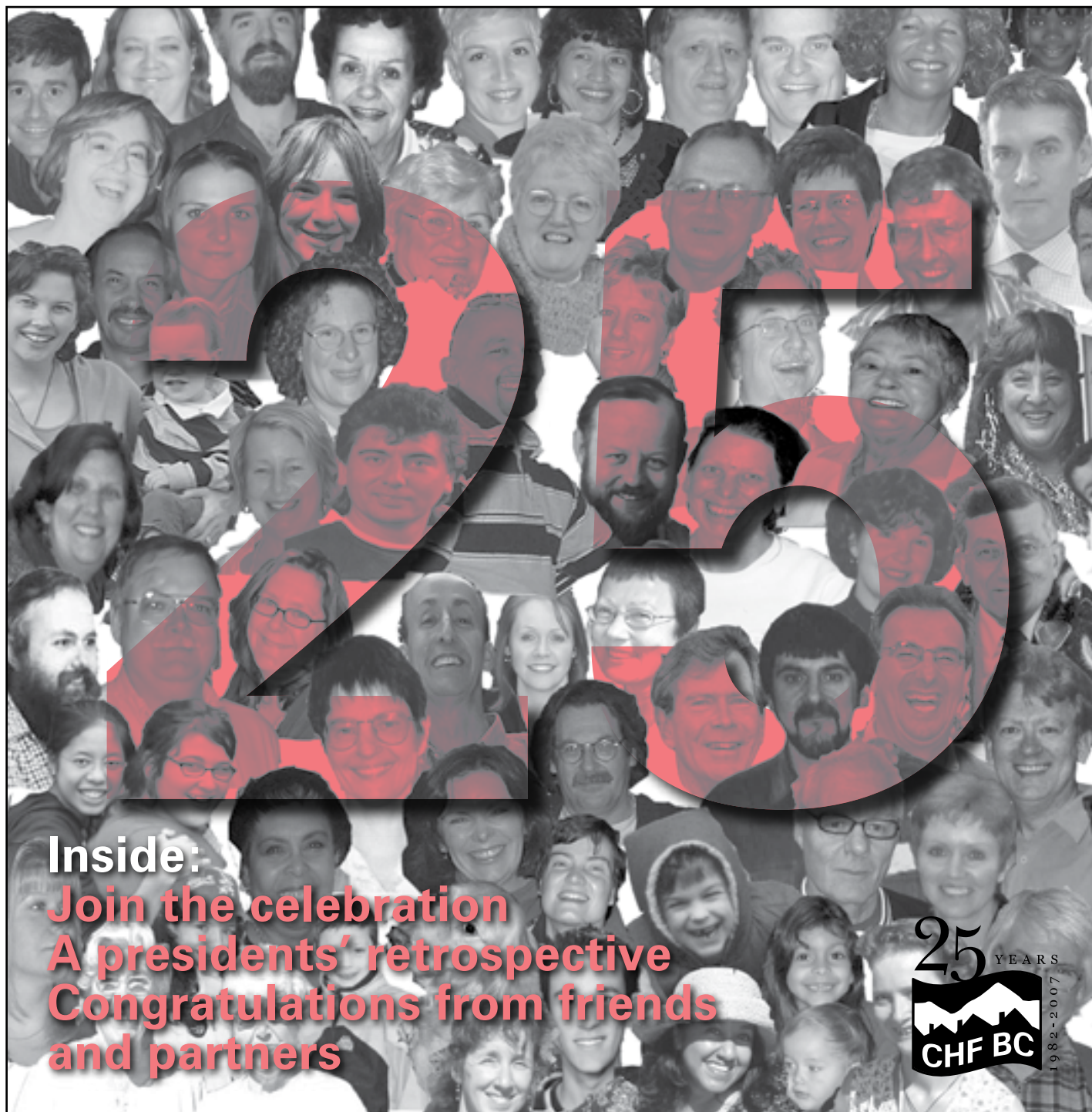


SCOOP

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES IN BC



25th anniversary edition

SPRING 2007 \$3

Looking back at the beginning

In 1980, my housing co-op, Quebec Manor, had just bought its 1913 building from our former landlord, and was in the midst of major renovations.

We had found out about and joined CHF Canada, and as new co-operators we were pleased when we heard that there were plans to form a federation of housing co-ops in British Columbia.

Two of the members of our board, Bruce Gillon and I, attended the meetings. At the end of the process, Quebec Manor signed on as one of 39 co-ops pledging \$12 per unit in first-year dues. Our priorities for the federation were education, information and resources.

At the time, government support was strong and resource groups were vibrant, with over 30 people working full time on developing new co-ops. At the peak in 1983, more than 2,500 new co-op units a year were being developed in BC.

Co-op boards were concerned that all the resources in the sector were working on new co-ops, while existing co-ops had no resources to call on. So, unique at the time, we decided our federation would only have housing co-ops

as members, and would not be a developer. Its role would be to support existing co-ops.

In 1982, the federation was incorporated. At the first annual meeting, I thought that the founding board could use some new members to help. What did I know? All the founding board members withdrew their names, and I found myself elected to the board and then president of a new federation.

In those days we were still getting used to smoking restrictions. I didn't smoke, but my three colleagues on the executive committee did. We had lots of work to do, and after our frequent meetings, the ashtray would be full of 20 butts or more.

To run the fledgling education program and produce *SCOOP*, we inherited a staff person and some funding from Columbia Housing. Additional funds came from CHF Canada. BC Central Credit Union offered us temporary space in the basement of their building on False Creek. Co-operation at work!

Co-op management was already an issue. The property management companies that co-ops had tried were not ready to work with a co-op board.



So our early ideas were for a management company focused on co-ops that eventually became COHO. (CANA was formed with the same motivation at about the same time.)

Financial independence was an issue for the Federation. We had to live within our means, and that meant that our member dues had to be sufficient to build the Federation.

