

## Proposal to Close Dorset Library Meets Strong Opposition

The proposed closure of the library in Dorset has met with strong local opposition and it appears that the decision may be reconsidered. This is good news for the more than 50 supporters of the Dorset library who braved snowy roads on January 30<sup>th</sup> to attend a public information meeting at the Frost Centre to discuss the County of Haliburton's library services decision.

In August, the County of Haliburton voted to fund only one library per municipality, a move deemed necessary to centralize library services and to bring libraries up to provincial standards. For the Township of Algonquin Highlands, which includes Dorset, this means that either the Dorset or the Stanhope library would be slated for closure by January 2009. Not only do the residents of these hamlets object to the loss of a vital community service, they question the fact that no public consultation was held prior to the vote. Dorset residents are advocating their need for a community meeting place, literacy development and recreational programming, all of which are provided through the library.

The message delivered to Cheryl Murdoch, Chair of the Library Board, was that a centralized library system does not meet the needs of the community in all cases. Ms. Murdoch said that she would take the community input back to the library Board. We hope a new recommendation could be crafted asking county council to reconsider its decision. Algonquin Highlands Councillor Diane Griffin expects that there will not be a final decision from council until April or May.

The Lake of Bays Association sent a letter to Algonquin Highlands Reeve Eleanor Harrison officially opposing the closure of the Dorset library. The economic and social well-being of our communities is of concern to the Lake of Bays Association. The loss of basic community services ultimately impacts the vitality of a village like Dorset and this affects all permanent and seasonal residents.

This issue is far from dead and your input is important. If you wish to share your opinion or concerns, please send a letter to Ms. Cheryl Murdoch, Library Board Chair, Deputy Reeve, Minden Hills, P.O. Box 372, Minden, ON, K0M 2K0. A list of additional representative to send you letters to is below.

### **CONTACT LIST: HALIBURTON COUNTY LIBRARY BRANCHES:**

**Warden of Haliburton County**  
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Mr. James Mackie (**Library Board**)  
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Ms. Cheryl Murdoch - **Chair Library Board**  
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Councillor Don Shortreed  
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Councillor Diane Griffin  
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