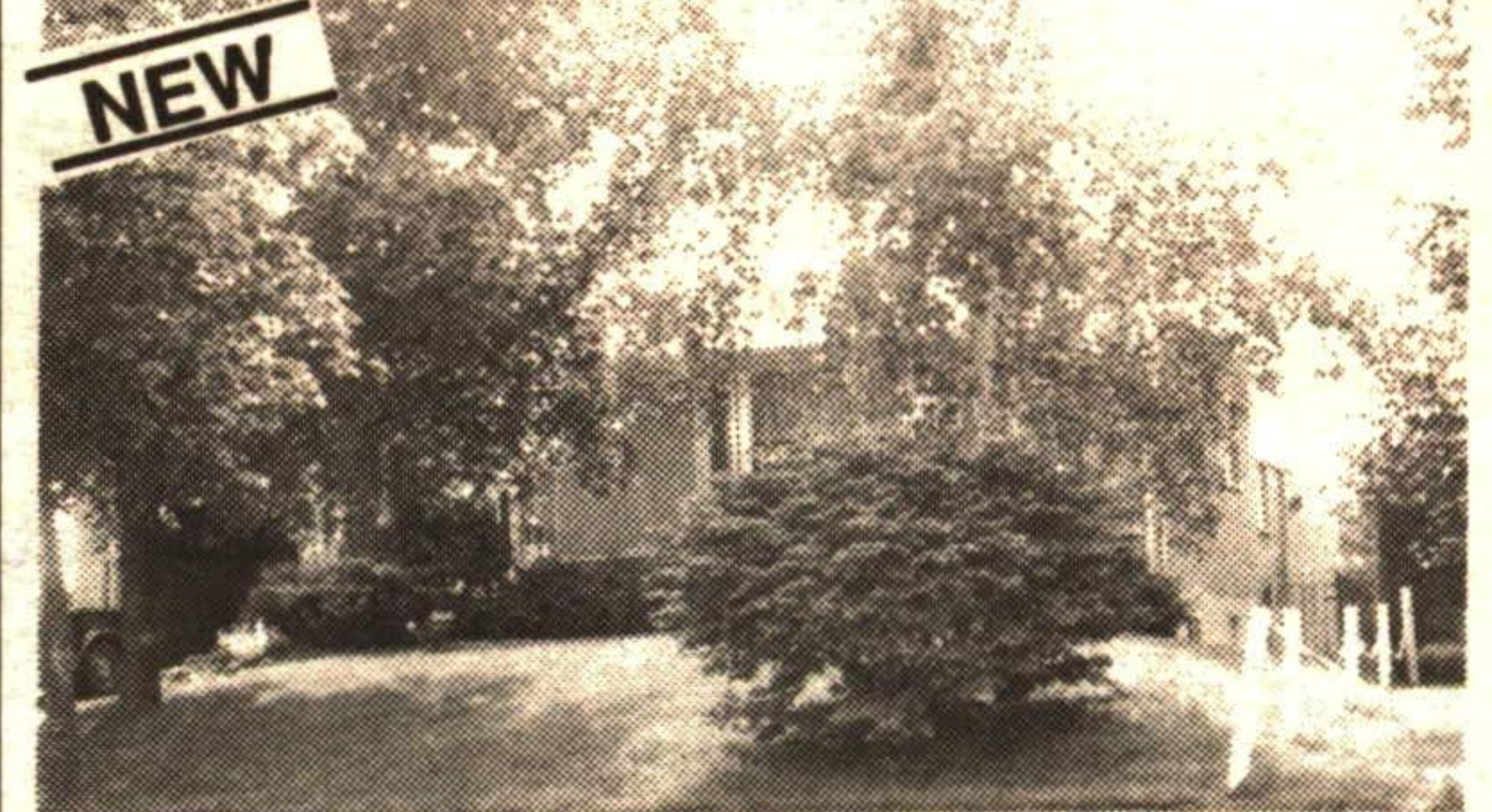
VALUE +++



Above the Glen - This large country bungalow has gleaming hardwood floors, 3+ bedrooms, 3 stone fireplaces, a 1 bedroom in-law suite, basement walkout, workshop, and much more for only \$295,000. RM108-91