It seems a long time ago, yet it's only 25 years. The Federation has accomplished all of what we hoped for, and more, providing strong resources to BC's housing co-operatives. But I miss the heady days of development. How great it would be to find new ways to expand our existing co-ops or to develop new non-profit co-ops providing secure, affordable, mixed-income housing.

Congratulations CHF BC, on our 25th anniversary. Be proud, all those who have supported the Federation as volunteers or staff over the years. And dream, and work for, what we might achieve in the next 25 years!

David Lach served as CHF BC's president from 1983 to 1984 and as the Federation's acting executive director in 2000. He is a member of Quebec Manor Housing Co-op in Vancouver.

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



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Co-op notices are published separately.

Co-op notices are available at www.chf.bc.ca (in the 'Co-op Directory'), by calling 604.879.5111 (toll-free 1.866.879.5111) or by email to info@chf.bc.ca. You can get a free copy by contacting our offices at 200-5550 Fraser Street in Vancouver or 410-1105 Pandora Avenue in Victoria.

ON THE COVER: In celebration of 25 years of co-operation among housing co-ops in BC, we've assembled a collage of many of the people who have participated in the affairs and activities of CHF BC. Do you recognize any of these faces? *SCOOP* is offering a prize to the person who can name the most people in this picture.

CRS

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For BC Housing Co-operatives

New service

Has your co-op completed major building envelope repairs?

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Protect your investment.

COHO Repair Services continues to grow with the co-op sector as needs change. Our services now include:

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SCOOP is published quarterly by CHF BC to provide a link between housing co-ops and the Federation, and a forum for opinion. *SCOOP's* content does not necessarily represent CHF BC policy. Publication of an advertisement does not imply endorsement of the product or service. *SCOOP* is distributed free to all households in CHF BC member co-ops. **ISSN 1206-2766**

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up front

LETTERS

Dear SCOOP,

Not long ago, our board of directors fired the co-op's bookkeeper and hired a replacement. Personally, I thought the former bookkeeper was doing a good job, so at our next general meeting I asked the members to overturn the board's decision. The chair declared my motion out of order and said that the members cannot overrule the board. Can this be true? I thought the members were the final authority on everything in the co-op.

The chair of your meeting was right to rule the motion out of order. The members cannot substitute their decision for a decision that the board had the legal authority to make. In this case, section 76 of the Cooperative Association Act says that the board must manage the business of the co-op. Since hiring (and firing) staff is a management function, the members cannot overturn the board's personnel decisions.

There's a good reason for this. In law, the directors must act in good faith and in the best interest of the co-op. They have a duty of care to do what they think is right. And if they don't, they can be liable for the consequences. The members aren't liable in the same way, and you can't separate the authority to make a decision from the liability for how it turns out.

The Co-op Act gives final authority to the members on some very important matters: electing the board, setting the Rules, appointing the auditor. These are the key governance functions in the co-op. But the directors are elected to manage (or supervise the management of) the co-op's business. Members can give the board all the advice or feedback they wish. In serious situations, they can even remove a board and elect a new one. They just can't make decisions that the Act says are the board's to make.



hot dates

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

- June**
- 5** Workshop: member complaints (see p.20)
 - 7 - 9** CHF Canada AGM, Winnipeg
 - 16** 25th Anniversary Member Appreciation Event (see p.13)
 - 18** Workshop: membership terminations (see p.20)
- Aug**
- 5** Housing co-ops march in Vancouver Pride Parade.

chip rates

Preferred rates for CHF BC member co-op operating accounts. These rates were effective May 1, 2007 and are subject to change.

CCEC – variable	3.38%
CCEC – fixed 12-month	3.5%
Coast Capital (Vancouver Island)	3.75%
Prospera	3.0%
VanCity	3.75%



At the semi-annual general meeting on April 28, delegates voted unanimous approval of CHF BC's budget for 07/08

Announcing the winners of CHF BC's anniversary art contest

Brenda Macevicius, James Bay Co-op wins an iPod nano. Chris Dickinson of China Creek Co-op in Vancouver wins a portable workshop for his co-op. Karen Armstrong, Whattlekainum wins a \$50 White Spot gift certificate. Charlotte Mann of James Bay Co-op in Victoria wins a \$50 Famous Players gift certificate.

We will feature the art submissions in future issues of *SCOOP* and on the CHF BC website at www.chf.bc.ca/pages/chfbc4.asp.

SAGM Report

Good news meeting well attended

CHF BC members gathered in Burnaby on April 28 for the Federation's semi-annual general meeting. 54 delegates, 10 alternates and 37 observers made it a memorable event. Delegates heard good news in the fight to find solutions for leaky co-ops in BC.

They also heard reports on the 2020 Vision Project, election readiness and opportunities for new co-op development. The board also outlined its plans to celebrate this year's 25th anniversary in style (see p. 8).

The keynote speaker was John Restakis, executive director of the BC Co-operative Association. His insightful and inspiring speech on the success and potential of co-ops for civilizing the economy was very well received.

Delegates also approved a budget for next year with a dues increase of 10 cents per unit per month. Membership dues for the year beginning August 1, 2007 will be \$3.25/unit/month.

You can download reports and the keynote speech from the Members' Section of CHF BC's website at www.chf.bc.ca. Mark November 24 on your calendar for CHF BC's 25th anniversary AGM and anniversary dinner/dance. We hope to see you there!

Two of the co-op members
who helped achieve a record-
breaking turnout at CHF BC's
2007 Spring Education
Conference

Spring education conference Sets new record

CHF BC's Spring Education Conference attracted a record 182 co-op members on March 31 in Burnaby. There was also a record attendance from Vancouver Island at this event with 12 members from eight Victoria co-ops.

In fact, some attendees travelled from as far away as Kelowna and Fort St. John! CHF BC also successfully hosted regular full-day education events in Victoria on March 10 and in Kelowna on April 21.

