

SCOOP

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THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES IN BC



Inside:

**Killarney Gardens
rolling in grants**

**Get your co-op ready
for reno cash**



Who's afraid of 2020? Challenges bring opportunities!



For many co-ops, the end of operating agreements with the government will come in this decade. This challenge presents an opportunity...

Fiona Jackson is CHF BC's new Communications Director.

A generation has grown up in our housing co-ops in BC and seen a whirlwind of growth and change. As we begin this second decade of the century, we have 235 member co-ops and 12,225 co-op homes. But more change is coming.

For many co-ops, the end of operating agreements with the government will come in this decade. This challenge presents an opportunity to look closely at the co-op's mission and vision, governance and management and take charge of the co-op's future. And with the eight standards of 2020 certification, the 2020 Vision program can guide co-ops to an independent, thriving and sustainable future beyond 2020.

Even for co-ops who don't face the end of their operating agreements, aging buildings – some still leaky – , rising energy costs, and concerns about climate change, mean we must find ways to repair and renovate our homes.

In this issue of *SCOOP* we tell the story of a co-op in Vancouver, Killarney Gardens, that has faced and overcome overwhelming repair needs. The co-op got the money to replace its roofs and windows, install energy efficiency fixtures

and build a playground. They now have hope for a bright future. The good news is that with various funding programs available, all co-ops in the province who need it could be telling a similar story in the next few years. See our "Nuts and Bolts" column for more information on how.

CHF BC's communications are changing too. You will only see two issues of *SCOOP* (spring and fall) this year instead of four. But look for a transformed website, updated e-news bulletins and increased possibilities for networking as we take advantage of the expanding opportunity of the web, and continue to reduce our carbon footprint.

As the world grapples with housing shortages and the need to live with less impact on the planet, co-ops continue to be the model for how to do it right. CHF BC is here to help make sure that your challenges meet up with opportunities that will make our co-ops stronger than ever.

Bring on the whirlwind!

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- Commercial Services News** includes updates on our CHF BC buying programs, including our newest partner, Trail Appliances, with Energy Star appliances for your co-op.

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Co-op listings are published separately.

Check www.chf.bc.ca in the 'Co-op Directory' or call 604-879-5111 or 1-866-879-5111 or by email to info@CHF.bc.ca to get a free copy.

ON THE COVER: Laura Sleeman of Killarney Gardens Housing Co-op stands in front of a new mural at her co-op. Laura is the treasurer and worked hard with her co-op to get ready for CMHC funding, LEAP funding and a playground build. Check out the full story on page 16.



hot dates Mark your calendars for upcoming co-op housing events you don't want to miss.
Mainland **5** Island **15**

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letters

Robert's Rules

Dear SCOOP,

I went to my first co-op meeting last night, and it wasn't run according to Robert's Rules of Order. In fact, the chair seemed to be making it up on the fly. Are the decisions we made still valid? How can I get the chair to follow Robert's Rules?

Meetings aren't governed by Robert's Rules unless the co-op formally adopts them as the rules its meetings must follow. Having said that, we don't recommend Robert's Rules for housing co-op meetings. They are too complex for the kinds of meetings most co-ops have. Our 10th edition of Robert's is more than 700 pages long!

CHF BC has prepared sample rules of order that are suitable for housing co-ops. You can find them on our website at www.chf.bc.ca/pages/policy.asp.

If you want these rules to apply to your meetings, it's best to adopt them as a policy. The board should review them first, then bring them to a members' meeting for approval.

When you adopt new rules of order, your chair (or someone else who is familiar with meeting procedure) should begin the next meeting with an orientation to the rules. Explain how to use the rules and how they will be applied to different situations. All members will then be able to have their say, and your meetings will run more smoothly.



hot dates

Come and get all fired up about co-op housing at these mainland events:

- Mar 8** Delegate forum, Vancouver
- 27** Spring Education Conference, Burnaby
- Apr 7** 2020 Compass Information Session, Vancouver
- 12** Delegate forum, Vancouver
- May 1** SAGM, Burnaby
- Jun 26** CHF BC/CHF Canada Annual BBQ, Trout Lake

WANTED your stories

SCOOP – your co-op magazine – wants to hear from you! All submissions qualify for our prize draw. Send photos, stories, questions, anything to CHF BC, attention:

SCOOP
200 – 5550 Fraser Street
Vancouver BC
V5W 2Z4

OR

Email scoop@CHF.bc.ca.

CHF BC passes second year energy audit – decreases carbon use by 1%.

