

(Energy Initiative continued from page 3)

will be of financial benefit to the co-ops," says Tapai. "Rather than feeding electricity into the units, it will be fed directly into the provincial grid. This is much more advantageous, because the co-ops buy power at a reduced rate."

At Tolpuddle Co-op, manager Nicole Hutt says receiving the REI funding "was the greatest opportunity the co-op has ever been offered." And Carol Stark, manager for Genesis Co-op, says "the extra money will allow us to do some repairs and upgrades that are needed including new floors and stoves. We would also like to invest some of the money for future plans."

Tanglewood is the first co-op to begin the installation process. While the co-op's board would like to use their new source of revenue to replace the co-op's aging playgrounds, it may be a while before the co-op sees the financial benefits of their retrofit project.

"Before we can begin selling back to the grid, London Hydro must upgrade the transformer station we will sell to," explains Tanglewood coordinator Veronica Tugwood. "This creates a bit of a setback for us because it delays our ability to start generating revenue."

To sell electricity back to the grid, the co-ops must enter into a contract with the Ontario Power Authority's through its microFIT program, which guarantees a rate of 80.2 cents/kWh for electricity produced from solar photovoltaic cells. As of February 2011, OPA also requires that all microFIT applicants first confirm with their local distribution company that they will be able to connect. This change was implemented to ensure that potential connection problems, such as those being experienced by Tanglewood, are identified early in the application and contracting processes.



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL
MEMBERS MEETING**

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 7:00 PM

*Four Points Sheraton Hotel
1150 Wellington Road South, London*

Consult with CHF Canada and other members on the big decisions taking place this year in St. John's. Tell us what you think about co-op governance and the tools you need to improve it. This conversation is about what YOU think—and we're listening.

This meeting will have all of the ingredients for a great co-op meeting...food, fun and fantastic feedback from the Members! This is an event you will not want to miss. Watch for further details coming soon to your co-op. Be sure to RSVP early to be ensure your place at the 1st Southwestern Ontario Regional Members Meeting.

*For more information, contact Denise McGahan at
1-800-644-3949 or dmcgahan@chfcanada.coop.*

The
**CO-OPERATIVE
HOUSING
FEDERATION**
of Canada



NewsBriefs
Southwestern Ontario

Spring 2011 | Volume 6, No. 1

2011
*The Year of Getting
Governance Right*

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

NewsBriefs is published by the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada.

Editors:
Denise McGahan and Scott Jackson

Printing:
Cielo Print Inc.

Material may be copied. Please credit CHF Canada.

Contributors:
Sara Hanson
Cindy Long

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

Story ideas, comments or questions? Denise McGahan at 1-800-644-3949 or email dmcgahan@chfcanada.coop.

Design and production:
Aerographics Creative Services
www.aerographics.ca



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

GOODBYE TO SHRA *Page 2*

JOIN US IN ST. JOHN'S! *Page 2*

LOCAL CO-OP TACKLES GOVERNANCE *Page 3*

RENEWABLE ENERGY HELPS CO-OPS *Page 3*



So Long SHRA...Hello HSA

By Denise McGahan

For many years now, Ontario co-ops and CHF Canada have been lobbying for a major overhaul of the SHRA to get rid of heavy-handed rules that take control away from members and give it to government.

Bill 140: Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act was introduced in the Ontario legislature on November 29, 2010. The main purpose of the Bill is to repeal the *Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA)* and replace it with the new *Housing Services Act (HSA)*.

CHF Canada is encouraged by some of the language in the draft legislation that indicates the government has been listening to our lobby efforts. We will continue to press for changes that are important to co-ops before the HSA is finally passed and becomes law.

Bill 140 has received first and second reading and has been referred to the Justice Policy Legislative Committee for public hearings at which CHF Canada and individual housing co-ops have made presentations. The third and

final reading of Bill 140 will likely be late in the spring, but the HSA will not come into force until January 2012 at the earliest.

Currently, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is conducting a series of working group meetings to develop the regulations that will accompany Bill 140. CHF Canada's Ontario Region staff are attending each of the working group meetings to provide input into drafting these regulations and ensure the co-op perspective is heard.

CHF Canada will be providing educational materials for co-op boards and management once the legislation passes and the regulations are set. Check our website regularly and subscribe to our e-Alerts to keep up to date on all the latest news regarding the HSA.



For information about the HSA and rules that affect co-ops currently operating under the SHRA, visit www.chfcanada.coop and click on the icon for Ontario Region.

