



NEWS AND VIEWS

JUNE, 2007

Alberta Community and Co-operative Association
 220, 10403 – 172 Street
 Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1K9
 Telephone: 780-451-5959 • Fax: 780-452-5385

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ACCA Annual General Meeting

ACCA held its Annual General Meeting on May 30, 2007. The meeting followed the Co-operative Merit Award and was attended by 35 people. The meeting consisted of three presentations in areas that ACCA is working and this was followed by the business meeting. The [Annual Report can be downloaded](#) from the ACCA website.

ACCA is moving!

We will be moving, effective June 18, 2007, to our new office in Stony Plain. This move will create significant savings for ACCA and will make us more accessible to many rural residents.

Our new address is

#104, 5013 – 48 Street

Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1L8

Phone: (780) 963-3766

Fax: (780) 968-6733

Website: www.acca.coop

E-mail acca@acca.coop

(E-mail and website remain the same as before, and our staff e-mail addresses will also continue unchanged.)

We would be delighted to show you our new office. Please drop by anytime; we'll provide the coffee.



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2007 Alberta Co-operative Merit Award

On May 30, 2007, members of the Alberta Community and Co-operative Association honored the 2007 Alberta Co-operative Merit Award recipients — Mr. Tymen Donkersgord and Mr. Marvin Allen Fischer — at a luncheon attended by over 50 members and guests. The Honourable Lloyd Snelgrove, Minister of Service Alberta presented Mr. Donkersgord and Mr. Fischer with an engraved plaque in recognition of their outstanding co-operative achievement on the local, provincial, and national levels.

Tymen Donkersgord served on the board from the following organizations: Lilydale Foods, The Co-operators, Alberta Chicken Producers and Rural Education and Development Association, (now Alberta Community and Co-operative Association), just to name a few. Mr. Donkersgord spent over 50 years providing community service and supporting the co-operative movement in Alberta.

Marvin Fischer served on the board for the Medicine Hat Co-operative Ltd. since 1982, serving as Chair for 10 years. Mr. Fischer also served as a delegate on the Alberta White Pool Sub District 301 from 1987 to the merger with Manitoba Wheat Pool (now Agricore United).

Each year, the Alberta Community and Co-operative Association (ACCA) and the Alberta Government recognizes individuals and/or groups who have made outstanding and continuous co-operative development at the provincial and community levels in Alberta. The Alberta Co-operative Merit Award is a honorary award for outstanding co-operative achievement.

The mission of the Alberta Community and Co-operative Association is to strengthen Alberta communities through co-operative and agricultural awareness, training and development. ACCA facilitates discussion of overriding issues common to all co-operatives, serves as a consultative body for the provincial government and acts in an advisory capacity on questions of government policy relating directly to the provincial co-operative movement.

For further information, please
contact
— Michele Aasgard,
Executive Director,
Alberta Community and
Co-operative Association
(780) 451-5959



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Development Fund Sponsors Five New Projects: New funding to help a number of rural communities and regions

Tofield. May 25, 2007. Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) announced funding today of \$4.55 million to sponsor five rural Alberta projects. The innovative projects will improve learning resources and connectivity in many rural communities and areas of the province.

The Integrated Community Clerkship project will see medical students spending at least eight months learning about medical practice in Sundre, Hinton, Edson, St. Paul, Sylvan Lake or Drumheller from doctors already living and working there. Studies show longer exposure time in a rural setting leads to more students choosing to work in rural communities after graduation.

Tomorrow's Promise Today will create virtual learning and business centres in Three Hills and Hanna. The regional centres will give residents in east-central Alberta better access to and expanded value from Alberta's SuperNet.

A project in Killam will attract key agri-businesses into the region while RADF's sponsorship allows the Sunchild E-Learning Centre in Rocky Mountain House to expand skills training for Aboriginal learners. The fifth project involves co-sponsoring the launch of a 211 phone service for southwest Alberta.

"All these initiatives will benefit rural Alberta. Multiple partners, community collaboration and the likelihood of long-term, positive impacts made these obvious choices for our Board to support," said Bob Clark, RADF co-chair. "These are the types of projects we are looking for," added Co-chair Fred Estlin.

Premier Ed Stelmach said the Fund is intended to help communities and regions diversify and create services that have far-reaching benefits. "These first five projects will help build a stronger Alberta by encouraging rural development and building on community resources," Stelmach said.



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Iris Evans, Minister of Employment, Immigration and Industry recognizes the importance of these projects, “A strong and vibrant rural Alberta means a strong and vibrant Alberta. These innovative new ideas strengthen our communities and our economy.”