If you missed these events, we have scheduled overflow events throughout the spring (see p.20). Mark your calendars for the Fall Education Conference on Saturday, October 27, 2007.



up front the inside scoop



WANTED

SCOOP - YOUR CO-OP MAGAZINE - WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

All letters, stories, pictures and questions qualify you
for our prize draw.

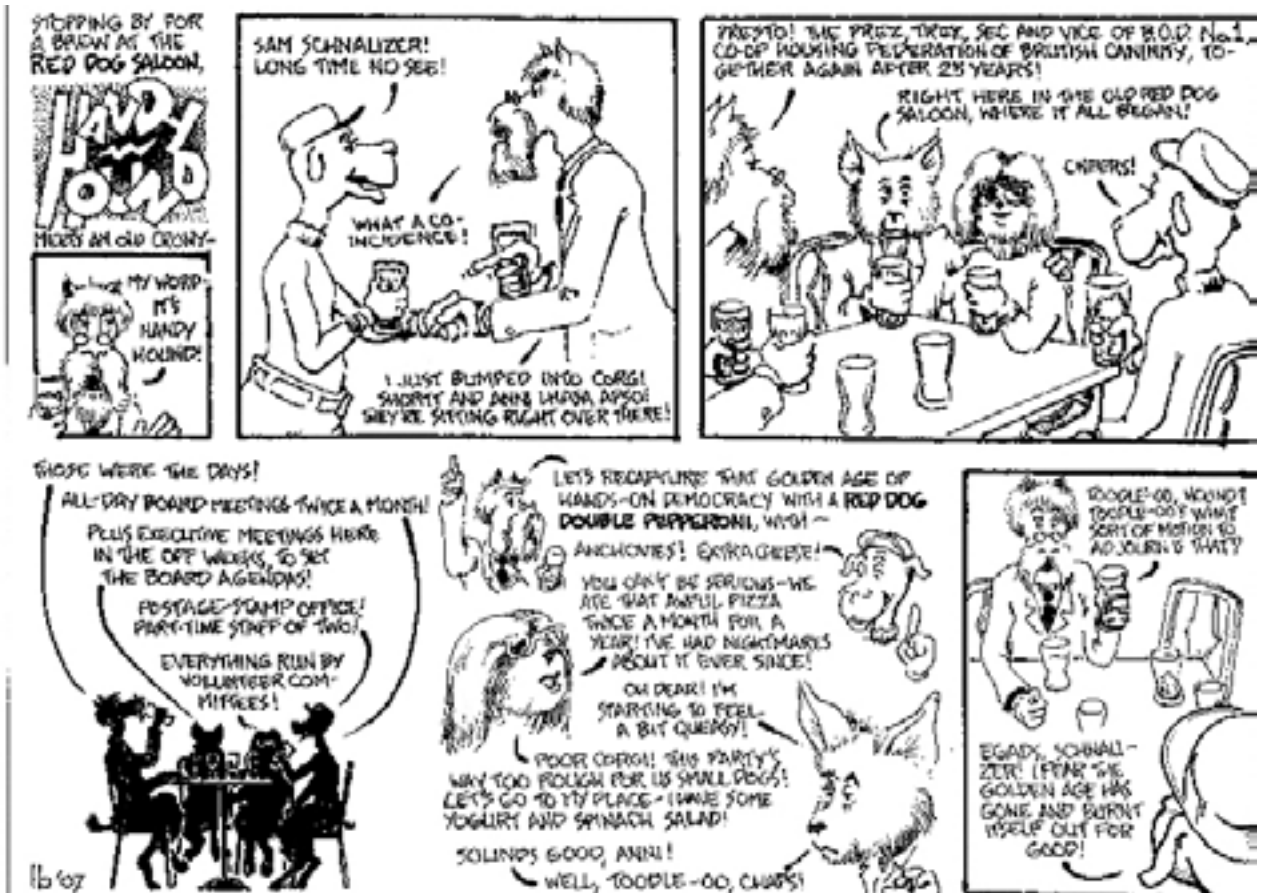
Send photos, art, stories, video, etc to CHF BC, attention: *SCOOP*, 200
– 5550 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC V5W 2Z4. Submissions may be
reproduced in CHF BC print materials and on CHF BC's website.



Join us for CHF BC's anniversary events

This year CHF BC is celebrating 25 years of co-operation among housing co-ops in BC, and we're celebrating our anniversary in style. We hope you'll join us because it's all about thanking you, CHF BC members, for your support.

This spring we're hosting family-friendly member appreciation events across the province with free food, drinks, games and prizes. The first event held in Kelowna on April 21 was a big success.



The next event will be in Victoria on May 26 from 1 to 4 pm at Glentana Village Recreation Centre, 1507 Glentana Road, Victoria. And finally, we'll celebrate in Vancouver at Trout Lake Park from noon to 4 pm. Everything is provided for these events.

All you need to do is RSVP, then show up and have fun!

Last but definitely not least, we are now selling tickets for the big event of the year, a gala 25th anniversary dinner and dance at Federico's Supper Club in Vancouver on November 24 after our AGM. The price is an absolute steal at \$25 for a three-course meal, wine, and live entertainment, and tickets are going fast. So contact Cathleen today at CHF BC's Vancouver office to find out how to get yours before this event sells out.

Visit our website at www.chf.bc.ca or call the CHF BC office near you find out more about these anniversary events, to RSVP or to buy tickets.

Opposite page: Trout Lake party to celebrate CHF BC's first anniversary in 1982.

Good news for BC's leaky co-ops

We are very pleased to report the results of discussions between CHF BC, CHF Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) on how best to help federally assisted co-ops suffering from premature building envelope failure (leaky co-ops).

CMHC has enhanced its workout framework for federally assisted CMHC-insured co-operatives committed under the Pre-86 Program with confirmed premature building envelope failure.

A more flexible workout framework will help more co-ops return to financial viability over the long term. "Helping co-ops with serious building envelope problems has been CHF BC's top priority for many years.

