

The
CO-OPERATIVE
HOUSING
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of Canada



NewsBriefs

Manitoba

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WILLOW PARK EAST— 40 Years and Going Strong

By Gaye Bissett

It's another beautiful sunny day in the north end of Winnipeg. As Pat Deans wanders past, her co-op neighbour Liz Campbell calls to her that there are tomatoes ready. "Liz gets better sun than at my place, so I asked if she would plant a couple of tomatoes for me." Pat contributes to the purchase and feeding of the plants, and Liz waters them when she is watering her own. Together they share the bounty.

Liz first joined Willow Park East 32 years ago. "I had no idea what a co-op was, but I needed a home for me and

my three dogs. This was the only place that would allow pets. After my first annual meeting, I realized that I needed to contribute more than just my housing charge to the community, so I joined a committee." Liz later served on the board and worked hard to ensure the success of Willow Park East's 40th anniversary celebration.

Pat managed the property for the co-op until her retirement in 1999. She became a member and has lived here since. "The only way I'm leaving is in a box, or a wheelchair," she declares. Willow Park East has served her family well. Her two sons have both been members of the co-op, and her mother lives in the Willow Park Centre seniors' residence close to the co-op. *(Continued on page 2)*

EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF HOUSING CO-OPS IN MANITOBA

Co-operative housing in Manitoba is moving forward. It is an exciting time with improved relations with Manitoba Housing and with co-ops receiving money to renovate for the first time in decades!

It has been one year since CHF Canada signed a memorandum of understanding with Manitoba Housing and Community Development. In July, CHF Canada representatives met with their CEO, **Darrell Jones**, and Director of Portfolio Administration, **Joe Johnson**, to discuss housing co-ops and their relationship with the Manitoba Government.


As a result—Manitoba Housing organized a meeting, the first of its kind, called “2010 Housing Co-op Summit: Planning a Successful Future for Your Co-op.” This was a landmark and exciting event for housing co-operatives in Manitoba. At this summit meeting open to all housing co-operatives across the province, co-ops discussed key issues such as what to do with aging buildings, keeping co-ops in good repair, good governance and management and subsidies after the end of current operating agreements.

Manitoba Housing also presented findings from their governance survey and engaged in a

dialogue with co-op leaders about issues that co-ops are facing today.

Maureen McCartney from **Northern Harmony Housing Co-op** in Thompson, Manitoba said, “Thanks to CHF Canada and Manitoba Housing for working together to plan this important meeting.”

CHF Canada president **Wes Hosler** also attended the session, saying he hoped to see this type of event duplicated across the country: “Manitoba’s housing co-ops made history today.”



Housing co-op members and staff from across the province met to discuss several critical issues.

Manitoba Housing organized this summit, the first of its kind, with help from CHF Canada

(Continued from page 1)

Winnipeg in the late 70s and early 80s saw a very high vacancy rate, and Willow Park East had 43 units vacant out of 174 at one point. An aggressive campaign eventually filled the units, but many new members had no idea about co-op housing. “We had to get serious about educating our members,” says Pat. “CHAM, the association of co-op housing in Manitoba, dissolved so that’s when we welcomed training

from CHF Canada educators. Bev Grant, Sandy Francis and the wonderful Wes Hosler spent many hours with helping us get a handle on our responsibilities as co-op members.”

Willow Park East is now in the process of restating its mission, mandate and values using CHF Canada’s 2020 Vision tools. “Our members are aging so we need to plan for their needs,” says Pat.

CHF Canada president Wes Hosler remembers Willow Park East fondly. He chaired many of their annual meetings during his 23 years as a co-op educator in Manitoba. Wes attended the anniversary celebration on September 18, saying “Willow Park East was and still is a well managed co-op and is very connected to and supportive of the co-op sector. We wish a happy 40th anniversary to all Willow Park East members!”



