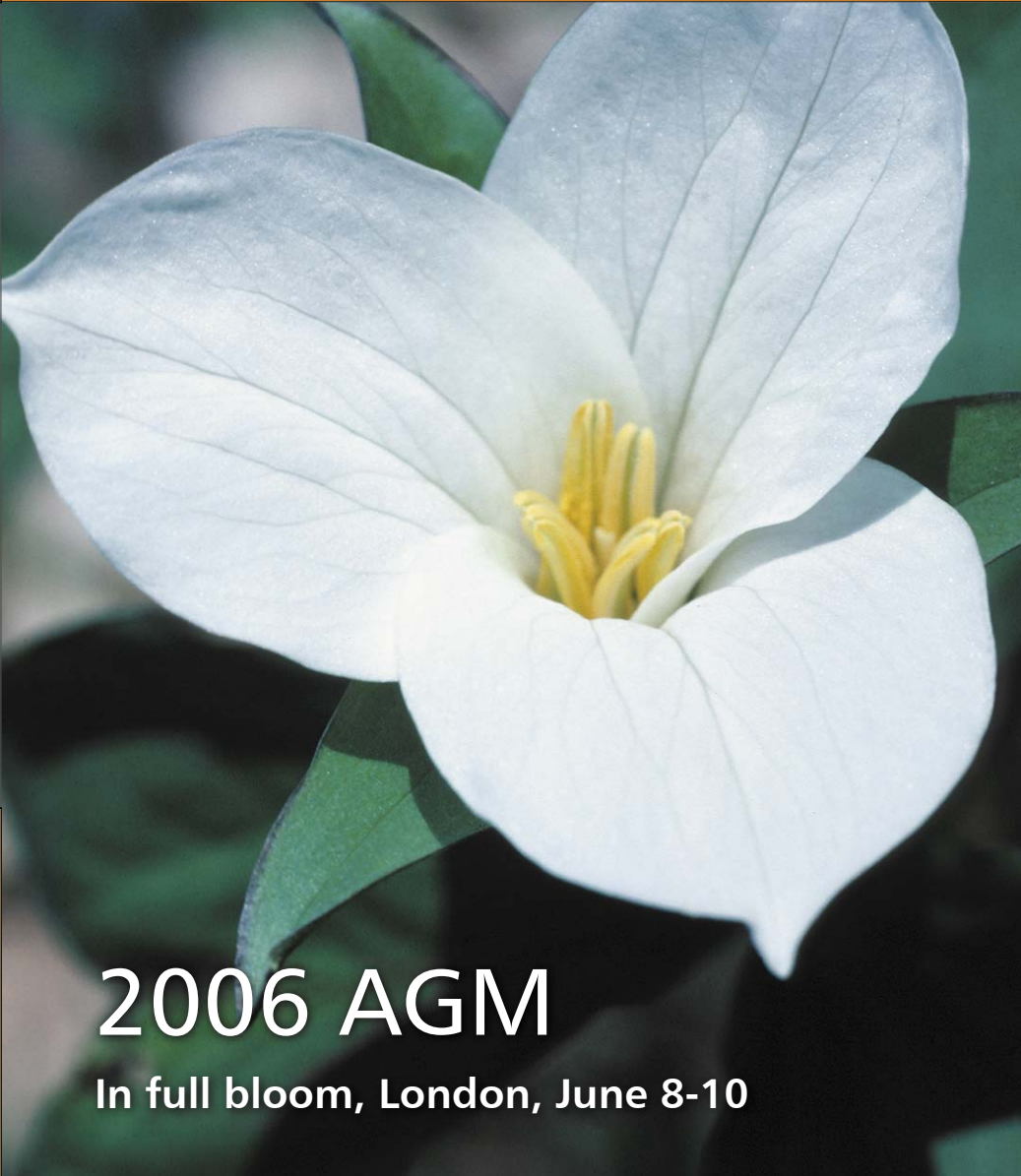


Newsbriefs

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO EDITION Spring 2006 – Volume 1, No. 1



2006 AGM
In full bloom, London, June 8-10

London calling

There will never be a better time to find out what CHF Canada's annual meeting is all about. The 2006 AGM is as close as it ever gets to your co-op. It takes place June 8 – 10 right in London.