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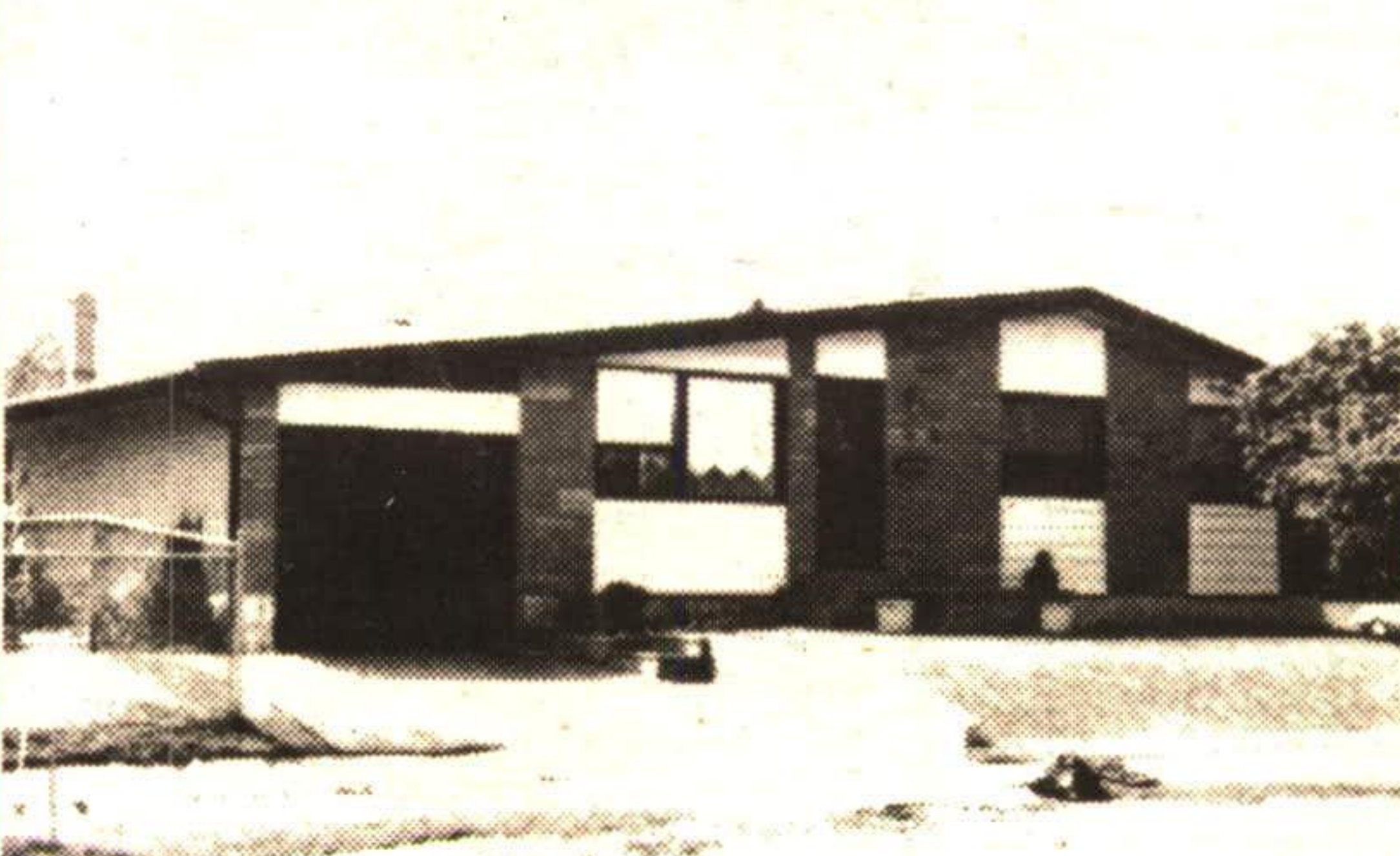


