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# Newsbriefs

NATIONAL EDITION

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## NEWSFLASH

### New housing minister

Prime Minister **Paul Martin** has named the Hon. **Joe Fontana** the Minister of Labour and Housing. The MP for London North Centre has seven housing co-ops in his riding, and was a strong supporter of housing co-ops during the national agency campaign. CHF Canada congratulates the new minister on his appointment and looks forward to working with him.

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## CHF Canada AGM Were you there?

**"Learn new things, meet fellow co-op people and have a great time doing so."**

**T**hat's how **Darrell Saunders**, a member of Toronto's **Ernescliffe Housing Co-op**, described CHF Canada's annual meeting. Over 600 people, representing 266 CHF Canada members got together in Quebec City for the workshops, caucuses, meetings and social events that are all part of CHF Canada's annual meeting.

Darrell took lots of pictures at the AGM and immediately posted them on his own website and added a link on CHF Canada's discussion group, *Co-op Talk*. "I decided to share these pictures so other co-op members who have never been to a CHF Canada AGM will get a better idea of what happens there. Having gone twice myself, I know it is an experience all co-op members should have."

You can see CHF Canada's own AGM pictures on our site at [http://www.chfc.ca/eng/gallery2004/agm2004gallery\\_01.htm](http://www.chfc.ca/eng/gallery2004/agm2004gallery_01.htm). Darrell's Quebec City pictures are at <http://f2.pg.photos.yahoo.com/ernescliffecoop> 🏠



## Board of Directors

Here are the results of this year's elections:

### At-Large

- Joanne Mick (Calgary, AB)
- Craig Hunter (Kitchener, ON)
- David Kelly, (Mount Pearl, NF)

### Regional

- British Columbia  
Tony Legare (Vancouver, BC)
- Manitoba (election was held on May 13th)  
Mel Willis (Winnipeg, MB)
- Ontario  
Heather Blake (Toronto, ON)
- Nova Scotia (election was held on May 1st)  
Thom Shields (Lower Sackville, NS)
- Newfoundland (election was held on May 1st)  
David Boyde (Mount Pearl, NF)
- New Brunswick  
Kenneth Elliott (Woodstock, NB)
- Aboriginal community  
Joe Johnson (Victoria, BC)

## Finance Committee

Members elect two members to serve on CHF Canada's Finance Committee. Elected this year were:

- Donna Charbonneau (Unionville, ON)
- Wes Hosler (Vancouver, BC)

CHF Canada's Treasurer and the Ontario Council Treasurer are the other members of the Finance Committee, along with CHF Canada's Executive Director.

## Some new faces on the Board

Members elected three new members to the Board of Directors this year. **Thom Shields** joins as the new director from Nova Scotia and **David Boyde** as the regional director from Newfoundland and Labrador. **Joe Johnson** is the new director representing the Aboriginal Community, replacing **Wendy Huggan**, who stepped down this year. CHF Canada would like to thank Wendy, along with **John MacDonnell** and **Vince Hall** who both left the Board earlier this year, for their service to CHF Canada.

Several directors are returning for a second term.

CHF Canada's Board of Directors has 16 members, with one director from each province, one representing the Aboriginal community, and five elected at large. Directors serve two-year terms and elections are held each year for half the Board. Some regions have chosen to hold regional director elections in the region; others are conducted at the annual meeting.

The Board met following the AGM and returned **René Daoust**, **Tony Legare** and **Joanne Mick** as President, Vice-President and Treasurer. Other Executive Committee members are **Craig Hunter**, **David Kelly** and **Joe Johnson**.

For more information on the CHF Canada Board, visit our website at <http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/board-and-committees.asp>. 



The 2004-2005 CHF Canada Board of Directors.

# AGM awards

## Wood Tree Co-operative wins Jim MacDonald award



**Wood Tree Co-operative Inc.** received the 2004 Jim MacDonald Award for Social Change. Wood Tree is a scattered rehab co-op that demolished a duplex and, using members' own equity and a \$94,000 grant from the City of Toronto, added five units of affordable, subsidized housing. The new units include one unit of refugee transitional housing. All are wheelchair accessible and will serve co-op members who are disabled or currently overhoused, allowing these members to comfortably age in place.

## Craig Hunter and Jason Moore celebrated for fundraising

**Craig Hunter** and **Jason Moore** received special recognition for their creativity and efforts to promote co-operative housing and diversity. Five years ago the couple launched the successful Glamazon evening.