These enhancements are a significant step forward in that effort." said CHF BC executive director, Thom Armstrong. A number of these enhancements will also be applied where helpful and appropriate to other federally administered CMHC-insured projects in difficulty across Canada.

"This new workout framework is very good news, not only for the leaky co-ops in BC that will now be able use it to finance their building

Leaky co-op at a glance

Category	Co-ops	Units
Fixed	13	712
Under construction	5	318
Design/tender	6	341
Loan approved	2	75
Analysis	9	552
Non-HPO repairs	6	349
Other	27	1479
Total	68	3826

repairs, but also for federally administered CMHC-insured co-ops elsewhere in Canada,” said CHF Canada executive director, Nicholas Gazzard. The enhancements are to be implemented immediately, where more flexibility can lead to a viable long-term workout arrangement. “For eligible co-ops, the enhanced framework will increase the amount of borrowing permitted in a workout and offer more flexible repayment terms for those loans,” said Sharon Matthews, Vice-President of Assisted Housing

for CMHC. “We are grateful to CHF Canada and CHF BC for co-operating with us on this initiative.”

Where redevelopment of existing co-ops is a more cost effective solution, enhanced assistance will still be available, along with seed funding to help cover the costs associated with the early stages of redevelopment. These enhancements build on work already undertaken by CMHC and the co-operative housing sector to find workable, affordable solutions

to help members of housing co-operatives continue to live in safe, affordable co-op homes.

Mandy Yeomans, CHF BC’s leaky co-op liaison officer continues to assist co-ops working their way through the remediation process. You can contact Mandy at 604.879.5111 ext 132, toll-free at 1.866.879.5111 or myeomans@chf.bc.ca.



An excellent assortment of useful information, guides and tools for leaky co-ops is available online in the members’ section of CHF BC’s website at www.chf.bc.ca/pages/resources-leaky.asp.

Sojourn Housing Co-op pictured in 2003 (right) and then in 2007 (below) after completing building envelope repairs.



Spring education events



By popular demand! These workshops filled up quickly at the spring education conference, so here's your second chance to attend. Register early to avoid disappointment.

Workshop: Dealing with member complaints

**Tuesday, June 5
7:00 to 10:00 pm at
CHF BC Vancouver office**

April English

Member complaints are a fact of life in housing co-ops. Unless there's a good process in place, boards, committees and staff can spend a lot of time dealing with complaints without actually resolving the problem. This can lead to more conflict and unhappy members.

This workshop will show you how to take the guesswork out of dealing with complaints. We'll talk about:

- different types of member complaints
- how you can respond effectively
- the role of the members, committees and the board in resolving complaints
- dispute resolution methods that work.

Membership terminations

**Monday, June 18
Geoffrey Dabbs and Thom
Armstrong
7:00 to 10:00 pm at
CHF BC Vancouver office**

Forcing a member to leave the co-op is unpleasant enough. Don't make it worse for everyone by ignoring the proper legal steps. We will outline what the Co-op Act and your Rules have to say about membership terminations. We'll also explain the difference between termination of membership and termination of the occupancy agreement.

The recent Court of Appeal ruling has clarified these issues for every co-op (see Winter 2007 *SCOOP* (page 17). Come to this workshop if you want to know:

- the legal steps involved in terminating membership and occupancy
- how to avoid the most common (and expensive) mistakes
- how to decide which termination procedure to use
- what you can do to balance community and individual rights.

Fees for the workshops are \$60 for members and \$180 for non-members plus GST. CHF BC will invoice your co-op after you register. Register at www.chf.bc.ca, 604.879.5111 ext. 0 or info@chf.bc.ca.

Good management goes hand in hand with sound governance and principled leadership. Whether you need help with policies, your long-term vision, overall direction or taking care of daily co-op business, there's something in our program for you.

commercial services news

Services for CHF BC member housing co-ops



New manager at Pacific Wholesale Appliances

David Harapiak is the new general manager of Pacific Wholesale Appliances (PWA). David has been with PWA for five years and has extensive experience in the appliance industry.

David and his staff are attuned to co-ops' appliance needs and would be happy to provide a quotation on any brand that you desire, so be sure to include them in your appliance decision-making process. One call to PWA could save you time and money. You can reach them at 604.270.2460.



The Apartment Appliance Specialist

Special
Coop Member
Rates!



Pacific Wholesale Appliances is your number one choice for service and value. We offer a superior selection of appliances at unbeatable prices.

We carry Energy Star Appliances which are the most energy-efficient on the market today, and provide you the benefits of reduced energy costs.

Call David Harapiak for more details on special Coop Member rates.

2451 Vauxhall Place, Richmond, British Columbia V6V1Z5
Tel: 604-270-2460 Toll Free: 877-241-0848 Fax: 604-270-2452

coinamatic
GROUP OF COMPANIES



To get a better and more personal picture of CHF BC's formation and history, SCOOP interviewed our Federation's leaders, past and present. Here are some highlights from these exchanges.

Herb Barbolet

Founding board member, president 1982

I was involved in some of the early attempts to create a BC federation in the 70s, with the Western Housing Federation and Pacific Housing Federation. These didn't get off the ground because of factions and competing agendas. But by 1981 there were a lot more housing co-ops – more people and energy – and we recognized the need for a regional federation.

We spent a year and a half developing CHF BC's memorandum and rules. Then I chaired a big meeting at False Creek Housing Co-op where we had about 80 people representing just about every co-op in BC. By the end of the day, operating by consensus, we had formed the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC.

I haven't been involved for about 15 years now, but I think it's fabulous that it's still around doing education and training. I have every wish for another 25 years and for a government that will wake up to how wonderful a success this has been and reinstitute a major program for housing co-ops.

Leo Burdak

Founding board member

I first got involved in housing co-ops in the 70s in a failed attempt to create a new co-op in downtown Vancouver called Robson International. After that we joined Twin Rainbows which was starting up in False Creek. I got to know several co-op housing activists during this time and joined the founding board to set up a regional federation. I was *SCOOP's* second editor, after Patricia Hogan, when CHF BC took on this publication started by the BC Education Resource Committee from the offices of Columbia Housing.