In the second year of auditing its carbon emissions, CHF BC met its target of reducing carbon emissions by 1%. In 2008, CHF BC became the first co-op housing federation to go carbon neutral. We did this by reducing carbon emissions and buying offsets from Offsetters who contribute the money to projects designed to help reduce carbon emissions overall. To reduce our carbon footprint we set up a comprehensive recycling

program that reduced our garbage output by 75 kilograms. With the purchase of a new printer and a policy of double-sided printing and copying, coupled with the move to higher recycled paper content we saved five metric tonnes of paper. That's the equivalent of 46 40-foot tall trees!

Paperless workshops, paperless vision

Well, not quite paperless. With CHF BC's quest to remain carbon neutral and reduce our impact on energy use and carbon output, we are looking

for alternatives to how we get things done. Instead of giving members a stack of papers at our education events and AGM, we are trimming these down to the essentials. If you take a course or workshop at an education event, you will be given a "passport" that allows you to view and download course materials after the course. For some workshops, if you have a personal laptop with you, it's possible to view materials during an event. Feedback from members to date has been overwhelmingly positive as members take home only important handouts and are not left with a pile of papers to recycle. "People make a point of mentioning

CHF Canada's Annual Meeting • June 9-12

The
CO-OPERATIVE
HOUSING
FEDERATION
of Canada



La
FÉDÉRATION de
L'HABITATION
COOPÉRATIVE
du Canada

LONDON 2010

Join us in June in London, Ontario for CHF Canada's 2010 Annual General Meeting.

CHF Canada will be offering a great education event with plenty of workshops to choose from, and a chance to have your say at the national business meeting. We'll also be talking about the mission and mandate of CHF Canada as part of our 2020 Vision, and about the scale of the co-op housing sector.

And for fun -- the local planning committee is planning a great local social event and even a double-decker bus tour. So register now and plan to join us in the Forest City!

FIND OUT MORE. REGISTER ONLINE. WWW.CHFCANADA.COOP/2010AGM

Two of the founding directors of COHO, Leo Burdak and David Lach.

how much they appreciate our efforts to reduce paper use,” says Grace Bauer, Administrative Assistant for the education program. “They go out of their way to call and email to tell us how much it means to them.”

2020 Compass



If you haven't heard about 2020 Vision yet, here's what it's all

about: many co-ops, especially federally funded ones, are facing the end of their operating agreements with the government. That means the end of mortgage payments, but it also will mean the end of subsidy and financial assistance. In order to prepare for that day, co-ops need to examine their current situation and see what they can do to be ready. Our 2020 Vision program, developed in partnership with CHF Canada, is designed to make sure your co-op is prepared. To point you in the right direction we've developed the 2020 Compass. Find out more about how your co-op can take advantage of the Compass by contacting Sue Moorhead at smoorhead@chf.bc.ca or 604-879-5111 (1.866.879.5111).

Regional Diversity Grants

CHF Canada is presenting Regional Diversity Grants to member co-ops or federations who are working on “innovative diversity initiatives to support leaders who keep diversity issues on the radar screen for housing co-ops and federations.” To find out more, check out the CHF Canada diversity pages at: www.chfcanada.coop/eng/pages2007/res_diversity.asp and download the brochure: www.chfcanada.coop/eng/pdf/DiversityGrantBrochure.pdf.

COHO Management Services Society celebrates 25 years

COHO Management Services Society is 25 years old. COHO was formed in 1984 by members of CHF BC. COHO offers management services to co-ops in BC. Now employing 45 people and with offices in Vancouver and Victoria, COHO serves 80 clients with more than 5,000 co-op homes.



The SCOOP on E-News

You will only see Spring and Fall issues of SCOOP this year. But look for updated e-news bulletins as we continue to reduce our carbon footprint. Find out more on **page 2**.

YES Camp

YES Camp is getting ready for another summer of fun and leadership training. Enter CHF BC's draw to attend one free basic week of YES Camp. Find out more on **page 27**.

Spring Education Conference

Saturday, March 27, 2010
Executive Hotel and Conference Centre Burnaby

Join us for another great line-up of workshops. Every workshop will help your co-op on the Road to 2020.

Workshop details are at www.chf.bc.ca and in the brochure mailed to your co-op. Register on-line early as workshops fill up quickly.

- Dealing with conflict in co-ops
- Managing capital projects
- What makes a good board?
- 2020 co-ops and long-term financial planning
- Leadership renewal
- Policies that work
- What makes a good director?
- Asset management - It's as easy as 1,2,3!
- Show me the money! Keeping arrears down to zero
- Take the good governance test
- Sustainable gardening and landscaping



Promoting sound management, good governance and principled leadership.