Rural Alberta’s Development Fund is a not-for-profit company that inspires innovation, collaboration and growth across rural Alberta. It is funded by the Government of Alberta and is a key implementation initiative of Alberta’s Rural Development Strategy. More information is available at www.ruralalbertasfund.com

Canadian Co-ops and Rural Communities Applaud New Program and New Minister

Ottawa — Canadian co-operators are joining with rural Canadians in applauding today’s announcement by the federal government to renew and extend the Agricultural Co-operative Development Initiative (Ag-CDI). In the announcement, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada Minister Chuck Strahl pledged \$3.25 million over two years to assist in the development of co-operatives as a way for agriculture producers and communities to take advantage of opportunities associated with biofuels and other value-added activities.

“The two-year funding for the Agricultural Co-operative Development Initiative is just what the co-op movement needs to continue helping farmers and rural communities form or expand value-added agricultural co-ops, including biofuel co-ops using agricultural materials,” says Canadian Co-operative Association President (CCA) Dave Sitaram.

The two national co-operative organizations, CCA and the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération (CCC), ran a very successful pilot from September 2006 to March 2007, during which time 27 projects received approximately \$500,000 in funding for advisory



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CONTACTS:

John Anderson, Director,
Government Affairs & Public Policy
Tel: (613) 238-6711 ext 228; Fax:
(613) 567-0658

Email: [John.Anderson@
CoopsCanada.coop](mailto:John.Anderson@CoopsCanada.coop)

Lynne Markell, Government Affairs
& Public Policy Advisor

Tel: (613) 238-6711 ext 204; Fax:
(613) 567-0658

Email: [Lynne.Markell@
CoopsCanada.coop](mailto:Lynne.Markell@CoopsCanada.coop)

Canadian Co-operative Association
www.CoopsCanada.coop

services and learning exchanges. Groups were in all phases of development from initial start-up to undertaking equity drives. Other outcomes from the pilot include: a successful conference that brought together 120 people to exchange information, learn from existing co-ops and network with others in the start-up phase; and the development of new education resources that will shortly be distributed through the Ag-CDI section of CoopZone. CoopZone is the national support system for co-operative organizations and developers.

“Today’s announcement is a clear indication of the government’s confidence in the co-operative sector to facilitate the development of farmer-led agricultural biofuel and other value-added agricultural co-operatives through the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building activities,” explains CCC President Michel Rouleau.

The pilot concluded at the end of March and with this announcement, CCA and CCC anticipate restarting Ag-CDI in the fall. Groups interested in receiving more information should send their e-mail address to AgCDI@CoopsCanada.coop.

CCA and CCC also welcome the transfer of responsibilities for rural and co-operative initiatives from Minister Strahl to the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Christian Paradis. This means that the Secretary of State, who already attends meetings of the important Economic Affairs committee of Cabinet, will have now a clear responsibility for the non-financial co-operative sector and for the federal Co-operatives Secretariat.

The Canadian Co-operative Association is a national association for co-operatives in Canada, representing more than seven million co-operative and credit union members from over 3,000 organizations. CCA members come from many sectors of the economy, including finance, insurance, agri-food and supply, wholesale and retail, housing, health and the service sector. CCA provides leadership to promote, develop, and unite co-operatives and credit unions for the benefit of people in Canada and around the world.



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Russell Wolf Completes Ukraine Project

Russell Wolf, Chair of ACCA, completed a two week development visit to Eastern Ukraine – primarily the town of Stakhanof.

Russel met with individuals and groups to discuss co-op development, planning, potential partnerships. He feels that there is great potential for further discussion and cooperation. [See his complete report on the ACCA website.](#)

ACCA staff members participate in international co-operative futures conference

Dianne Schoepp, Special Project Co-ordinator, Allan Bartolcic, former Manager of Youth and Community Development, and Celeste Warner, 2005 Comfort Trust Award winner, attended the 2006 International Building Co-operative Futures Conference in Manchester, England.

The participants and speakers represented nine countries. The topics of discussion included the co-op movement in the various countries and also the importance of ‘fair trade’, a term which relates to fair prices for producers in developing countries.

Dianne, Allan and Celeste visited Rochdale where in 1844 28 men gathered to set up the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society and opened a co-op shop on Toad Lane. It was a story that they had not heard before, but one which they will remember.

This international conference provided unique experiences for the ACCA representatives. They heard Ghanians discuss their problems and successes with the production and marketing of cocoa beans: they listened to Edgar Comeros, the Project Manager of the World Council of Credit Unions, describe how he moved to Afghanistan to form a Credit Union: and they returned to Canada with a new appreciation of the co-op movement and its potential throughout the world.



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Building Co-op Futures Conference

On Co-op ([The Ontario Co-operative Association](#)) recently hosted the 5th annual international Building Sustainable Co-operative Futures Conference, May 23rd- 26th, 2007 at the University of Guelph in Guelph, Ontario, Canada.