CHF Canada's AGM is the one time that co-op members from across the country get together to talk about co-op housing. It's a chance to debate and vote on issues that will affect your co-op and others in the years to come. Combine that with the biggest co-op housing member education event in Canada, training for co-op staff, and just plain fun – you won't want to miss it.

Because the AGM is local, it will be more affordable for co-ops to send their members. We hope that co-ops will take advantage of this [2] ▶



2

Feature

In this issue, we look at the sustainability of local services in Southwestern Ontario and discuss plans for the future.

3

Member profile

As Woodfield Housing Co-op celebrates its 20th anniversary, long-time member Judy Koyle talks about the co-op's past.

4

Dollars and sense

Co-op Cost Cutters is just one way CHF Canada members can save money. Find out what the program can do for you.

◀ [cover]

opportunity and send as many members as possible to the Education Forum and the Business Meeting.

And there are other ways to participate. The AGM Planning Committee is looking for volunteers during the week of June 5 – 10. Volunteers are needed to help with kit stuffing, information booths, airport welcoming, the bus tour, social events and much more. By volunteering you can meet other co-op members, join up with old friends from the sector, and have fun! It's a chance to show other co-op members the kind of welcome London can give.

High school students can earn volunteer hours needed to graduate. And anyone who volunteers for four hours can attend a free workshop! Interested? Call **Kate Jones**, CHF AGM Local Co-ordinator at (519) 675-1252. ☎

Examples of local services

- Local education events
- Local *Newsbriefs*, a newsletter published twice a year
- Co-op Cost Cutters program
- Close contact with local service providers
- Advice from a local staff person
- Help close to home

All this is in addition to CHF Canada's regular services, such as commercial insurance for your buildings, MemberGuard insurance for members belongings, national communications, federal and provincial government relations and more.

Sustainable local services in Southwestern Ontario?



Since 2004, the cost of CHF Canada's local services for housing co-ops in Southwestern Ontario has been paid from CHF Canada's national budget – money raised from co-ops across Canada. But this year, like other places where local services are available, CHF Canada's members in Southwestern Ontario should start thinking about how these services can work in the future. Here's some information that you and your co-op's members can use.

In most parts of Canada, a local federation or a CHF Canada office provides local services: workshops, management advice to co-ops, group buying services, a local newsletter like the one you are reading, and so on. In those regions, member co-ops pay dues to federations or to CHF Canada (for example in Manitoba and Nova Scotia) to make sure they get these services. These dues are used only in the region, and co-ops in the region decide how they are spent.

Local dues across Canada range from about \$2.50 to \$3.00 per unit per month. For now, CHF Canada members across Canada will continue to help pay for local services in Southwestern Ontario. But it's not fair for them to pay for all of them indefinitely.

Local organizations also get other income – from CHF Canada's shared revenue pool (if they qualify) or from group buying programs like Cost Cutters and CHIP (the Co-op Housing Investment Program.)

What's coming next...

This year, we will talk with your co-op, and with other members in Southwestern Ontario, to see what services you want and how much these cost. Together, we'll decide how much each member co-op in Southwestern Ontario will need to pay to keep CHF Canada "at your service" with programs delivered locally in addition to the services that all Ontario members get from CHF Canada and the Ontario Region.

Look for these consultations at our AGM delegates meeting in London (May), the annual meeting (London, June 8 – 10) and a special meeting of all Southwestern Ontario members in October. ☎

by Judith A. Koyle, Woodfield Co-op

Woodfield Housing Co-op

Woodfield Housing Co-op is a 35-unit co-op in London. The co-op has belonged to CHF Canada since the beginning. Woodfield celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Long-time member Judy Koyle talks about her home.

What a wonderful birth it was for Woodfield Housing Co-op 20 years ago – March 1, 1986. Her children came one by one. I was the first, and soon she was the proud mother of 35 families.

