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Above: CHF Canada's Manitoba Regional Director Linda Ferguson and Manitoba's Minister of Water Stewardship Christine Melnick at a fundraiser organized by the Youth Services Co-op, a training program that helps young people learn about co-ops.



CO-OP YOUTH STEPPING UP

By Sara Hanson

As the youngest board member at **Village Canadien Co-op** in Winnipeg, Frank Wheeler was excited to be selected as his co-op's delegate for CHF Canada's Annual Meeting in St. John's, NL.

"It was quite an awakening," says Frank. "You really don't have an idea of what it's going to be like until you actually get there."

Frank got his start in governance after Village Canadien President Linda Ferguson encouraged him to seek new opportunities. "I naturally felt it was a cool idea that you can play a role in governing your co-op," he says.

Frank's story highlights the importance of mentorship—a topic he discussed with other young co-op members during the youth networking session at the Annual

Meeting. "I met all these engaged young people who were so enthusiastic. That event pushed my co-op into my own life for the long term. Now I see that I can do more."

During the AGM, Frank spoke about how electing more young people to co-op boards encourages intergenerational learning and diversity. He hopes the excitement generated in St. John's encourages more co-ops to send young members to next year's AGM.

As the result of the YES resolution passed at the 2011 AGM, CHF Canada is developing a youth engagement strategy for the co-op housing sector which will be presented at the 2012 AGM in Niagara Falls.



Village Canadien board member Frank Wheeler says he was inspired by the youth presence at CHF Canada's 2011 AGM in St. John's, NL.

SPECIAL YEARS FOR CO-OP HOUSING

Did you know that both 2011 and 2012 have special significance for Canada's housing co-ops?



2011 is the Year of Getting Governance Right, as designated by CHF Canada and regional co-op housing federations across the country. Co-ops are being encouraged to take steps to strengthen co-op governance using special tools and resources developed by CHF Canada, including online learning programs such as Board Basics Online.



2012 will be the International Year of Co-operatives as designated by the United Nations. Canada's co-operative movement aims to use 2012 to raise awareness and support for co-ops under the slogan "Co-operative enterprises build a better world". CHF Canada members passed a resolution in May encouraging housing co-ops to celebrate and promote 2012 in their communities.



For more information, visit www.chfcanada.coop.

EQUITY CO-OP TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE SENIORS' HOUSING

One of CHF Canada's newest members in Manitoba is responding to the lack of affordable housing for seniors living in Brandon. When complete, **Western Manitoba Seniors Co-op** will be the first non-profit equity housing co-op in Manitoba.

The co-op's vice president, Harvey Douglas, says this 34-unit co-op on city land will be the first of several new affordable housing options for seniors, ranging from independent living to full-service care. "Once we have a base to work from, we'll keep organizing until we are strong enough to have some effect on what rents are costing the seniors of this city."

The idea for the co-op originated when **Seniors for Seniors Co-operative**, an advocacy group founded in the 1970s, identified affordable housing as an issue for seniors living on fixed incomes in Brandon, where vacancy rates hover around one percent.

Douglas says they hope to begin construction in early spring 2012, once the re-zoning process for the co-op's land is complete. The co-op has already received a \$20,000 grant from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and \$60,000 from Manitoba Housing.



NEWS BRIEFS

GRANTS GOING TO CO-OP HOMES

In June, with assistance from CHF Canada, several housing co-ops were awarded over \$12,000 in grants from the **Manitoba Co-operative Association**. Co-ops received money for computers, building condition audits, riverbank assessments and big screen televisions for their common rooms.

The deadline for the next round of grants is December 15, 2011. For more information, contact Tammy Robinson or visit www.manitoba.coop under "Co-op Development".



Organizers of a fundraising social at **United Housing Co-op** hope to create a playground for the children and youth of the co-op and surrounding neighbourhood.

MORE GRANTS FOR CO-OPS: COMMUNITY PLACES

Under the Community Places Program, the Province of Manitoba offers grants to non-profit housing co-ops to support sustainable recreation and wellness benefits to communities such as recreation areas for adults or safe play spaces and playgrounds for children.

The program provides funding and planning assistance for construction, upgrading, expansion or acquisition projects. Non-profit community organizations can

apply for up to half of the first \$15,000 of project costs and up to one-third of project costs over that amount. The maximum grant is \$50,000. Applications for the Community Places Program are now available. The application deadline is December 15, and approvals are announced in the spring.

CHF Canada is happy to help our member co-ops with the applications or provide letters of support. For more information, call Tammy Robinson at 204.947.5411 or visit www.gov.mb.ca/housing/cpp/.

MANITOBA SIGNS AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEAL WITH OTTAWA

In July, the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba announced a combined investment of over \$62 million under a new affordable housing agreement. The Province announced that it would match the federal funding. This agreement for 2012 to 2014 will help reduce the number of Manitobans in housing need by improving access to affordable housing. The Province has also announced the development of approximately 150 affordable seniors housing units and committed to develop affordable family housing.

CHF CANADA WELCOMES SOUTH OSBORNE HOUSING CO-OP

South Osborne is a new CHF Canada member. This 71-unit seniors housing co-op located in Winnipeg features a beautiful multipurpose room with a kitchen and a tuck shop that sells household necessities.

CHF Canada Program Manager Tammy Robinson says that she is very happy that **South Osborne** has decided to join. "They have already attended several workshops to learn about rules of order for meetings, board governance and enabling older co-op members to age in place in their co-op homes."

CHF Canada offers networking opportunities and forums for member co-ops to exchange ideas. CHF Canada and **SAM Management** recently helped South Osborne obtain a grant for a computer for their co-op community.

On October 4, Vote for Co-op Housing!

Manitobans go to the polls on October 4, and CHF Canada is asking voters and candidates to think about affordable housing and the future of housing co-ops in our communities.

Many Manitoban households, including seniors, working families, single-parent households and new Canadians, need affordable co-op homes in strong communities. Hundreds of Manitobans will not be able to afford their co-op homes when government agreements with housing co-ops end. The next Manitoba government needs to find a solution that helps housing co-op members continue to benefit from their affordable co-op homes.

At CHF Canada, we are encouraging political parties and their leaders to push for action to build more affordable co-op homes. For over 40 years, Manitoba's mixed-income co-ops have provided quality, affordable homes in healthy, diverse communities. Co-ops are the best option for affordable mixed-income homes.

When candidates come to your door, we encourage you to:

- 1 Ask your candidate about how they intend to keep co-op homes affordable after operating agreements end.
- 2 Speak to them about building more affordable co-op homes.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! DON'T MISS CHF CANADA'S FALL EDUCATION EVENT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

at the Delta Winnipeg

CHF Canada's Fall Education Event is an excellent opportunity to network and learn about issues that are relevant to your co-op.

Co-ops from across the province will come together and learn about:

- welcoming and orienting new members
- leadership renewal and youth
- the Good Governance Test
- environmental sustainability and funding
- keeping co-op members satisfied
- long-term capital reserve planning for housing co-ops
- ensuring co-ops and members are protected in case of an emergency

*For more information, please contact
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