20
VISION
20

Co-op Housing Spring BBQ

Free

Prizes

SATURDAY, JUNE 26th
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

at the south end of
TROUT LAKE PARK under
the covered picnic area

RSVP by June 18 to Suzan at
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info@CHF.bc.ca

**Take transit or ride your
bike for Green prizes.**

This event is sponsored by
CHF BC and CHF Canada.

Family-friendly

Burgers

Hot dogs

Games

Drinks



Savo Djuretic

Farewell to two much-loved co-op leaders

Late last year we lost our former president, Savo Djuretic. Savo served on the board from 2001 to 2004 and was president for two years. He always had a ready smile and was instrumental in getting an agreement to repair leaky co-ops in the province.



Peter Royce

We also lost a brave member and activist Peter Royce. Peter lived and breathed co-operation and was a guiding light for his co-op and for the many people who knew him. He is missed. "Peter was very passionate about new co-op development," says director Isabel Evans. "Although he was never afraid to speak his mind, he was a very gentle person."

Service Canada hire

CHF BC welcomes Amrit Dhadwal, an intern from the BC Co-operative Association's Career Internship Program. Amrit will be working on behalf of the Community Housing Land Trust Foundation to raise the profile of the Disability Trust and Domestic Violence Relief Fund to CHF BC members, beneficiaries of the funds and the community at large.

To find out more please contact CHF BC 604-879-5111 (1.866.879.5111).

The DVRF provides interest free loans to women who are leaving abusive relationships so they can afford share purchases for co-op housing. Women leaving abusive relationships continue to cite not having affordable housing as one of the main barriers that prevents them from leaving an abusive relationship.

The DT provides interest free loans to individuals with disabilities who need financial help so they can afford to purchase shares for co-op housing.

Amrit Dhadwal, CHF BC Intern, Career Internship Program, BC Co-operative Association.



Delegate forums – what are they and why should you be there?

Every CHF BC housing co-op is eligible to send members to the delegate forum. It is your co-op's chance to find out what CHF BC is all about, to meet other co-op members. Most meetings feature a special presentation. The next delegate forum will be on Monday, March 8 at the CHF BC office and will feature a workshop on public speaking with professional speaker, Margaret Hope. Be there! Contact Fiona Jackson for more info: fjackson@chf.bc.ca or 604-879-5111.

Semi-annual general meeting

May 1st – BC delegates will elect your CHF Canada regional director.

After a special resolution passed at the CHF Canada AGM, and confirmed by CHF Canada's members in BC, delegates from BC will elect their regional director to the CHF Canada board at the CHF BC SAGM on May 1st. Other highlights will be a review of our budget and dues and a talk about the future of the co-op housing movement.

'09 AGM

Packed event celebrates progress

More than 100 co-op members, staff and guests packed the Executive Inn in Burnaby on November 28 for CHF BC's 2009 annual general meeting.

Delegates welcomed five new directors to the Federation's board: Fred Silvergieter, Kamal Yazbek, Mary McMullan, Lawrence Boxall and Dave DeRé. They join Catherine Porter, Dianne Brubaker, Alana van Dam, Lisa Berting, Isabel Evans, Larry LeSage and Susan Barron on the board. Larry LeSage since stepped down from the board.

Members heard an exciting report from the board on the events of the past year, including progress made in repairing leaky co-ops, three election campaigns, the 2020 Vision program, leadership renewal, and an update on the Federation's sustainability efforts.

Yaana Dancer, Nick Sidor and Nicholas Gazzard brought members up to date on what's happening at CHF Canada and on the national federation's promising efforts to get the co-op housing message heard at the federal level.

Executive Director Thom Armstrong provided an update on CHF BC's programs and services for members.

Auditor Donna Diskos (Grant Thornton) presented a clean audit report, and Treasurer Catherine Porter reported the details of a ninth consecutive operating surplus.



CHF BC's new board of directors (left to right): Alana van Dam, Dianne Brubaker, Lisa Berting, Mary McMullan, Fred Silvergieter, Kamal Yazbek, Lawrence Boxall, Catherine Porter, Dave DeRé, Susan Barron and Isabel Evans.

Members were inspired by the success stories told by MitraniKetan Housing Co-op (Victoria) and Killarney Gardens Housing Co-op (Vancouver).

The AGM bade a fond farewell to retiring president Wes Hosler and thanked outgoing directors Azima Buell and Marty Norgren.

Mark your calendars now for the Federation's semi-annual general meeting: Saturday, May 1, 2010.