We were and remain good friends from that founding board. I look back at these early days, when we had a postage-stamp-sized office and everything was very volunteer-driven, with a certain nostalgia.

David Lach

President 1983-84

See editorial on page 2.

Merrilee Robson

**Founding board member,
president 1985-1986**

When CHF Canada's AGM was being held in Vancouver in 1981 a group of us got together locally to help plan the meeting, and we started working on the idea of a regional federation. We were looking at education, providing local services, and doing advocacy for housing co-ops in BC.

I thought it was a really significant gesture and a real sign of the interest and need for a regional federation that the original co-ops paid their first year's dues in trust in advance. Now seeing the role that CHF BC plays in the sector and how big it is and how many co-ops have joined, I think it's a real justification of that initial trust. It's very satisfying to see that.

When I was president, two years after CHF BC became operational, there were all sorts of things going on. The 56.1 program was still operating and there were co-ops opening all the time. That was part of the role of president too – to go out every weekend to openings and ribbon-cuttings, hand out the co-op flag. It was a real circuit, with people from CMHC and various politicians from the city and province. We'd go around to these openings and have tea and sandwiches and hang around together. We used to joke about it and had t-shirts done up saying 'there is such a thing as a free lunch, just no such thing as a free weekend'. That

was great: that there was a real interest in affordable housing, with people actually doing something about it.

It was a fun time. We were young and we just went out and got it done. We didn't have really have any notion that we might fail. We remain close friends with a lot of people who were involved in the early days.

Jamie Ritchie

President 1995

I've worked with some great people over the years and have always been impressed with the quality and commitment of those who choose to commit their time to CHF BC.

During my tenure I had the privilege of presiding over the organization as it pulled off the amazing CHF Canada AGM under the sails in 1995, generally acknowledged by all – well at least us in the West – to be the AGM by which all others are measured.

I have been involved with the Federation for almost 20 years, seen it go through highs and lows, and I'm proud to be involved with it as it continues its focus on providing service excellence to housing co-op in BC and being a champion of safe, secure, affordable housing for British Columbians.

Angela Sealy

President 1996

When I moved into a co-op in '91, I knew a great deal about relationship building and co-operative living but not much about the co-op sector at large. Being a member of the CHF BC board and eventually becoming president taught me a great deal about the housing co-op sector, and this made me a better co-op member. I would encourage any co-op member to get involved with any of CHF BC's many offerings. CHF BC membership helps us understand the co-op housing sector, strengthens the network system and offers the education needed to sustain the co-op movement.

Isabel Evans

President 1997

I learned a lot during the time I was on the CHF BC board. I think, as a federation, we have grown tremendously: in membership and staff, financial stability, services and education to our members. I think the Federation has more vision and initiative today. The relationship with CHF Canada and other federations across the country has never been stronger, and I think the leadership from CHF BC is a major reason why housing co-ops across the country are a force to be reckoned with.

Mike Alsop

President 2005

My biggest memory has been the work on the leaky co-op campaign as one half of the "Wayne and Mike Show" with Wayne Callaghan. Having to go to co-ops and talk about whether their buildings leaked was tough, and it's been a long battle starting back in 1998. But it's great to see what has been accomplished, especially with the national support we've received. In fact, this file really helped make our relationship with CHF Canada the excellent one it is today.

From my term as president, I think I'm most proud of our Opening Doors campaign – a really great project – and the communications audit, where we learned a lot, more than we expected, about our members and their needs.

We've come a long way, but the challenges certainly aren't over. I have to admit to being quite nervous about where this 2020 Vision work is going to go, because it's so key to the survival of co-ops, the sector and this federation.

Wes Hosler

President 2006 – present

Clearly CHF BC is one of the most successful federations of housing co-operatives in Canada. Strong member support and a dedicated professional staff ensures its success in the future.

Presidents' retrospective

Free

Prizes

Family-friendly

Burgers

Games

Hot dogs

Drinks

CHF BC's 25th ANNIVERSARY MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENT

Please join us for this fun, free afternoon of food, games, music and prizes to thank you, CHF BC members, for your support.

June 16th, 12:00 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Trout Lake Park, Vancouver

RSVP to Cathleen @ 604.879.5111 or cdavies@chf.bc.ca





BC's co-operative housing

Leo Burdak

Jamie Ritchie 1995

Abbotsford Co-op Villa, BC's first non-student housing co-op

Section 61 first federal co-op housing program

Section 95 replaces Section 61 program

CHF BC is incorporated, representing 39 housing co-ops

ILM program replaces Section 95

CHF BC creates the Community Housing Land Trust Foundation

Vancouver Island Co-op Housing Association (VICHA) formed

CHF BC begins its Commercial Services program

1967 1969 1970 1973 1979 1982 1984 1986 1987 1992 1993 1994

Campus Residence Co-op, BC's first federally funded housing co-op.

De Cosmos Village, BC's first federally funded family housing co-op

SCOOP newsletter launched

BC Education Resources Committee (BCERC), CHF BC's predecessor, established out of the offices of Columbia Housing

Rooftops Canada launched

CHF BC starts COHO Management Services, a co-op management company

Federal co-op housing program cancelled

HOMES BC created, provincial program includes support for new co-ops

Wes Hoster 2006 -

Mike Alsop 2005

*Merrilee Robson
1985-86*

*Herb Barbolet
1982*

history

David Lach 1983-84

CHF BC creates
Leaky Co-op
Committee.