She was family-oriented with large attached townhouses, a courtyard, and a community centre. It didn't matter that the siding wasn't on the units yet or that we had planks to walk on because the entire co-op site was mud (our children frequently came into the house minus one boot – the other buried in the muck!)

Within a year a grand opening was held in Mother Woodfield's honour and the main event was a "tug-of-war" in the mud that was hilarious with almost all the adults and children joining in. Oh, there was merry making! We planted and we watered: grass and trees, flowers and shrubs. We partied and planned and fundraised for social events.

Mother opened her doors to the world and many newcomers to Canada got their start with her. Then came the 10th anniversary party. It was a huge success. Everyone pitched in. There were pony rides, a balloon toss and other games for the children. We had a big birthday cake for Mother Woodfield with her name written across it. There was a barbecue, bingo and a penny auction for all. The weather co-operated to make a beautiful day.

But, as they say, "in every life a little rain must fall." Members have come and gone, lived and died in Mother Woodfield's arms. Members have formed strong bonds with each other that continue to today.

Mother Woodfield herself has weathered many storms. Her siding has been blown off. Her basements have been flooded. Some stairways have given way, but through it all she has remained a fortress of strength to all who love her.

People still care and I know she has merit because our co-ordinator, **Rosemary Cook**, has been with us for 14 years. Mother Woodfield's mortgage is up for renewal and she badly needs repairs and replacements, but in spite of some uncertainty we all look forward with optimism to the next 20 years. ☺

▶
In the beginning – A couple of Woodfield Co-op's first members come home on opening day, May 1986.



dollars and sense

▶
Page 3: As the co-op celebrates its 20th anniversary, Woodfield Co-op member Judy Koyle looks back as she looks forward to another 20 years. Inset: Woodfield Co-op's first picnic in 1986.



Publication information

Newsbriefs is published by the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. Material may be copied. Please credit CHF Canada.

Story ideas, comments or questions? Call Merrilee Robson at 1-877-533-2667 or e-mail mrobson@chfc.ca.

Editor: Denise McGahan
dmcgahan@chfc.ca
Design and printing:
EGO Creative Solutions
design@egocreatives.com
Allegra Print & Imaging
jim@allegra-ottawa.ca

Contact information

National Office
311-225 Metcalfe Street,
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1P9
Tel (613) 230-2201
Fax (613) 230-2231
Toll-free 1-800-465-2752

Southwestern Ontario
c/o Ontario Region Office
313-720 Spadina Avenue,
Toronto ON M5S 2T9
Tel (519) 453-0999
Fax (519) 453-6854
Toll-free 1-800-644-3949

Co-op Cost Cutters program offers great deals for members

Belonging to CHF Canada can help co-ops and co-op members save money. We work hard to harness the buying power of housing co-ops and by participating in our Co-op Cost Cutters group purchasing program members can save money! And, as more co-ops use their collective buying power, Co-op Cost Cutters gets better and better!

Co-op Cost Cutters is a group purchasing program that offers member housing co-ops the ability to pool their buying power with co-ops throughout Ontario to save money. Member co-ops save money on maintenance supplies, electrical, plumbing and cleaning supplies, appliance parts, flooring, carpets, tile, paint and wall coverings, office supplies and furnishings, the purchase or leasing of appliances, and credit reports and checks.

There are some great deals with Co-op Cost Cutters. The research has been done, the deals negotiated and extras included. Co-op Cost Cutters aims to provide the best value, quality and customer support. In many cases, these same deals are also available to co-op staff.

For further information on the program, contact **Denise McGahan** at (519) 453-0999 in the London area or toll-free at 1-800-644-3949. ☎

Don't miss the Delegates' meeting

The AGM delegates' meeting is a chance to find out more about the AGM, meet other people who are attending and talk a bit more about local services.

Mark your calendar:

Tuesday, May 9, 7:00 p.m.
Windy Woods Housing Co-operative
(in the Common Room)
111 Belmont Drive
London, ON

Contact Denise McGahan, (519) 453-0999 or email dmcgahan@chfc.ca.

