

# Dental outreach expected to require \$40-50,000 annually

By Mark Arike

Haliburton County's first dental outreach centre, which will offer free "urgent care" to low income adults, is estimated to require an annual operating budget of \$40,000 to \$50,000, said members of the project's management committee during a Jan. 7 meeting at the Haliburton County Development Corporation's (HCDC) board room.

Committee member Lisa Kerr provided some "round ball" numbers outlining operating costs of a Scarborough dental outreach centre that her husband, Dr. William Kerr, regularly volunteers at.

"The round ball number, which they put out in 2008, talks about them running their clinic for \$80,000 per year," said Kerr. "They do employ one person and are open two days per week."

Only volunteers will run the local outreach centre, expected to open sometime this spring.

"If we can train all these volunteers, we can have all the people on site that we need," said Kerr. "Based on the number of dentists that have come forward, I think we're in the same ballpark of having eight to 10 days per month."

Dr. Kerr, the head visionary of the project along with dental hygienist Lisa Stoughton, pointed out that it's hard to determine an annual operating budget at this time due to the fluctuation in donations.

"I've always been hesitant about putting a number on it because I just keep getting people giving me stuff," he explained.

Hugh Nichol, another member of the committee and local chartered accountant, responded by saying that challenges may present themselves when it comes to securing ongoing donations.

"People give in the beginning ... I'm just thinking about what happens after our first year," said Nichol.

The group agreed that since the Haliburton Volunteer Dental Outreach would not have a paid staff person, annual operating expenses would likely range in and around \$40,000 to \$50,000.

To help keep start-up costs to a minimum, Dr. Kerr explained that he originally intended on opening the outreach centre with conventional x-ray film equipment rather than installing the more current, digital Pan-Ceph technology. However, because of a forthcoming donation, it would be wise to use the latter from the onset, he said.

"This piece of equipment, which I know is pretty expensive, was offered to Gena [Robertson] and I by an orthodontist who isn't using

it," said Dr. Kerr, estimating that one of the diagnostic machines would likely go for around \$75,000.

Dr. Kerr said that he plans to approach organizations like HCDC about funding opportunities that may be available to help cover costs associated with running the digital x-ray equipment.

Since news of the outreach centre was first released in December, individuals, businesses and organizations have offered monetary and other types of support.

Gena Robertson, committee member and executive director of SIRCH Community Services, said that to date, \$6,336 in funds have been received, \$5,000 of which came from the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit's discretionary fund.

SIRCH took on the lead role as the charitable organization responsible for collecting and holding all monetary donations made to the project.

A list of dental professionals who have signed up to volunteer at the outreach centre currently includes: six dentists, one denturist, four dental hygienists and four office managers/receptionists.

Since the outreach centre will require ongoing funding, the group discussed the need for fundraising.

"That's going to be critical," said committee member and restaurant owner Maarten Steinkamp.

Nichol pointed out that Dr. Kerr could give talks to local service clubs about the project in hopes of gaining further support. Kerr said he would "speak anywhere" as long as it fits around his busy work schedule.

Both Steinkamp and Janis Parker, a committee member and owner of Parker Pad & Printing Ltd., agreed to be involved in fundraising efforts.

Parker said that she was already working on organizing a benefit concert that would feature Juno award-winning artist Ian Tamblyn.

"It looks like I'm going to have it at the West Guilford Recreation Centre," said Parker of the event she hopes to have together for February.

Issues that the management committee also examined included the screening process for the outreach centre, renovations to the future location, governance and what the legal structure would look like.

To make a donation to the project, go to [www.sirch.on.ca](http://www.sirch.on.ca) and click on the "donate now" button. All inquiries can be sent to Dr. Kerr via email at [bill\\_kerr@sympatico.ca](mailto:bill_kerr@sympatico.ca). ■



Local contractors Jason Reay, Alex Roome and Preben Gustavsen (centre) gather with their work crews at what will be Haliburton County's Volunteer Dental Outreach.

Photo by Mark Arike

## Construction begins at volunteer dental outreach

By Mark Arike

Construction crews got their hands dirty this past Monday at what will become Haliburton County's first volunteer dental outreach clinic.

The demolition process was well underway at 739 Mountain St. in Haliburton, the former site of the 2011 Winterfest office, as crews from local companies Cedar Plumbing & Heating, Alex Roome Construction and Jason Reay Construction prepared for upcoming renovations.

### Want to help?

Organizers of the clinic have come up with an ingenuitive way for people to help ease the financial burden that comes

with buying construction supplies for the project: Air Miles.

"The procedure is very simple," said Lisa Kerr, a member of the management committee, in an email.

By going to [www.airmiles.ca](http://www.airmiles.ca) the public has the option of buying any quantity (up to 25) of \$20 or \$50 vouchers. No administrative or shipping fees apply.

Once on the homepage, click on the following links: "Rewards", "Gift Cards & Subscriptions" and "Home, Reading & Renovations". Finally, click on the Tim-br Mart image or highlighted link.

Scheduled to open at the start of May, the volunteer dental outreach is aimed at providing urgent dental care to low-income residents of Haliburton County.

Financial contributions to the clinic can be made by going online to [www.sirch.on.ca](http://www.sirch.on.ca) and clicking on the "Donate Now" button. For more information about the clinic email Bill Kerr at [bill\\_kerr@sympatico.ca](mailto:bill_kerr@sympatico.ca).



## Construction begins

Left, Lisa Stoughton and Bill Kerr were on hand when construction began at the Volunteer Dental Outreach for Haliburton County in Haliburton last week. Ray Ralph, not pictured, a Haliburton cottager and president of REM Equipment donated a brand new BaseVac dry vacuum suction unit which retails for \$5,000. This environmentally friendly unit will significantly reduce the water consumption and energy draw of this clinic, Kerr said. Dr. Ed Busvek, one of seven volunteer dentists, was there, not pictured. Submitted by Bill Kerr