NEWSBRIEFS

STIMULUS RENOS UNDERWAY

Co-ops across Manitoba are reaping the benefits of stimulus money from Canada's Economic Action Plan matched with funding from the province of Manitoba.



Co-ops like **Payuk** have used their stimulus grant for security cameras, while others like **Village Canadien** (pictured left), have replaced windows and patio doors. **Westboine Park** (pictured above) renovated members' units and **United Housing Co-operative** is repairing cracking foundations and aged parking lots. **David**

Gawthrop, general manager of Village Canadien says, "This is the first time in decades that co-ops have received money to fix up their co-ops. This couldn't have happened at a more crucial time. Our housing co-ops are aging and some are in desperate repair. I am sure co-ops across Canada are thankful for this money but we need more!"

HOMELESSNESS SUMMIT

Last spring, CHF Canada's Program Manager for Manitoba, **Tammy Robinson**, and Manitoba's Minister of Housing and Community Development, the Honourable **Kerri Irvin Ross** attended the Homelessness Summit sponsored by Manitoba Housing at Turtle Island Community Centre. Housing leaders from across Manitoba were invited to discuss Manitoba's housing shortage, rental housing and other key housing issues.

HELP FOR HOARDERS

Many people enjoy collecting things and have a hard time throwing items out. However, some people collect so much stuff that they don't know where to start with cleaning up and clearing out. Co-op homes full of saved items can result in injury or property damage, loss of friends and emotional distress.

Age and Opportunity Inc. has a program called '**This Full House**', the first and only program of its kind in Canada, to assist older adults who are hoarders and whose belongings fill their homes and limit their lives. They provide assistance in cases of hoarding for individuals over the age of 55. In some instances, financial assistance for cleaning services may be available. For more information, call Age and Opportunity at 956-6440.

GREENHEART ACCESSIBILITY AWARD



On September 30th **Greenheart Housing Co-op** received a 2010 Honourable Mention Accessibility Award presented by Winnipeg mayor **Sam Katz**. The awards committee said it was "very impressed with the efforts in making all (Greenheart's) units visitable and affordable for the community."

Greenheart member **Christa White** (pictured above second from left) said, "When I moved in to Greenheart I cried. Greenheart was the first decent place I have ever lived in and moving into an accessible suite allowed me to use my wheelchair when I needed to and live comfortably." Way to go Greenheart!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Fall Education Event

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Victoria Inn, 1808 Wellington Ave, Winnipeg

CHF Canada is hosting another Fall Education Event for housing co-op members and staff. Join other co-operators from Manitoba and gain valuable skills and knowledge.

This 'not to be missed' event will feature workshops on co-op governance and management and how co-ops can become greener. Your co-op has already received brochures by mail which you can find in the Resource Centre of CHF Canada's website at www.chfcanada.coop.

Sign up today and don't miss out!

For more information, contact Tammy Robinson at 1-888-591-3301 or trobins@chfcanada.coop.



USE YOUR DUES!

Have you checked out CHF Canada's member only section at our website? We offer co-op talk, lots of exclusive tools for CHF Canada member managers and board members and essential resources for your co-op. Visit www.chfcanada.coop for more information.

 **NEW & ONLINE**

Beyond Participation



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VISION
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CHF Canada's website www.chfcanada.coop has a wide range of useful tools and guides in the Co-op Housing Resource Centre. The latest featured resource is called *Beyond Participation: building a foundation for real member involvement*. This publication is a thought-provoking discussion of what we mean by meaningful member involvement in our housing co-ops and how we can implement new strategies that best serve the community's needs. It includes a useful discussion guide to help your co-op start a discussion about what kinds of member involvement are most meaningful in your community.

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On the cover: Celebrating Willow Park East Housing Co-op's 40th anniversary are (from left) CHF Canada regional director Linda Ferguson, CHF Canada president Wes Hosler, mayoral candidate Judy Wasylycia-Leis, federal NDP candidate for Winnipeg North Kevin Chief, and Willow Park East board member Linda Campbell.