28 FALUDON, GEORGETOWN

This immaculate 4 bedroom "Country Squire" is Dutch clean; gleaming hardwood floors, an eat-in kitchen overlooking a large family room with 2 walkouts, a roll out awning, storage shed, separate dining room and much much more for only \$224,900. RM214-91

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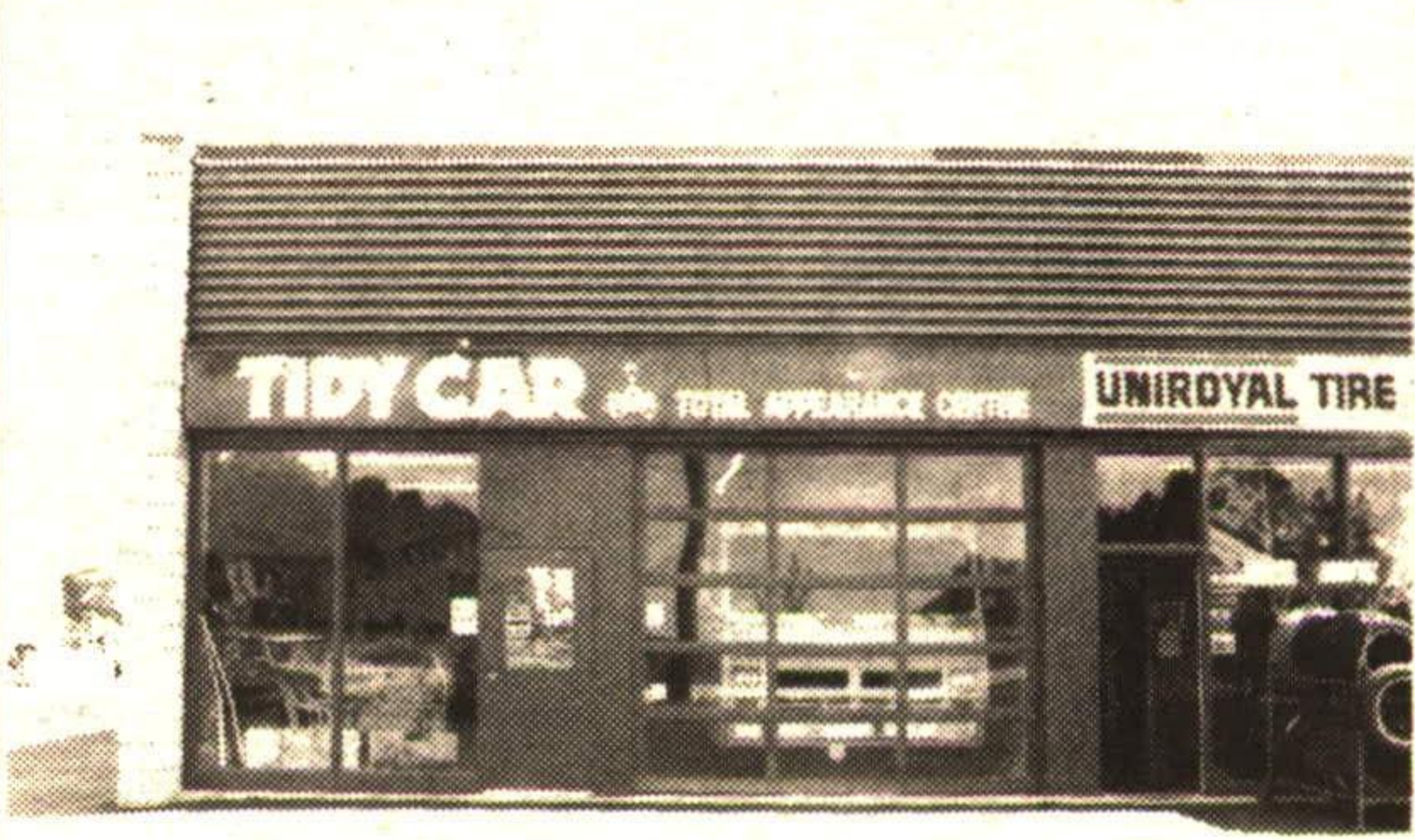
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This 4+ acre property has a cedar lined winding driveway with the home at the rear, a large pond, a basement apartment and a mobile home. What more could you ask for only \$289,900. RM141-91