Picture Yourself in St. John's!

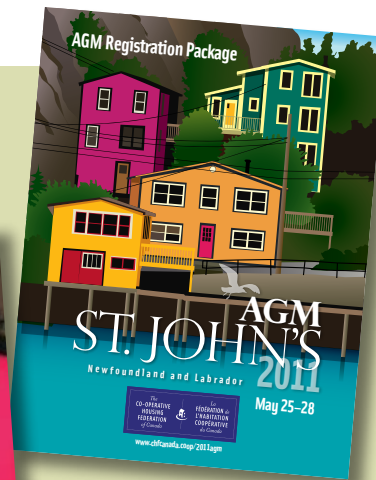
by Cindy Long

You definitely won't want to miss CHF Canada's 2011 Annual Meeting unfolding in friendly, historic St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador from May 25-28. With over 30 workshops to choose from, and a dynamic town hall session on Getting Governance Right, you'll want to start planning now for an unforgettable experience. Ensure a strong future for your co-op, as you explore the many tools for good governance, and share ideas and expertise. Find common ground with members and managers from co-ops across the country. Discover for yourself why the AGM receives rave reviews year after year.

Kim Carter of Mary Campbell Co-op volunteered at the 2010 AGM in London.

"It was an awesome experience," she said. "It's one big classroom.

You come back with a head full of ideas, and the energy level was amazing!" Kim suggests that potential delegates be prepared to share solutions to problems in their own co-ops with others. "Go with an open mind," she advises, "and be prepared to be blown away!"



Breathe in the clean, fresh sea air as you explore the live music venues, restaurants and shops of St John's. This vibrant city is fast becoming the cultural capital of Canada. Join us for the 2011 AGM, and find out why. Register now so that you and your co-op can be a part of this year's excitement.



MARY CAMPBELL CO-OP IS GETTING GOVERNANCE RIGHT

By Sara Hanson

After some lively discussion at their general members meeting in February, members of Mary Campbell Co-op in London are getting started on the road to becoming a 2020 Co-op. While the process seemed overwhelming at first, Mary Campbell President Jeremy Chambers says the members realized they are already well positioned to meet two or three of the program's five standards.

"We're financially stable and it's extremely rare that we have any vacancies or arrears," says Chambers. "There will be a few things to iron out as we work to become a 2020 Co-op, but more or less it's already there."

When looking towards the future, Chambers says the co-op is in really good shape. Despite being in a strong position, the members recognize that being a 2020 Co-op will be beneficial should

any unexpected capital expenses arise in the future.

"The possibility of getting further financing is definitely a draw for us," explains Chambers. "If we have met the 2020 Vision standards, then prospective lenders will know we are a sound organization. Going forward, being a 2020 Co-op will definitely be an asset."

The co-op's members are currently completing the 2020 Compass tool with support from Denise McGahan, CHF Canada's Program Manager for Members Services in Southwestern Ontario. Over the next few months they are holding workshops where members can offer input for the co-op's mission statement. They are also planning to complete at least some of the standards by the end of the year.

"I feel really confident going forward," says Chambers. "Our board works really well together and we know we will have no

problem meeting the governance standard by the end of 2011."

With the governance standard secured by the end of the year, Mary Campbell will be right on schedule to celebrate the *Year of Getting Governance Right*, CHF Canada's official theme for 2011. Over the next year, CHF Canada is challenging all of its member co-ops to at least meet the 2020 governance standard. With this standard secured, co-ops will be well on their way to securing a bright and successful future.

Wondering what's in your co-op's future? Then register to become a 2020 Co-op today at www.2020vision.coop. CHF Canada staff can provide the tools and expertise to help your co-op on the road to 2020. For more information about the 2020 Vision Program, please contact Diana Devlin at 1.800.465.2752 ext 245 or ddevlin@chfcanada.coop.

Energy initiative promises income for London co-ops

By Sara Hanson

The future is about to get a lot brighter for five housing co-ops in London that received funding to install solar photovoltaic cells on their rooftops. Tanglewood Orchard, Tolpuddle, Genesis, Windy Woods, and Whiteoak Heritage co-ops each received funding under the Ontario government's Renewable Energy Initiative (REI), which

devoted \$70 million for the implementation of renewable energy technologies in social and affordable housing.

Tom Tapai, Social Housing Technical Support Officer for the City of London, has been working closely with the co-ops to guide them through the application process. "The solar panels

(Continued on page 4)