This has now become a regular feature of CHF Canada AGMs, raising funds for charity. Those named Mr. and Ms. CHF at the annual talent contest continue fund-raising throughout the year.

## Building and strengthening co-ops earns CMHC award for Kit Hickey



**Kit Hickey** was presented with the CMHC award for Outstanding Contribution to Co-operative Housing. Kit is the Executive Director of **Housing Alternatives** in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Kit has played an active leadership role in the broader housing sector and is currently involved in developing First Steps housing, a transition house program for pregnant and parenting youth.

But it is for her support of co-op housing that she received the honour. She has helped develop 10 co-ops in Saint John, and she continues to deliver management services to eight of them.

## Sylvie Moreau named honorary life associate



**Sylvie Moreau** first worked for co-operative housing in development, helping to create Habitation populaire de la Côte du Sud and working to educate its members.

In 1987, after studying English, Sylvie joined the Ottawa Federation of Housing Co-operatives as director of member services. There she built new member services and reached out to francophone housing co-ops. In 1991, she moved to CHF Canada, where she was responsible for recruitment, federations and helping co-operatives in difficulty.

Sylvie continues her connection with our movement as a consultant and volunteer. She served as a trustee of the Federal Co-operative Housing Stabilization Fund for six years, including two years as chair. 🏠

20-year members honoured

At each year's annual meeting, members recognize those housing co-ops who have belonged to CHF Canada for 20 years or more. The following housing co-ops received their awards at the annual meeting or will have the award presented in their region.

- Integra Co-operative Ltd.** (AB)
- Garry Point Housing Co-op** (BC)
- H.W. Flesher Housing Co-op** (BC)
- Heritage Housing Co-op** (BC)
- Paloma Housing Co-op** (BC)
- Lower Cove Housing Co-op** (NB)
- Beothuck Housing Co-operative Society Ltd.** (NF)
- Albro Court Housing Co-op** (NS)
- Rooftops Housing Co-op** (NS)
- Hillside Housing Co-operative** (NU)
- Abiwin Co-operative Inc.** (ON)
- Ashwood Housing Co-operative** (ON)
- Aurora Village Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Catalpa Housing Co-operative** (ON)
- Charles Hastings Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Fred C. Dowling Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Guise Street Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Harmony Haven Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Heath Street Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Phoenix Housing Co-op** (ON)
- Ramer's Wood Co-op Homes Inc.** (ON)
- Stone Church Co-op Homes** (ON)
- Tamarack Co-operative Housing** (ON)
- Toronto Women's Housing Co-op** (ON)
- William Lyon Mackenzie Housing Co-operative** (ON)
- Argyle Park Housing Co-op** (SK)

# Resolutions focus on building new co-ops, helping existing ones

A resolution directing CHF Canada to call on the Government of Canada to introduce a new national housing program was passed unanimously by the AGM. The resolution states that such a program should be done in partnership with the provinces and territories.


Other AGM resolutions focused on protecting and strengthening existing housing co-ops. Members passed a resolution to adopt core management standards and promote the standards of strong management and governance to co-ops across Canada.

A resolution submitted by **Coopérative d'habitation Voisins** in Ottawa directed CHF Canada to work on helping co-ops to continue to house low-income people when their operating agreements expire.

**Beaver Creek Housing Co-operative** and **CHF BC** submitted a resolution that addresses the problems faced by Section 95 co-ops, who receive reduced assistance when their mortgages are renewed at a lower rate. CHF Canada will press the Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to make sure that those co-ops are not unfairly penalized.

Co-ops from across Canada agreed to support Ontario members' fight for changes to the *Social Housing Reform Act*. They also agreed to support housing co-ops in Quebec in their efforts to reverse a CMHC decision that makes Section 95 co-ops ineligible for a cost-shared program for older Quebec projects.

Members passed a resolution from **Longview Housing Co-operative** that directs CHF Canada to evaluate the performance of the new national agency. Other resolutions addressed making our co-ops barrier-free and supporting the Character Communities program.

For information on all the resolutions considered at our annual meeting, visit our site at <http://www.chfc.ca/eng/chf/resol2004.htm>. 

## Small dues increase for 2005

Members approved an increase in member dues for 2005, to \$3.50 per unit, per month, up from \$3.40.