At their first meeting after the AGM, the Federation board elected Catherine Porter as its new president. Other members of the executive are Dianne Brubaker (vice president), Alana van Dam (secretary) and Lisa Berting (treasurer). ■

New faces on the board

Dave DeRé

I've been a member of Greenland Co-op in Richmond for four years and I'm currently Treasurer, active on committees and the CHF BC delegate. I ran for the board of CHF BC because the co-op movement is very important to me. At a time when changing living accommodations was a necessity, the co-op housing movement was just what my family was looking for: a model that would give us the lifestyle that we wanted while allowing us to give back to a community. I am very passionate about educating our members about the co-op movement.

Fred Silvergieter

I've been a member of Hillside Place in Burnaby for 23 years and have served on our maintenance committee, board, newsletter committee and as CHF BC delegate.

I'm a former executive recruiter, charter captain, instructor, business owner and now freelance web designer, database programmer and article writer.

I'm interested in computer-assisted education, especially the good governance and sustainable co-op model we promote. I was my father's caregiver so I have a keen interest in keeping our elders in their own homes. I know a few of the needs and frustrations: my own co-op hasn't one wheelchair-friendly unit or a single bathtub grab-rail.

Kamal Yazbek

I am from Access Housing Co-op. I've decided to join the board for a number of reasons. As an immigrant from a country where there are no co-ops, I am very interested to learn about how co-ops operate. I am also interested in volunteering my time to assist the co-op in any way I can.

CHF Canada has developed eight standards co-ops must meet to become certified as 2020 Co-ops. Standard 5: Good governance and principled leadership, is one of these. For a complete list, check out the 2020 Vision section at www.chfcanada.coop



Good governance and principled leadership

“As a director you must act in the best interests of the co-op, and always put the co-op’s interests ahead of your own... Directors acting together as a board have authority, but the authority of the board can never be abused to serve a director’s personal interest.”

What makes a good director?

5

Duty of loyalty: conflict of interest

One important legal duty that a director has to the co-op is duty of loyalty. This means as a director you must act in the best interests of the co-op, and always put the co-op’s interests ahead of your own.

At the same time, Section 76 of the Co-op Act gives the board power to take action on behalf of the co-op: “...The directors must manage or supervise the management of the business of the association and may exercise all the powers of the association...”

Directors acting together as a board have authority, but the authority of the board can never be abused to serve a director’s personal interest.

As a director you must:

- always put the co-op’s interests first
- do what you know is right, not what you think is popular
- support the decisions of the board to the membership

- do not speak publicly against other directors of the co-op
- keep secret any confidential or private information about the co-op’s business
- avoid conflict of interest.

Avoiding conflict of interest

If the co-op does business with a director that results in a material gain to that director (or to any person or organization in which the director has a material interest) then the director is in a conflict of interest.

A director with a disclosable interest must:

- disclose the conflict to directors at the earliest possible moment
- make sure the disclosure is minuted
- abstain from voting.

It is good practice for the director involved to leave the meeting during the discussion and vote.

Standard 5

Good governance and principled leadership

(excerpt from CHF Canada's *Getting Governance Right*)

Your co-op can meet this standard by:

1. Your co-op's directors sign ethical conduct agreements that set out

- the directors' duties of care and loyalty
- how conflict of interest is to be dealt with
- what directors must do to remain in good standing.

You can find a sample ethical conduct agreement in Appendix 4 of the 2020 Vision certification guide.

2. There is training in good governance and board basics for all board members each year.

3. The board conducts an annual planning session.

4. At least two members' meetings a year are held:

- one to receive the co op's annual budget and approve housing charges
- one to hold your annual meeting, when members receive the audited financial statements and a report from the board, and appoint the co op's auditor.

Of course you will also need to hold elections for your board, which usually, but not always, take place at the annual meeting.

The board must:

- recognize a conflict of interest when it exists
- approve only by resolution of the Directors—the decision cannot be delegated to management or committees
- report the conflict of interest to members. The Co-op Act (section 91) spells out the reporting requirement.

Depending what the conflict is, if a director offers a service to the co-op, and the co-op Rules allow this, fellow directors decide whether the service is worthwhile and acceptable to members. Good business practice becomes important at this time. The board should ensure that competitions for service provision are shown to be open, fair and competitive.

Some co-ops just say "no"

Some co-ops opt to avoid conflict of interest situations by having Rules or policy that do not permit directors to be in conflict of interest situations.

Acting ethically

Even if your board follows these guidelines you should set the bar high with regard to how directors conduct themselves when governing and managing the co-op. Be sure that improper influence, bias, discrimination, bad business practice or not acting in good faith are avoided at all costs.

