



HOT ENOUGH? King Nebuchadnezzar (Brandon Bennett) checked out the heat as he prepared to cast Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego into the fiery furnace during Trinity's bible school.

Trustees debate school closure policy

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Acton's public schools - none of which are operating at capacity - could face scrutiny by Halton public school trustees if they approve a revised temporary school closing/consolidation policy unveiled by staff last week.

The province has told school boards across Ontario that if they want money for new schools in growth areas, they must prove that they don't have any unused space. The Halton board has an estimated 6,000 extra pupil spaces. That translates to about four high schools or 10 elementary schools.

The board's last accom-

modation study showed that McKenzie-Smith Bennett was operating at approximately 70 per cent of capacity with 780 pupil spaces and approximately 500 students. Robert Little was at 75 per cent of capacity with 370 students and 490 student spaces. Acton High, which has a projected enrolment of 560 students and capacity for 670. The board is currently waiting for revised capacity figures from the province.

Halton District School Board chair Ethel Gardiner said that, in total, schools in north Halton were operating at 92 per cent capacity in the board's last accommodation report, an acceptable level as far as she's concerned.

Gardiner also noted however that "everything is wide open" and on the table when it comes to proposed school closures and consolidations.

"Certainly our biggest difficulty when it comes to excess space is in Burlington and Oakville but we will be looking at all schools," Gardiner explained Saturday, adding the province's time frame to reduce capacity figures is "incredibly tight."

If the Halton board has a plan ready to get rid of empty school by the Dec. 31 deadline it can't keep profits from the sale of the excess schools but the spaces will be removed from its inventory and that would help it get money to build new schools. After

the deadline the board can keep the profits of school sales but the pupil spaces remain in the inventory and the board won't get money for new schools.

"We're over a barrel here and if we want to be fiscally responsible we need to explore the options of closures or consolidations. It's a very difficult thing to look at again," Gardiner said, remembering the public outcry when the board looked at closing surplus schools several years ago.

Trustees will debate the proposed new policy next month. If approved, the policy includes two October public meetings for each possible closure/consolidation.



SUNSATION: Young Street resident Pat Joyce couldn't believe it when a sunflower in his yard stretched over nine feet tall. Pat's about 5'10" and this plant had its head bowed as Old Sol sank into the horizon, so he couldn't tape measure the actual height. Pat says he had some trees removed which allowed more sun to filter into his yard. - Hartley Coles photo

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By M. Tynan

Empty nesters will love this fashionable level entry basement home.

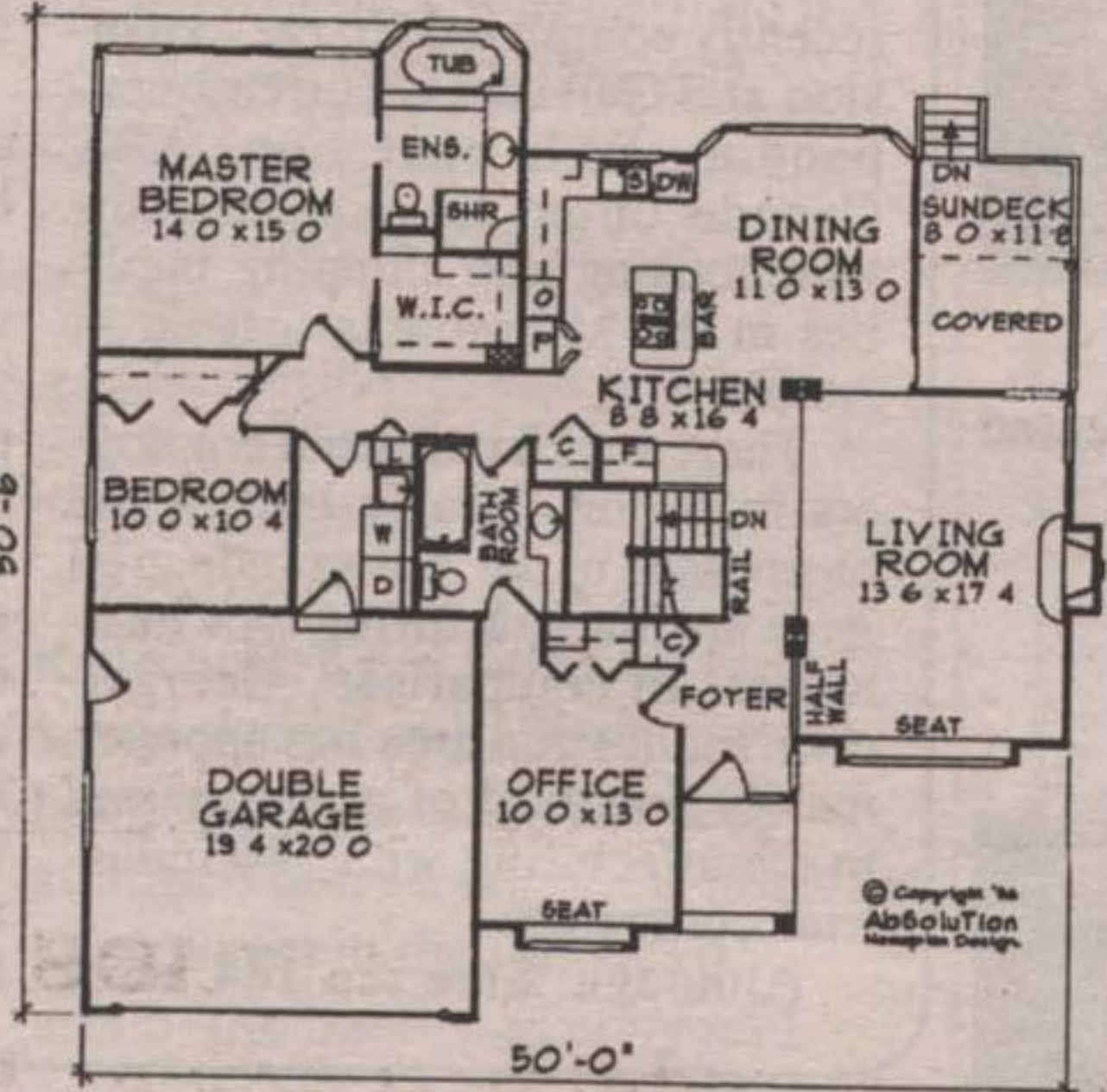
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The master bedroom boasts a walk-in closet and a four piece ensuite with a raised swirl tub set into a bay.

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Women's Association meeting

The next meeting of the Acton Women's Association will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Band hall, 85 Wallace St. Join us for a Weekender's Fashion Show and come out and see the new Fall and Winter clothing line! Weekender's Clothing is both easy care (was and wear) and easy wear (comfortable)! Orders for clothing will be taken at the show, although there is no obligation to purchase, and everyone is welcome to come out and socialize and enjoy looking at the fashions.

This evening will also benefit women at Halton Women's Place because 10 per cent of the proceeds from sales will go towards purchasing clothing for the women at the shelter.

The goal of the Acton Women's Association is to give women an opportunity to meet other women in the community. Membership is free and women of all ages are welcome to attend.

For more information about the Acton Women's Association, please call Cathy at Halton Hills Community Support and Information at 853-3310.

Foot Clinic

Foot Clinics are held every six weeks at the Acton office of Halton Hills Community Support and Information, located at 19 Willow Street North. The Foot Clinic Program is designed to provide regular preventative foot care for seniors and the disabled.

The next Foot Clinic will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 7 with appointments available beginning at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$12. To make an appointment please call Halton Hills Community Support and Information at 853-3310.