## Want to learn more about the AGM?

For more information on the AGM, contact your co-op's delegate or visit our website at [http://www.chfc.ca/eng/chf/chfc\\_1-2004.htm](http://www.chfc.ca/eng/chf/chfc_1-2004.htm)

## Get ready for Edmonton

**D**on't miss CHF Canada's 2005 AGM in Edmonton, June 15 to 18, 2005. Here are some things you can do to make sure you will be there:

- Make sure your co-op has money in the 2005 budget for registration fees, travel, accommodation, and per diems. If you're a small co-op, find out about the special discounts for small co-ops.
- Ask to be your co-op's delegate. For information on the role of the delegate, see our *Delegate's Handbook* on our site at <http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/delegates.asp>.
- Find a young person in the co-op interested in attending the 2005 Youth Forum. They'll love it.
- Invest in your staff. Help your staff person serve your co-op better. Budget to send them to the staff development conference.
- Many AGM delegates bring a family member with them or plan their vacations around the AGM. Visit these Edmonton websites to see the travel possibilities:  
  
[www.edmonton.com](http://www.edmonton.com)  
[www.infoedmonton.com](http://www.infoedmonton.com)  
[www1.travelalberta.com](http://www1.travelalberta.com)

## AGM reference group

Attendance at this year's AGM was down from our normal 800 participants. The CHF Canada Board has set up a reference group to look at why AGM attendance was lower this year. If your co-op didn't send a delegate to this year's meeting, we'd like to know why not. Please contact **Nick Sidor**, Director of Corporate Affairs at 1-800-465-2752, ext. 231 or e-mail [nsidor@chfc.ca](mailto:nsidor@chfc.ca). 🏠



Alberta co-op members have accepted the rainbow flag from the Quebec local volunteers and are ready to start planning the 2005 CHF Canada AGM.

# *AGM photo gallery*





# Ontario members' meeting

On June 11, 195 delegates, alternates, staff and observers gathered for the 2004 Ontario Region annual meeting in Quebec City. A letter of greetings from the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable **John Gerretsen**, said, "I assure you that this government wants to see housing co-operatives continue to succeed as member-controlled communities that play an important role in providing Ontarians affordable housing."

## Recognizing contributions to co-op housing



**Bruce Lewis**, the Ontario Region's legal advisor, received the first ever Ontario Region, Lifetime Achievement Award. Bruce has made a remarkable contribution to housing co-ops in Ontario through his work shaping the legal system for co-ops.

Bruce developed the model by-laws used by hundreds of co-ops across Ontario. His commitment to writing legal documents in plain language has allowed co-op members to easily understand their by-laws.

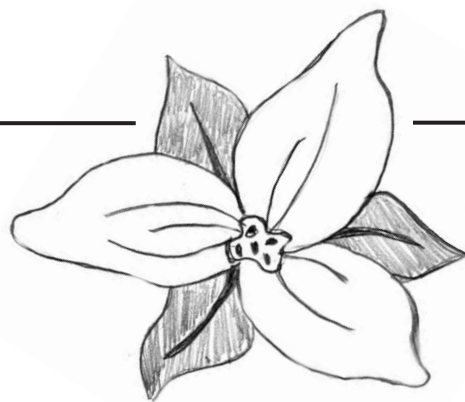
He was also the legal mind behind the changes the co-op sector negotiated to the Ontario *Co-operative Corporations Act* and the current work on reforming the eviction system.

In addition to his work for sector organizations, he has represented many individual housing co-ops.

Co-op housing employees were also recognized for long-term service to housing co-ops in Ontario. This year, 64 employees were presented long-term service awards for serving five, 10, 15, 20 or 25 years as staff in housing co-ops. Honoured for 20 years of service were **Luis Alvarez, Louise Dixon, Carolyn Perkins, Joanne Shingler, Brynne Teall** and **Stuart Wroe**. **Tim Beers** and **Marcia Johnson** were honoured for 25 years of service.

## Thanks to retiring Council members

**Scott Piatkowski** received a certificate of appreciation for his hard work on Council in the past year. **Tina Stevens** and **Karen Francis**, who were not able to attend, were also thanked for their work on the Council.



## New Ontario Council

Delegates elected three at-large Council members, **Lori-Anne McDonald, Amanda Yetman** and **Charles Ng**. Staff associations elected **David Roy** as their representative and **David Spackman** was acclaimed as the Northern Ontario member at a meeting held in northern Ontario before the annual meeting.

