



People flock to meeting on new Weymouth library

More than 60 people made their way to the Weymouth branch of the Royal Canadian Legion to discuss a new library for area on Tuesday, June 12.

The Municipality of the District of Digby has approved the building of a new Weymouth branch of the Western Counties Regional Library and was hoping to get the public's input on such things as a location and makeup of a

new library.

"No decision could possibly be made without community input," emphasized Randall Amero, councillor for the Weymouth area.

"Council approved going forward with a new building," said Jimmy MacAlpine, deputy warden for the municipality and member of the Regional Library Board. He said council has al-

ready set aside \$100,000 toward the capital project and the municipality is hoping to break ground on a new building in 2008.

The municipality has set a deadline for public input on the location and services of the new library so it can move forward with the planning process, MacAlpine said.

Once the deadline has passed, council will review the suggestions and create a shortlist of three or four locations and take those back to the community, MacAlpine said following the meeting.

Any new library would have to meet provincial standards and Western Counties Regional Library Director Trudy Amirault laid out those standards in a brief presentation during the meeting. The new library branch will have a larger collection of books, periodicals, and video and audio material. The increased space will also provide for more programming and computer terminals, be accessible to all and have increased hours of operation.

Once the new venue meets those standards there are many other decisions to be made, but few more critical than location, she said.

"That's what makes or breaks a library," she said. A good rule of thumb for a library, she said, is "if it works for retail, it works for libraries."

The existing location is good, but the community has outgrown the building, she explained.

The municipality is actively pursuing funding options including using alternative energy sources such as solar power. The library will be approximately 3,000 square feet with a community room of at least 500 square feet. The key is getting the public input so that the community gets the facility it wants that meets its needs.



Staff
profile

Joanne Head

Originally from Montreal, Joanne Head has traveled a varied route to Southwestern Nova Scotia, and along the way she has discovered that libraries are her passion.

"I never dreamed I would be a librarian," says the Deputy Director and Coordinator of Children's Services for the Western Counties Regional Library.

She began her career working with young offenders but left to obtain her Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) degree at McGill University in Montreal. From there she worked in public and school libraries before moving to the Yarmouth area with her husband Kevin and daughter Lauren to take a job with the Western Counties Regional Library.

Her first library function was the official opening of the McKay Memo-

rial Library in Shelburne on July 21, 1989. It was emblematic of the many changes that have occurred since she started. In her nearly 18 years of service she has seen the opening of new branches in Shelburne, Digby and Barrington and the start of a new one in Clark's Harbour. She has witnessed the expansion of the Yarmouth branch and headquarters and the arrival of automa-

tion. "Technology has introduced a whole new component to library work," she says. It is keeping up with those changes that are vital to the relevancy of the public library. "If there is one thing I would like to accomplish by working here, it is to have people look upon the library as a welcoming, happening place. I want it to be a place they truly believe is their own."

She wants the library to be a fun part of daily life. It is the fun, imaginative side of library services that motivates Joanne, especially in her role as the Coordinator of Children's Services.

"I have a real passion for and appreciation of children's literature and a healthy respect for imagination," she explains. Her work is a constant reminder of the richness of life and depth of new experiences. "What I like about being a librarian is I learn something new every day."

Summer Reading Club already a huge hit

Children and teens across the tri-counties are finding their way to *Lost Worlds* as part of the TD Summer Reading Club at the Western Counties Regional Library. Young readers are signing up for the club in record numbers this summer and the program is only getting started.

“The theme of *Lost Worlds* is an exciting one because it creates so many opportunities for fun programming and great books to read,” says Joanne Head, coordinator of children’s services at the regional library. “Ancient Egypt, dinosaurs, Atlantis are all *Lost Worlds* and are just a few of the possibilities to explore over the summer.”

Early response has been tremendous, especially for the new teen reading club. In Weymouth, the teen club has proved so popular that more supplies had to be ordered. In Yarmouth by early July, the children’s club surpassed 185 members and 37 teens were taking part. Last year Yarmouth didn’t break the 100-mark until late summer. Programs are proving so popular that some branches have doubled their programs to accommodate the waiting list.



Yarmouth Library Clerk Janet Miller feigns surprise when she is confronted by the Summer Reading Club T-Rex in the Program Room at the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library in Yarmouth.

The children’s Summer Reading Club covers up to the Grade 6 level. Participants are given an activity card, a log book, and stickers when they register. The activity card has three large pyramids on it made up of 25 blocks each. Every time a child completes an activity he or she fills in a block.

“This is a fun way for children and youth to keep up and improve their reading skills over the summer months,” Head says.

When the child completes all three pyramids, he or she receives a FastPass to Upper Clements Park and a chance to win great prizes including the grand prize of a bicycle and helmet. With the theme of *Get Lost!* teens are invited to plunge into reading books about lost worlds and ancient civilizations over the summer months. The reward is a FastPass to Upper Clements Park and a chance to win an Apple iPod Nano. The reading club is open to youth from the Grade 6 level to the Grade 12 level and participants are required to complete 25 hours

of reading.

The club is an award-winning joint initiative between Library and Archives Canada, Toronto Public Library and TD Bank Financial Group. Locally it is being supported by Upper Clements Park, McDonald’s Restaurants in Shelburne and Yarmouth counties, Staples, Wilson’s Home Hardware in Digby, For Kids Sake of Wilson’s in Barrington Passage, Manser’s Bike Shop in Yarmouth and Norco Performance Bikes.

Staffing Updates

Sharon Trueman was hired on May 14 as Library Clerk at the Digby library replacing Marjo Belknop.

Brenda Keizer was hired on June 11 as Reserve Library Clerk at the Clare Branch Library.

Paula Hesse was hired on June 18 as Library Clerk at the Shelburne library, replacing Loreley Himmelman.

Shauna Mahaney was hired on June 18 as Reserve Library Clerk in Shelburne replacing Paula Hesse. Shauna will also be the Reserve in Lockeport, replacing Elizabeth MacKinnon.

Sharlie Burney was hired on June 18 as the Summer Program Assistant. She will be working for 10 weeks to deliver programming and events for the Summer Reading Club and other summer related activities for the branch libraries.

Surprise visit results in literary gift



Yarmouth librarian Debbie Little, right, gladly accepted three novels from visiting author Janelle Taylor of Evans, Georgia, at the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library on June 27. The author has written 52 books, nine of which have made the New York Times bestsellers list. Taylor and her husband have been touring Canada over the past three months and had stopped into the library for some help, resulting in the donation.