Prepare directors to meet their legal duties

- hold a training session every time the board changes
- ask directors to sign ethical conduct agreements
- talk about the duties of a director at the board table and to the members.
- remind directors of their duty of loyalty to "act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the co-op and in a manner consistent with the Co-op Act, and the co-op's Memorandum and Rules" (Section 84 of the Co-op Act).

With directors acting on their duty of loyalty, your co-op will be well on its way to good governance and principled leadership—Standard 5 of the 2020 Vision standards.

Find out more

For a complete outline of the roles of a good director see the March 2009 issue of *SCOOP*.

For a complete outline of conflict of interest see Sections 86 – 96 of the Co-op Act.

See the 2020 Certification Guide on the CHF Canada website at www.chfcanada.coop.

CHF BC's set of workshops for board training offers modules that target key elements of board performance standards. It's all part of CHF BC's Road to 2020 education program, and will help your co-op get the results you want.

Council Meeting report

Since the last Vancouver Island Council meeting, two Vancouver Island directors, Avis Michalovsky and Larry LeSage have moved from their co-ops and are not eligible to continue on the board. Mary McMullan (Oak Bay Kiwanis) has been appointed to fill the position vacated by Larry. Mary was acclaimed to an at-large board seat in November but now has shifted to fill the Island seat. The board will continue with nine at-large directors instead of ten. Susan Barron (Waterside) was appointed to fill the position vacated by Avis.

Larry and Avis enjoyed their experience on the CHF BC board and both feel that there is tremendous benefit to serving on the CHF BC board. They encourage members of Island co-ops to stand for election in the years to come.

CHF BC welcomes Mary and Susan to the board table. ■



Right: Chris Colibaba of Trail Appliances Ltd presents Margaret Ransford of Twin Oaks Housing Co-op with the door prize at the Island Council Meeting on February 9.

New faces on the board



Susan Barron

As the local coordinator for the CHF Canada AGM in Victoria in 2009, I met co-op members from all over Canada and locally. I realized we all have very similar issues from aging co-ops and depleted subsidy pools, to our struggle to meet operating expenses.

This convinced me to run for the CHF BC board. I look forward to working with my fellow directors. We bring experience and diversity to the common goal of supporting members with education programs to give co-ops the tools needed for the tough road ahead.



Mary McMullan

Mary has lived in Oak Bay Kiwanis Housing Co-op in Victoria for seven years. She was the treasurer for her co-op and is the co-op's CHF BC delegate. Mary volunteered for the CHF Canada AGM in Victoria last June and enjoyed meeting others from co-ops across the country. Then she attended CHF BC's AGM in November. "I met nice people and learned how their co-ops run."

She looks forward to working on projects related to aging in place and diversity and is committed to finding solutions.

For info about Island services, contact Kerry Panter in CHF BC's Victoria office at 384.9444.

island dates

Come and get all fired up about co-op housing at these great events:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Mar | 6 | Island Education Day, Victoria |
| | 10 | Open House celebration, Victoria |
| | 27 | Spring Education Conference, Burnaby |
| Apr | 17 | Trade Show, Victoria |

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Killarney Gardens

Hard work equals good luck for housing co-op

With 227 units, Killarney Gardens Housing Co-op in East Vancouver is one of the largest housing co-ops in the province.

Now, it just might be the luckiest. Last year the co-op received a combined total of \$4.45 million in grants and awards to cover major repair work, energy efficiency renovations and a playground.

But it wasn't luck that got the co-op back on its feet. It was hard work.

Formed as a co-op in 1989, Killarney Gardens was built in 1968 as privately owned condominiums with townhouses and apartments, but was turned into a rental complex in the 1970s. By the time it became a co-op there were a lot of unresolved maintenance issues.

"They never had the extra funds they needed to manage repairs," says John Waldo of COHO Repair Services (CRS). "Every winter there were leaks and other problems. They were band-aiding everything,"

For more information on how your co-op can take advantage of available grants, see "Good Management and Grants", p. 21.

Things began to turn around for the co-op in 2006 when they set up a full management contract with COHO, a professional management company for co-ops that worked with them to restructure their financing and free up some money for urgent repairs and maintenance. The co-op had to recover from vacancy loss and arrears, partly due to the poor state of some of the units.

The members agreed to increase their housing charges to help with costs. COHO let the co-op know about grant programs and the board members rolled up their sleeves and applied.

