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Contact: Bonnie Stewart
Maclure Library
483-2972

Novel on Bullying Is Focus of “Community -Wide Read”

PITTSFORD — The impact of bullying on young people’s lives is the topic as the Maclure Library in Pittsford invites students, families and residents of the Otter Valley Union High School area to join in a “community-wide read” and follow-up discussion of Vermont author Doug Wilhelm’s new novel *The Revealers*.

In his tenth book for young adults, Wilhelm explores the complex issues that surround bullying and harassment in our schools. Across the country in recent years, bullying behavior — including aggression among girls — has appeared to be on the increase, and has been related to outbreaks of more severe violence in schools.

“*The Revealers* is a gripping story that offers a powerful starting point to engage the issues surrounding bullying in our society, particularly the role of the school in the lives of young people,” said Bonnie Stewart, director of the Maclure Library, which is sponsoring the program.

Free copies of the novel are available at the Maclure Library, the Brandon Free Public Library, and the Otter Valley High School Library, for any community resident to pick up. The author will join a discussion of his book on Thursday, November 20, starting at 6 p.m. in the Otter Valley library.

“If we adults want to understand and help kids who are dealing with bullies, or any other problem in their lives, we have to start by asking them questions and really listening to what they say,” said Wilhelm, a Rutland Town writer who researched his

novel by hearing students' own tales of bullying at a number of Vermont schools. When the author was a middle schooler, he was himself taunted and harassed — in fact, the opening scene of *The Revealers* is based on a violent experience he had in seventh grade.

The Nov. 20 discussion will begin at 6 p.m., then break at 7 for complimentary pizza. Participants will reconvene at 7:30 to discuss bullying and how community members can support children and schools in addressing this issue.

“Bullying is a tremendously important issue that touches all our lives,” said Maclure. “This is an opportunity to bring our young people and adults together as a community to talk about this, and do something about it. We hope that young people, in particular, will speak openly about their experiences, and about the role that bullying and being bullied plays in youth culture today.

“As librarians, we encourage you to read *The Revealers*, and come on Nov. 20 prepared to share your thoughts and concerns.”

For more information, or to reserve a copy of the book, call Bonnie Stewart at the Maclure Library, 483-2972.

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