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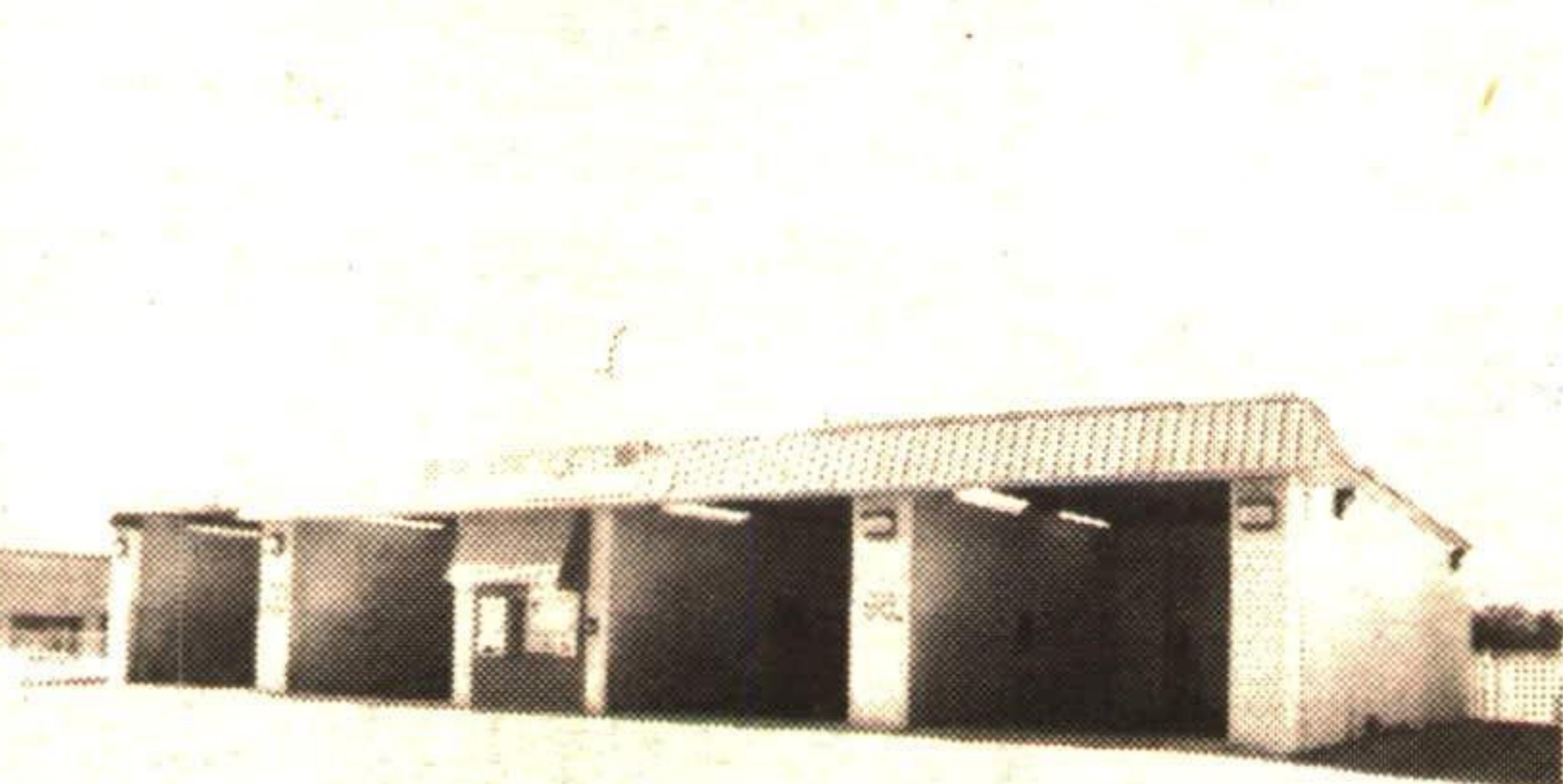
BE YOUR OWN BOSS



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