At the same time, City Green Solutions (a non-profit enterprise working on energy efficiency programs) was looking for housing projects that could qualify for a Livesmart BC Efficiency Assistance (LEAP) program grant. City Green knew Killarney Gardens from an Affordable Warmth walk-through assessment and report in 2007. Once City Green completed energy efficiency assessments, eaga Canada (a social enterprise that provides environmental efficiency contracting) put together a quote for the costs. Killarney Gardens received a grant for \$385,000, the largest LEAP program project to date. This paid for energy upgrades including:

- compact fluorescent lights (CFL's),
- low-flow showerheads,
- low-flow bathroom aerators,
- bathroom fans,
- weather stripping, and
- insulation for townhouse crawlspaces.





Left: A young member checks out the stepping stones in the co-op's new garden. Right: Members and volunteers celebrate the opening of the co-op's new playground. Opposite: Hannah takes time to enjoy the co-op's new playground.

With these upgrades, Killarney Gardens is projected to save 1290 GJ of energy annually, which is equivalent to savings of 32.813 tonnes of co2 a year, or taking 26 passenger vehicles off the road for one year. The fuel cost savings for the co-op will amount to an estimated \$14,000 annually.

With a grant from KaBOOM, an American company that builds playgrounds by partnering with local corporate sponsors, (in this case Home Depot), the co-op was able to build a playground. Killarney's new "Nature & Play" themed playground includes a mural, children's handmade stepping stones and native plant landscaping from Projects in Place, worth about \$100,000.

Co-op members and CRS staff recruited and organized volunteers for the playground build day, and brought in donations from local businesses for a salmon barbecue, coffee, tea and other food.

Eaga Canada also contributed \$2000 to the landscaping and volunteered on the build.

The biggest windfall for Killarney came with a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) retro fit grant for close to \$2.9 million to replace their roofs, windows and sliding doors.

"Everyone has been working very hard," says Laura Sleeman, the co-op's treasurer who has worked on the projects.

"Killarney has been fantastic. Working with a really progressive board who understand the difference between governance and management is critical," says John Waldo, COHO Repair Services.

John Waldo agrees. "Killarney has been fantastic. Working with a really progressive board who understand the difference between governance and management is critical."

The co-op had to be willing to commit their own funds to cover lawyer fees and to pay for anything not covered by the grant funding. But the work and extra cost are worth it.

"My son has a developmental handicap," says Sleeman. "The co-op is important for people like him. It's important if you're a young family starting out, if you're at the end of your life and you want to be part of a community or if you're vulnerable, like my son. That's why we live in a housing co-op."

The co-op still has more work to do. Like other co-ops they hurry to meet the March 31 first-year funding deadline to finish the repairs. When the co-op's second mortgage is paid off this year, they will borrow more to continue the work: replacing old flooring is a high priority. But they are in a better place now.

"Before, only vacant units were getting repairs," says co-op member Liz Chaput. "Now you can put a work order in and expect it to be dealt with that day or the next. Before, it could take weeks or longer." ■

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Persons with disabilities face many struggles which affect their quality of life. Affording housing should not be one of them. CHF BC is passionate about making sure people with disabilities have the choice to live in co-op housing.

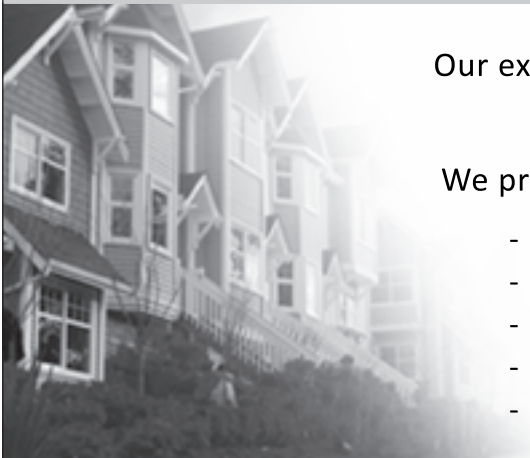
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Good Management and Grants

What does good management have to do with grant money?

Co-ops that demonstrate good management and governance succeed in getting money. Whether a co-op is applying for funding from a grant, looking for financing or paying for a project from its reserves, if it demonstrates good governance and management it has a far higher success rate. Those co-ops who are consistently meeting the Core Management Standards are those that achieve the best results.

When a co-op plans to undergo any kind of project it is important that the co-op understand its responsibilities and its role. A board that demonstrates good governance by ensuring good management and a board that is committed to acting quickly has the best chances of success.

Well-managed co-ops have succeeded in taking advantage of many different grant opportunities. Our clients accessed grants last year ranging from \$2500 all the way up to \$3.1 million totalling \$7 million. That's 16 successful applications from five different grant programs.