On June 13, the new Council held its first meeting and elected its executive. The Ontario Council for 2004-2005 is:

- Lori-Anne McDonald, President (at-large)
- Ivy Tait, Vice-President (at-large)
- Charles Ng, Second Vice-President (at-large)
- David Spackman, Treasurer (Northern Ontario member)
- Heather Blake (Ontario Regional Director)
- Craig Hunter (CHF Canada Board appointed Council member)
- Mark Paul (federations' member)
- David Roy (staff associations' member)
- Amanda Yetman (at-large)



Your 2004-2005 Ontario Council. From left to right: Charles Ng, Lori-Anne McDonald, David Spackman, Ivy Tait, Heather Blake, Mark Paul and Amanda Yetman. Missing: Craig Hunter and David Roy.

## Choosing our focus

**D**elegates passed three resolutions that set the focus for the Ontario Region for the year ahead. Resolution R1, *Eviction law reform*, sets out the next steps in changing the law on co-op housing evictions so it works better for co-ops and members.

The second resolution, *Fair property taxes for housing co-ops*, asks the Ontario Region to look into ways to reduce property taxes for housing co-ops.

The final resolution, *Time for action on co-op housing*, sets the direction for a campaign of all Ontario housing co-ops, provincial and federal, to convince the new provincial government that it's time for action on co-op housing. The campaign will call on the government to:

- overhaul the *Social Housing Reform Act*
- change the federal/provincial Affordable Housing Program.

More information on the campaign is on the Ontario Region area of the CHF Canada website.

The full text of all resolutions is posted on the CHF Canada website at [www.chfc.coop](http://www.chfc.coop). 

### Ontario Region moving

The Ontario Region office is moving at the end of August. Our new address will be 313-720 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T9. Phone numbers, staff extensions and e-mail addresses will remain the same.

### Investing in our diversity

The 2004 Investing in our Diversity Awards Dinner and Fundraiser took place June 23, hosted by the **Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto** and **Scadding Court Community Centre**.

Through the CHFT Charitable Fund, CHFT was able to award three young co-op people with \$4,000 scholarships and four \$1,000 bursaries. The community centre awarded two \$4,000 scholarships. In all, \$24,000 was awarded to these young people for their post-secondary education because of their work and efforts to promote diversity in their communities: Anjala Kulasegaram, **Woburn Village Co-op**; Aymen Eldardiry, **Atkinson Housing Co-op**; Daniel Vu, Atkinson Housing Co-op; Daniella Bullen, **Stanley Knowles Co-op**; Fathi Sheik-Hussan, Atkinson Housing Co-op; Tamika Boyce, **Jenny Green Co-op**; Tiffanee Meyer, **La Paz Co-op Homes**; Tofayel Hussain, Atkinson Housing Co-op.

Ontario Chief Justice **R. Roy McMurtry** was the keynote speaker for the evening.

## Fires harm two co-ops Co-op members need your help

**Neighbours Co-op** in St. Catharines, Ontario suffered a great loss early in July. Fire destroyed five townhomes displacing four families. No one was injured but only one of the four families had insurance.

An emergency account has been set up for Neighbours Co-op. Donations can be deposited at any Niagara Credit Union to Account Number – 5995824 or mailed to:

Neighbours Co-op  
c/o **Pinecroft Co-operative Homes**  
85 Westland Street Unit 37A  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2S 3X3

For more information, call  
905-688-1766

Meanwhile, a mother and her 15-year-old son at **Harris Road Housing Co-op** in Pitt Meadows, BC awoke early one July morning to find their unit on fire. They escaped without injury, but lost all their possessions. The cause of the fire is still unknown. Their two cats and two dogs made it out safely.

Donations can be sent to:  
c/o Harris Road Housing Co-op  
19225 119th Avenue  
Pitt Meadows, BC  
V3Y 2B2

For more information, call the co-op office 604-465-1938.



## How safe is your co-op?

**F**ire is a serious threat to the safety and security of co-op members. Fires can damage co-op property and members' belongings. Fires can injure and kill co-op members. To reduce the risk, co-op members need to know how to prevent fires. And they need to know what to do when fires start.

CHF Canada provides information on managing your co-op's risk to each co-op insured by our commercial insurance programs. Now is a good time to review the materials in the **Risk Management Kit**.

**Make sure that members in your co-op have the information that could save their homes – and their lives. Plan a fire safety session at a members' meeting in your co-op.**

For instance, did you know that:

**Most fires start in the kitchen** – According to The Co-operators' statistics, almost half of the fires that lead to insurance claims were kitchen or grease fires. Another 26 per cent were caused by barbecues, flammable garbage and other materials, or children playing with matches. Candles and smoking each caused about 8 per cent of the claims. Members should know how to avoid causing fires in their units and have emergency routes planned if a fire does start.