CHF Canada
makes fixing
BC's leaky
co-ops its top
priority

CHF BC
launches
Opening
Doors
program to
help women
leaving abuse
access co-op
housing

Construction
cost inflation
averaging 2%
per month stalls
repair plans
for some leaky
co-ops

The Agency for
Co-operative
Housing
launches BC
office, taking on
administration
of federal co-op
programs

CHF BC creates
Model Rules
to help co-ops
conform to
BC's new co-op
legislation

Westwood
Housing
Co-op first
property
transferred
to the Land
Trust

Federal
government
announces
framework
to repair
BC's leaky
co-ops

Federal
government
instructs
CMHC to fix
the Section
95 subsidy
flaw

CHF BC,
CHF Canada
and CMHC
announce
enhanced
assistance
for leaky
co-ops

CMHC
returns
\$350,000
to BC
co-ops
after
sector
mobilizes
against
clawbacks
of net
operating
resources

CHF BC
launches
website

Federal
government
announces
it won't
download
adminis-
tration of
co-ops in
BC

HOMES
BC co-op
program
cancelled

CHF BC
creates
Policy
Manual to
help co-ops
review
and revise
co-op
policies

CHF BC
launches
privacy tools
to help co-ops
conform to
BC's Personal
Information
Protection Act
(PIPA)

CHF BC
celebrates
25th
anniversary
with 226
member
housing
co-ops
representing
11,785 units

Federal government
starts
downloading
administration
of federal co-op
programs to
provinces.
Co-op housing
sector launches
campaign to
stop it.

CHF BC
and VICHA
combine to
form one
federation
for BC

CHF BC
launches
campaign
to restore
Section
95 co-op
subsidies

CHF BC
launches
Aaron Webster
Memorial Fund
to promote
diversity

Angela Sealy 1996

Isabel Evans 1997



Join us at the co-op event of the year



25th Anniversary

Dinner & Dance

November 24, 2007

Federico's Supper Club

Tickets \$25

(Limit two per order)

**To order tickets, contact Cathleen at 604.879.5111, ext. 0
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Seniors are a very important asset to our housing co-ops



Statistics Canada defines seniors as those 55 years of age or older. Seniors make up 23% of Canada's population, and this percentage is representative of seniors living in housing co-ops. Seniors are as diverse a group as any other group living in co-ops. Seniors also have things in common:

- seniors tend to have lower incomes than average
- seniors volunteer more than any other age group
- seniors have increased their physical fitness more than any other age group
- seniors have a whole wealth of life experiences
- seniors make good role models and mentors for our youth.

In Canada, seniors are the fastest growing segment of society. In most societies, seniors are a valuable community asset and the most respected group because they have knowledge and experience they are willing to share, and they volunteer time to their communities.

Seniors want to be:

- **INVOLVED** in making choices about our daily lives including any help we need
- **RECOGNIZED** as a group with a valuable contribution to make to the housing co-op sector
- **RESPECTED** within our co-operatives in the same way as we respect others

Seniors don't want to be ignored because of their age. We want to be heard!

CHF BC's Diversity Committee has decided to focus on senior issues for the upcoming year. We would like to hear from seniors in our member co-ops regarding their issues.

You can contact the Diversity Committee care of CHF BC, 200 – 5550 Fraser St. Vancouver V5W 2Z4 or to info@chf.bc.ca marked "Attention: Diversity Committee".

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Island members put a lot of thought and effort into CHF BC's 5-year performance review at the Vancouver Island Council Meeting on February 22.

Island Council 5-year review gives CHF BC top marks

In addition to being CHF BC's 25th anniversary, 2007 marks five years since the merger of regional co-op housing federations into one federation for BC. At the most recent Vancouver Island Council meeting, held February 22 at the Howard Johnson Hotel, delegates evaluated the CHF BC's governance, service and value for Island co-ops. They gave the Federation a positive review, concluding that Island co-ops are well represented and well served by CHF BC and that membership provides good value for dues. They also provided excellent feedback and suggestions for further improvement.

Other meeting highlights included an update from CHF BC commercial services partner, Sherri Madden of Pacific Wholesale Appliances. Members were pleased to learn about the benefits and tailored service available through PWA.

island chip rates

Preferred rates for CHF BC member co-op accounts. Rates effective May 1, 2007 and subject to change.

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



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Nuts + bolts

by Alana Taylor

Playground Safety Tips

We all know the benefits of play. First and foremost it is how children keep fit. Play is often the only form of exercise they receive. They also grow socially, mentally and creatively through play. Learning to interact with their peers in a play environment helps create involved, caring and responsible children.

As a co-op, when considering play equipment or surfacing, it's important to keep in mind safety for kids, and reduce liability risk – by choosing equipment which meets CSA (Canadian Standards Association) standards. Not all companies certify all their

products, as it is an expensive process. Ask your supplier which products are compliant. The guidelines cover the way it is made, installed and how it is used. Sad to say, most of the equipment from even as little as five or ten years ago would not meet current standards, especially if it is of the wood variety.

Traditional surfacing such as grass or sand are no longer favored by CSA. The three main options are peagravel, wood carpet and rubber.

Peagravel - The upside of this option is price - though shipping can often push the price up. It

is also more labor intensive to install. The downsides are that it attracts animals, migrates onto grass (not good for lawn mowers), can be dangerous if thrown, and is noisy against metal surfaces. It needs constant raking and top up to keep its safety value.

Wood carpet is engineered wood fiber and is made from new cuts of wood – not recycled. It has significantly fewer sliver issues than old bark mulch. Animals do not like it, so it stays cleaner, lawnmowers are not affected by any spillage and it does not migrate the way pea gravel does. Wood carpet is rated as an accessible surface for those in walkers/wheel chairs. It does require some raking and topping up but not as much as pea gravel. It is easy to install by volunteers and is not much more costly than pea gravel, if at all.

Rubber comes in essentially two forms: rubber tiles and poured in place rubber surfacing. Pour in place allows for some flexibility in design as the material is trowled in. The downside of this product is that the top layer, is somewhat soft and will begin to wear away, leaving only the black subsurface showing, compromising the safety value of the product. Rubber tile is a mat which can be laid out in a geometric pattern to add more play value to the site. [p. 23] ►



Nuts and bolts

It is an ideal surface for toddlers and for co-ops wishing to provide excellent accessibility to their residents. From a maintenance point of view it only needs general sweeping. Rubber tile comes with a ten-year warranty which covers the head impact rating, meaning that the fall protection of the product will remain as it is when first installed. It is the most expensive option for surfacing but in the long run, generally well worth the investment.