A well-managed co-op is in a better position to take advantage of grant opportunities when they come along. More importantly, a well managed co-op is ensuring a successful future for the co-op. ■

Co-ops that meet the Core Management Standards:

- make the decision to have the right management model that will ensure the operations and buildings are maintained as a successful business
- make decisions in timely manner
- take immediate action with all housing charge arrears
- have a capital plan in place
- hire appropriate consultants and project managers to ensure proper tendering and to oversee the project
- have realistic housing charges that will fund the current and future needs of the operations and building
- have current updated rules, policies and procedures in effect
- follow their rules, policies and procedures consistently
- understand that change is required if they aren't meeting the Core Management Standards
- expect that with any large project there will be disruption and inconvenience for the long term gain of the co-op.



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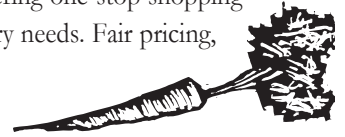
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Charles Court is one of four housing co-ops in Halifax that have merged to ensure long term success.



United we stand

Nova Scotia merger sparks scale discussion across Canada

In the fall of 2008, CHF Canada approached four struggling housing co-operatives in the North end of Halifax about the possibility of strengthening their governance structure and their long term financial viability.

Anathoth, Charles Court, Jim MacDonald and Seaview had all been struggling as small housing co-ops over the last several years. In the summer of 2009, each of the four co-ops unanimously voted on a special resolution to merge together. They became the North End United Housing Co-op, the largest housing co-operative in Nova Scotia with 131 units.

This co-op has since then received \$3.1 million from provincial and federal stimulus funds for capital repairs and energy-conserving modifications such as roofs, windows and doors.

“Co-op mergers made this funding possible,” said CHF Canada President Ken Elliott at the funding announcement in January. “It demonstrates that amalgamated co-ops are successful. This is a model that is working for co-op housing in Nova Scotia and can succeed in other areas as well.”

Nova Scotia leads the country in co-operative housing mergers. The success of these mergers has stimulated a discussion across the country about the potential to reshape the scale of housing co-ops, federations and other sector organizations.

The board of CHF Canada has made this discussion one of their 2010 priorities. CHF Canada has produced a discussion paper on scale and will be conducting a Town Hall dialogue on scale under the banner “Think Big” during CHF Canada’s Annual Meeting in London, Ontario, June 9 to 12, 2010.

Be sure to take part in this important discussion by registering for the AGM and joining co-ops from across the country. Or take part online for a planned webcast of this session.

Stephen Ryan of Kabuki Co-op in Halifax attended his first AGM last year. “I came away with an appreciation for the first time of how we have an entire country of co-ops finding their way. It has left me with a lasting desire to share knowledge and efforts with other co-ops,” says Steve. He adds that anyone going this year should start organizing early to get the most out of the experience.

For more information about the Annual Meeting or the issue of scale in the co-op sector, visit CHF Canada’s website at www.chfcanada.coop. ■

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Rooftops Canada celebrates 25th Anniversary

Rooftops Canada, the international arm of CHF Canada, has been helping people create co-operative homes in the developing world for 25 years now.

From 1984-2009, Rooftops Canada:

- Mobilized over \$30 million to support housing projects and programs with overseas partners.
- Helped build local capacity by providing over 370 technical advisors in 36 countries.
- Supported over 280 visitors to Canada from 21 countries.