**Adults over 65 have the highest risk of being killed or injured in a fire** – Does your co-op have a fire emergency plan? Are people assigned to take charge in an emergency? Do they know the units of any frail or disabled members who may need help in an emergency?

**Most fatal fires happen at night** – Does each unit in your co-op have a working smoke alarm?

*continued on page 11*

## Safety in your co-op

### What can you do?

- Review the information in your Risk Management Kit
- Make sure your co-op and its members have good insurance
- Educate members on fire safety – at meetings or through your newsletter
- Organize a fire drill
- Clean up clutter and flammable materials
- Ask your local fire department for information and advice.

For more information on CHF Canada's commercial insurance, contact **Linda Stephenson** at 1-800-465-2752, ext. 234 or [lstephenson@chfc.ca](mailto:lstephenson@chfc.ca).

Members can get coverage for their personal belonging through MemberGuard, a program designed just for them. MemberGuard offers complete coverage at the best possible rates. For more information and to obtain a free, no-obligation quote, call 1-800-387-1963. 🏠

## New agency Board holds first meeting

In April, the CHF Canada Board appointed directors to form the founding board of the new agency. The directors are **Stuart Thomas** and **Jill Kelly** (BC), **Carol Davis** (Prairies), **Barb Millsap**, **Peter Crawford** and **Raymond Hession** (Ontario). They will bring extensive experience in co-operative housing and the broader co-op sector to the board of the new agency.

The first meeting of the new agency Board is scheduled for August 9. For more information on the national agency, visit our website at <http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/agency.asp>.

### New roles for CHF Canada staff

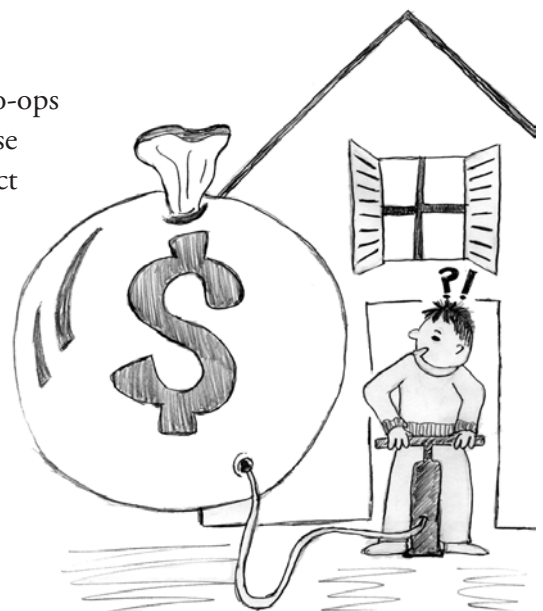
In order to get the new agency up and running, Executive Director **Alexandra Wilson** will be working on special assignment until March 1, 2005. **Nicholas Gazzard** has been named acting Executive Director for that period. **Karla Skoutajan** has been confirmed as the acting Director, Sector Development. 🏠

## Inflation and your co-op

Do you know how inflation affects your co-op? In Canada, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures changes in the prices of things we buy. The rate at which the prices go up is called the inflation rate.

Once again, inflation may be on the rise. In May 2004 the CPI rose by 2.5%. All co-ops should know how changes in the economy can affect the cost of running their

co-op. In particular ILM co-ops should monitor CPI because the inflation rate has a direct impact on their mortgage payments and federal assistance. For more information see *Inflation worries in your co-op* at [http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/resources\\_coopinflation.asp](http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/resources_coopinflation.asp). 🏠





# Newsbriefs

THE LAST WORD



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## Federal election could mean good things for co-op housing

**T**he results of the June 28 federal election have created a real opportunity to build more affordable housing. Over two-thirds of voters opted for parties – the Liberals, NDP and the Bloc Québécois – that made specific commitments about federal investment in housing.

Housing co-op members were active in this campaign. CHF Canada had 14 election co-ordinators working across the country, encouraging our members to “vote co-op housing.” Co-op members met with candidates across the country and CHF Canada will be following up with MPs. We will continue to work with other housing stakeholder groups, to get more affordable housing for the 1.7 million Canadian households in core need. But we will plot our own strategy to build on “vote co-op housing.” 🏠