Financing projects can be a challenge. If you are in the process of doing a major or minor building repair, check into the option of upgrading your play structure at the same time and combining the funding.

Though it can seem overwhelming, finding out about how to make a safe, fun play environment for your smaller residents can be well worth the effort.

Alana Taylor is the Greater Vancouver territory manager for The Playground Guys. She offers complimentary play environment evaluations for CHF BC member co-ops. Call 866-984-7529 or visit www.theplaygroundguy.com for more information.



WANT TO GO TO CAMP... FOR FREE?

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**Entry deadline:
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New youth Editor Aly dela Cruz Yip (above) and writer Jessica Wallin (bottom right) pair up bring you the New View.

SCOOP's new youth editor and writer say “hi”

Yo, fellow co-op kids!

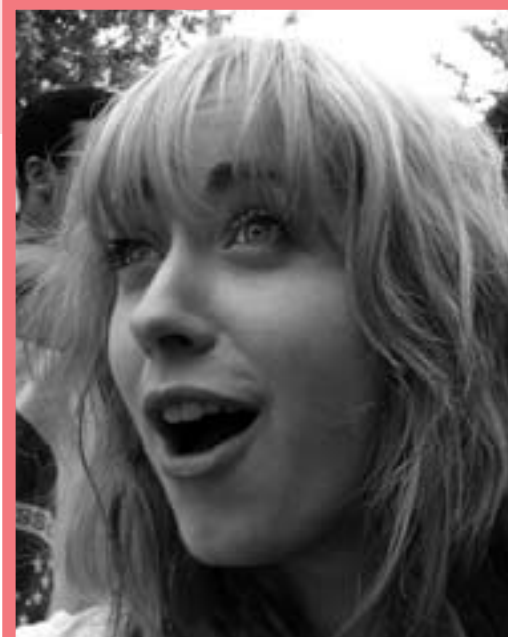
Aly dela Cruz Yip here wishing you a happy Spring! For this first installment as the new Youth Editor, I thought I'd introduce myself. I am a grade twelve International Baccalaureate student at Britannia Secondary in East Vancouver and reside at Le Coeur Housing Co-operative. I enjoy listening [and dancing] to music, drama, painting, sculpting, photography, social activism, and writing. I am a firm believer that co-operation is an element applicable to all aspects of life. I was ardently involved with the promotion CHF BC's Domestic Violence Education Project (Opening Doors), along with fellow co-op youths, in Vancouver and Victoria. I

was also privileged enough to help accept the Jim MacDonald Award for Social Change on behalf of CHF BC at CHF Canada's 2005 AGM in Edmonton. I am an active member of CHF BC's Diversity Committee, and a graduate of The Yes, formerly known as Camp Rainbow. I am very passionate about the co-op movement and the issue of affordable housing in general. I believe the voice of youth is absolutely essential to the future of co-op housing and know my new post will be a great opportunity to continue advocating youth involvement. Thus, by means of a personal statement, I'd like to introduce a new key contributor, Jessica Wallin, who will hopefully be submitting her valuable insight regularly in the future.

Hey there!

My name is Jessica Wallin and I go to Lord Byng Arts Mini in the Literary and Music programs. With a passion for improv and writing music and prose I go through my day drinking lots of tea. I've been living in Heritage Housing co-op for, basically, all of my life. I spent my childhood playing Sailor Moon and Spice Girls with the other kids in the co-op and sometimes even performing music shows for the rest of our neighbors. To this day I love the potlucks and various get-togethers our co-op has as well as the tight knit community that we have amongst a city that can feel, at times, distant. I'm excited to be writing for SCOOP as well as working with Aly! Best Wishes, Jessica

That said, Jessica and I would like to make an open invitation to all you co-op kids! Submit your short stories, poems, artwork, memoirs, questions or concerns and whatever else your creative minds can dream up about what co-op housing means to you and we'll see about getting your entries in SCOOP's next issue! I can't wait to start receiving your brilliant thoughts and rad ideas! Sincerely, Alyssa



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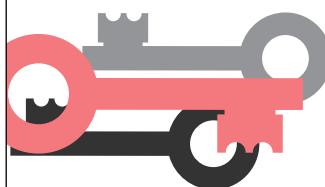
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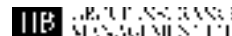
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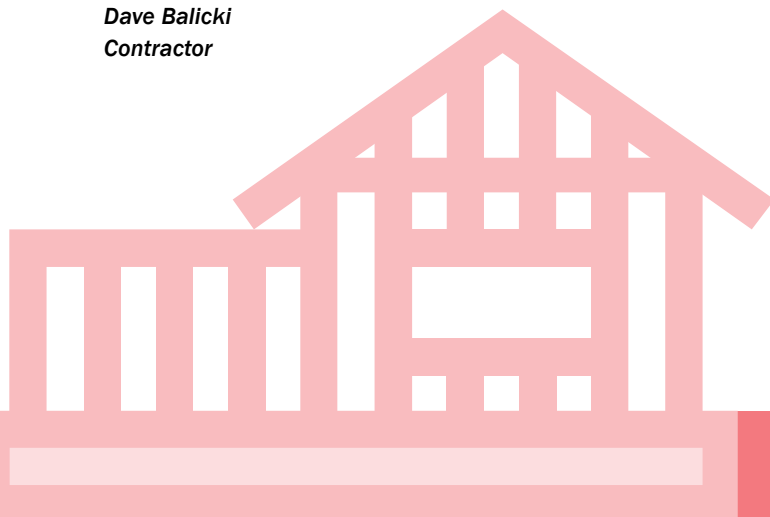
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national BY NICHOLAS GAZZARD

CHF Canada sends anniversary congratulations

The Board of Directors of CHF Canada would like to congratulate all the members of CHF BC on the 25th anniversary of your federation.