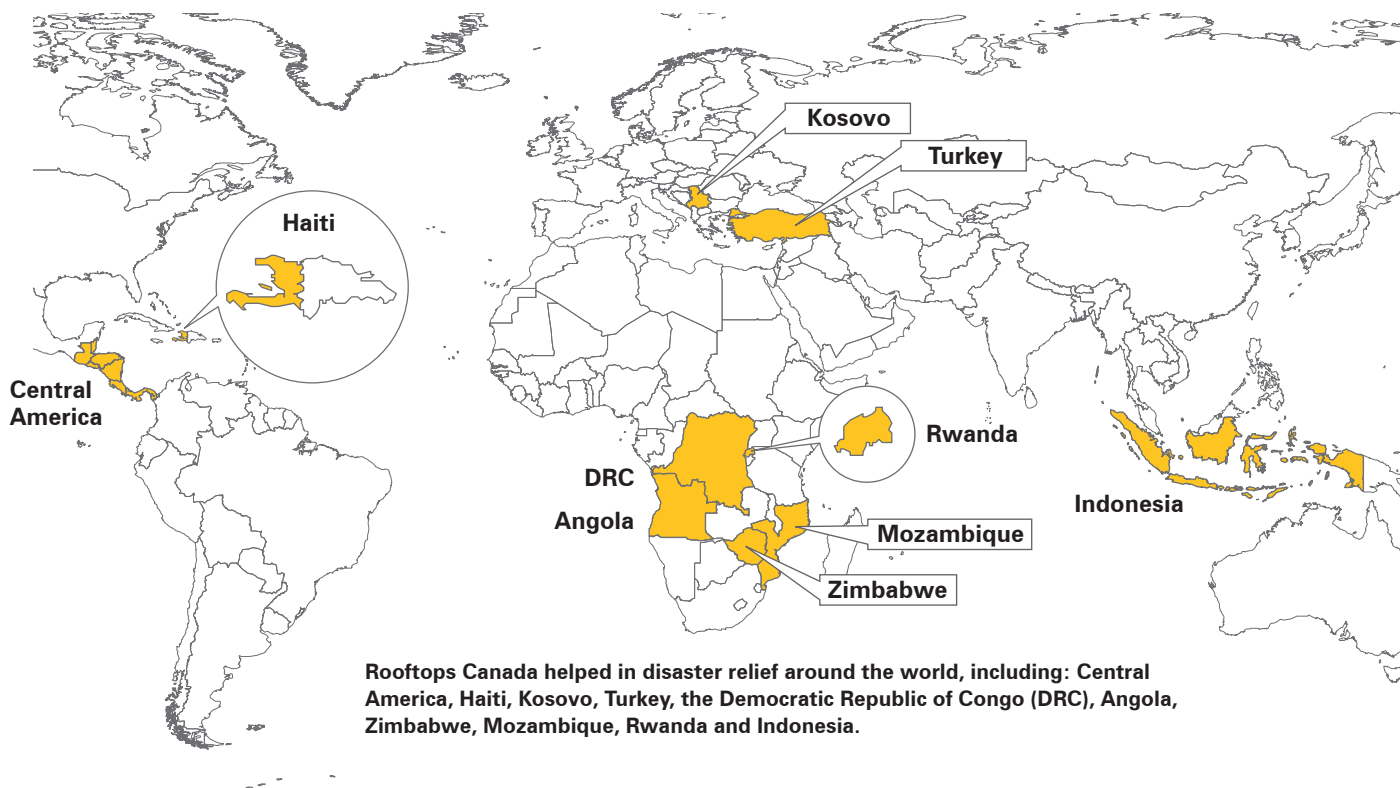
Rooftops Canada will celebrate their accomplishments through 2010 with partner organizations across the country including a workshop and reception in Richmond in the fall (more details closer to the date). ■

Rooftops Canada and Haitian Earthquake Rebuilding

Rooftops Canada has helped post-disaster in other parts of the world and will help rebuilding in Haiti. Rooftops Canada has helped with a post-tsunami housing program in Indonesia, watched over housing projects in Rwanda, evaluated housing projects in Central America and worked in Turkey after the 1999 earthquake. They also have direct experience in the emergency/relief and reconstruction in Angola, the DRC, Central America, Mozambique, Kosovo and Zimbabwe.

Rooftops Canada believes it is essential to rebuild with as much local involvement as possible.

For more information about Rooftops Canada, or to sign up for their e-bulletin, visit www.rooftops.ca.





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The YES camp staff do an incredible job of making the week fun, hilarious and exciting. Check them out on the website at www.theyes.ca and sign up for a week that will change your life!

The YES is supported by co-ops and credit unions from around the province. If you would like to come but are in need of sponsorship, please contact The YES director at youth@bccca.coop. ■

Be sure to enter CHF BC's draw for three lucky people age 14 to 15 to attend one free basic week of YES Camp. For more information contact info@chf.bc.ca.

Access to Grants, Utility Savings, and Improving Housing



Affordable Warmth BC (AWBC), a program of City Green Solutions, provides the most comprehensive database of energy efficiency resources for Affordable Housing in the Province of BC. The goal of AWBC is to bridge the gap between the 'affordable housing continuum' and the programs and incentives that exist in the Province to encourage energy conservation. Co-op Housing can take advantage of numerous incentives available through local, regional and provincial governments, as well as utilities and financial institutions.

Follow these 5 simple steps to locate grants, incentives and financing:

1. Go to www.affordablewarmth.ca
2. Click on the Incentives tab at top of page.
3. In the search engine tool boxes provided identify your 'building type', 'region', 'type of work', and 'people'.
4. Click the Search button.
5. Review the list of incentives that may be available to you.

If your Housing Co-op would like to learn more about available programs and services please go to the Affordable Warmth BC web site at www.affordablewarmth.ca or call toll free 1.866.381.9995 ext: 108 and ask to speak to one of our friendly and professional service representatives today!

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