



This is an election publication of the Mississippi Mills Resident's Association, Fall 2006

## **Sunday hunting coming soon to rural areas**

There will soon be hunting allowed on Sundays in Mississippi Mills. In June the town council voted by a narrow margin to set aside this decades old ban. Council approved Sunday hunting over objections from all Ramsay ward councillors -- Ramsay, with the largest rural population, will be most affected -- and many local residents, including many hunters.

The idea first came before the Finance committee in May of 2005. John Brisbane, from the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources, requested the town allow gun hunting on Sundays on private land during existing hunting seasons.

### ***How Council voted***

In a recorded vote, it was turned down with a tie. For Sunday hunting were mayor Lunney, and councillors Ferguson, Minnille, Levi and Gillis. Against were councillors Lowry, Anderson, Edwards, Torrance and Wilkinson. Councillor Wilson was absent for the vote.

The idea surfaced again June 5, 2006, when Greg Farrant from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters addressed the Finance committee. He asked that Mississippi Mills join other rural municipalities that plan to allow Sunday hunting. This time the vote favoured Sunday hunting. For were mayor Lunney, and councillors Ferguson, Minnille, Levi and Gillis. Against were councillors Anderson, Edwards, Torrance and Wilkinson.

The motion came before council for a final vote on June 13. Councillor Edwards made an impassioned plea to keep Sunday as a non-hunting day. He argued that the hunting ban goes back generations and such a huge lifestyle change in the Ramsay ward should be publicly debated. He put forward a motion to postpone any decision until after a public meeting on the subject. Mayor Lunney and councillors Ferguson, Minnille, Levi and Wilson voted down his motion. The same five then voted for Sunday hunting. The dissenting councillors were Anderson, Edwards, Torrance and Wilkinson. Councillors Lowry and Gillis were absent. Councillor Torrance said she would support Sunday hunting if it was limited to deer season.

### ***Two main issues***

There are two troubling issues in this vote. One is the total lack of respect given to the Ramsay ward viewpoint as represented by its councillors. All four Ramsay councillors opposed the Sunday hunt, though four of the five urban members of council chose to allow Sunday hunting in rural areas. One wonders if they would have voted the same way if hunting was allowed in Almonte.

The second is the lack of interest shown by the majority of council in public input. Why not have some form of public input first? When the issue came before the Council of Lanark Highlands, they polled the residents before they decided to support the Sunday hunt. Are some reluctant to face a room full of angry Ramsay residents?

### ***Almost every Sunday***

Sunday hunting is now allowed on any Sunday during an official hunting season. If you look at the hunt schedule for bears, deer, turkey, waterfowl and small game, it includes almost every Sunday in the year.

### ***Other bulletins in this series***

- #1 Downtown Almonte
- #2 De-amalgamation
- #3 Sewage treatment options
- #4 Almonte's plan for growth
- #6 Regulating pesticides

The MMRA Board has reviewed the election 2006 bulletin articles for factual accuracy. The bulletins, and the opinions represented within them, are meant to stimulate community discussion and awareness in the time period leading up to the 2006 municipal elections in Mississippi Mills. Your vote counts!

The MMRA is a non-profit residents' association. For more information on the MMRA or to join, visit our web site at [www.mmra.ca](http://www.mmra.ca).