I was pleased to have the chance to attend your education conference last fall. I was able to spend time talking with members from many parts of BC and was impressed, not only with the numbers attending, but also with the superb quality of the event and the knowledge level and commitment demonstrated by everyone.

This commitment, this high level of activity, and this dedication to co-op housing is an inspiration to all of us across Canada. Your strong leadership and creativity has set the bar high for the rest of us.

On behalf of the Board and members of CHF Canada, I want to congratulate you on reaching this milestone, and wish you all the best for the next 25 years and beyond.

Ken Elliott, President
Co-operative Housing
Federation of Canada

CHF BC's 25th anniversary celebrations make me think back to the early days of the movement in BC, when I first joined a housing co-op, and reflect on how far the Federation has come and what it has achieved.

I'm fortunate to have witnessed CHF BC's early development up close, as a member of one of its founding co-ops, as a director of the Federation, and through my work with its management service for BC co-ops: COHO Management Services Society. From the start CHF BC impressed me with its innovation, its leadership and its pioneering of member services that were later adopted by federations across the country. CHF BC has fulfilled its early promise and has grown into a mature, well-led organization that serves its members well and responds to their changing needs.

Today, CHF Canada is pleased to be working closely with CHF BC on some of the key issues that face our member housing co-ops in this first decade of the 21st century, and our two federations share a close and growing bond of partnership. 2020 Vision, the leaky co-op crisis and the development of educational materials are just some of the initiatives we've been tackling together and I know we'll do more in the future.

So happy 25th, CHF BC! You are a great asset to your members and you set a service standard we can all learn from. I look forward to a continuing our partnership, for the benefit of housing co-ops in BC and across the country. May your next quarter-century be as successful.

 For more information, visit CHF Canada's website at www.chfcanada.coop.

Nicholas Gazzard is the Executive Director of CHF Canada.

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Co-operatives: Making a real difference in the Philippines

Co-op Month in Cebu City, Philippines began on October 1, 2006 with speeches, games and Sunday mass. Balloons filled the air and the winner in a game of musical chairs won a food basket filled with products from a local co-operative. This year's theme was "Co-operatives: Making a Real Difference."


The Philippines has over 7000 islands and more than 170 languages. Seeing people from across the country marching together made the strength of the Philippine co-operative movement very real to me. I attended the event as a Rooftops Canada Intern with the National Savings and Homes Co-operative (NSHC) managed by Danilo B. Consuegra, known to everyone as 'Danny'.

Danny has shown unrelenting determination in the formation and management of NSHC over the past two years. NSHC now has over one hundred members, representing a variety of incomes and dreams. Most of them live in rental accommodation ranging from single rooms to apartments. All of them want better housing. Danny is overseeing NSHC's three housing projects in Cebu. The process begins with member education and savings counselling, and ends with a community of co-op members managing their property together.

To increase affordability, the small row houses are often built as a single interior space. The co-op members can divide the space and make incremental additions such as a second floor.

Danny visited Canada in 2001 and 2006 to learn about our housing co-operative movement. He says, "I learned how to systematize the process of forming and managing co-ops, which has helped me make the huge strides that have made NSHC successful."

He has brought these experiences home and used them in his work in Cebu. Danny's typical day includes educating people about co-op housing, advocating at City Hall, and eating and laughing with current and prospective members. For Danny, knowledge and relationships are just as important to building successful communities as the structures that house them.

 For more information, contact Rooftops Canada at www.rooftops.ca.

Carla Weinberg (right) at Cebu City co-op month launch with Annie and Danny.



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Just as importantly, CHF BC has led the struggle to hold government to account for the effects of damaging policy decisions that have had disastrous consequences for the housing co-ops of the province. The fight to secure fair financial compensation for leaky housing co-ops is just one example.

CHF BC is also reflecting on the changing needs of the co-op housing sector as new challenges appear with the aging of co-op members, aging housing stock, and the continuing decline of government support for co-operative housing programs. Like other sectors of the co-op system in the province, housing co-ops face a continuing challenge as they strive to meet the changing needs of members for whom neither the state nor the private sector are prepared to provide accessible and affordable solutions to such fundamental needs as shelter, social care, health care, and transportation.

Too often, the co-op model is neither understood nor accepted as a response to failures of the market to supply people with what they need to live dignified, productive, and fulfilling lives. CHF BC has been a valuable contributor to the efforts of the broader co-op community to reform BC co-op legislation so that it better reflects the emerging needs of co-ops and the communities they serve. The recent legislative changes that formally recognize community service co-ops as the specific form that co-ops can use to incorporate as non-profits is a case in point. CHF BC's highly developed skills in the area of government lobbying and advocacy is just one of the many contributions that your sector brings, not only to its own members, but to the co-op movement as a whole. In this, and in many other areas of mutual interest, BCCA and the rest of the co-op family must work more closely and strategically with CHF BC and the province's housing co-ops if we are to develop a new generation of co-operatives that remain a vital force for responsive and progressive change in our communities.

John Restakis is the executive director of the BC Co-operative Association.

On the occasion of CHF BC's 25th anniversary it gives me great pleasure to reflect on your central role in supporting the growth of the co-op model throughout BC. CHF BC has been a stalwart member and supporter of BCCA, lending its leadership, experience, and financial support to our work as the umbrella association for the co-op movement in BC.

CHF BC executive director Thom Armstrong, and his predecessor, Mary Flynn, have acted as senior officers of BCCA and have had a direct hand in guiding our success and growth over the past decade. We continue to work closely with CHF BC as we explore new areas to apply the co-op idea in a growing number of new and emerging sectors. A key to the success of the co-op idea is its capacity to adapt to the changing needs of members. In this respect, CHF BC has been

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