Co-operators from Canada, the United States, the UK and Nigeria enjoyed an intimate gathering of like-minded folks to share stories, experiences and hopes for the future of co-operatives. This year's program was geared not only toward co-operative sustainability but to environmental sustainability as well with workshops designed to explore renewable energy, ethical trading, conservation and organic food supplies. We were happy to present workshop facilitators from large global companies such as Mountain Equipment Co-op and Ten Thousand Villages, as well as more grass-roots co-operatives such as the Grand House student Co-operative, Guelph Campus Co-op and the Quinte Organic Farmers Co-operative. There were also practical opportunities to simulate co-operative principles with respect to global economy, as well as to see the benefits of eco-friendly housing practices at Everdale Organic Farm and Education Centre.

Here are a few of the things said of the conference and its participants:

“It is impressive to see people of any age show dedication to conducting business in an environmentally and ethically conscious manner. This conference was a powerful demonstration of the co-operative movement's commitments to these ideals!”

“It was a fantastic opportunity to realize just how big a role co-operatives play globally. They are committed to furthering the goals of co-operation in their careers, communities and lives – and they are building that future today.”

On Co-op would like to thank everyone involved in making this years conference a great success, and feel confident that the participants will take the information gathered and connections made to continue to build the foundations for a stronger sustainable co-operative movement.

The [Ontario Co-operative Association](#) (On Co-op) is a key resource for the development and enhancement of Ontario's co-operatives and credit unions in the areas of Government Relations, Lifelong Co-operative Learning, Communications and Co-op Development



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Former FCL CEO Wayne Thompson Dies

Wayne Thompson, former CEO of [Federated Co-operatives Ltd](#), died late last month following a recurrence of cancer that had struck previously. Mr. Thompson led the organization for almost a quarter of a century before stepping down in March, at the age of 65.

A 1963 graduate of the University of Saskatchewan College of Commerce and a chartered accountant since 1966, Mr. Thompson spent 37 years in total at FCL, joining the organization in 1970 as an internal auditor. During his tenure, FCL's total yearly revenue and net assets grew, making it the largest non-financial co-op in the country. FCL remains the sole grocery, lumber, hardware and agricultural wholesaler to retail co-ops across Western Canada.

At the same time as he was CEO of FCL, Mr. Thompson was also head of Interprovincial Co-operatives Ltd, which arranges with manufacturers and food processors to supply co-op private label products supplied both to FCL and other co-op organizations in the rest of Canada.

First Graduates of the Master in Management of Co-operatives & Credit Unions

The Co-operative Management Education Co-operative (CMEC), which was formed in 2001 to support the creation of a Master's program for the co-operative movement, saw its mission realized on May 25 with the first 10 graduates from the [St. Mary's University Master's in the Management of Co-operatives and Credit Unions](#) receiving their degrees.

[The Co-operators](#) has supported the program development with financial contributions and participation on the CMEC Board of Directors. In addition, it had seven students in the program, three of whom graduated on May 25.



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One graduate from The Co-operators, Lisa Burke, shared her perspective on the program. “The last four years in the Master of Management Co-operatives and Credit Unions program have provided a rigorous learning experience....the course content was very meaningful but many of the learnings came from the sharing of practical experiences by fellow classmates from a variety of co-operative types across Canada, the U.S., Scotland and the United Kingdom. The strong relationships we’ve built have developed a network that will help us strengthen the co-operative movement globally.... And we’re committed to developing strong alumni that will grow with each new graduating class.”

CCA Bringing the World to World Credit Union Conference

The [Canadian Co-operative Association](#) (CCA) is shining a spotlight on the impact credit unions are having in developing countries at the World Credit Union Conference, in Calgary this summer. “We have invited two representatives from each of CCA’s nine international credit union partners to join the estimated 2,000 to 3,000 participants gathering July 29 through August 1 for the [World Council of Credit Unions](#) annual conference,” says CCA Senior Director of Development Jo-Anne Ferguson. “They will also network and share experiences at a special Partners Forum taking place on the eve of the Conference (July 28).” As well, 15 women credit union professionals who will be participating in CCA’s [Women’s and Credit Mentoring Program](#) at that time will attend the conference before returning home. For more information visit secure.lenos.com/lenos/omgameetings/woccu07



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The Meeting Place

June 26 – 29: Co-operative Development: Harness the Hidden Potential, National Congress and Canadian Co-operative Association and Newfoundland-Labrador Federation of Co-operatives AGMs, St. John's, NL. Through a range of interactive and participative keynote presentations, plenary discussions and workshops, the Congress sessions will explore what co-operative development means and how the system can look to build a lasting legacy for the communities it serves. As part of the broader discussions over the three days, sessions will include dialogue and learning exchanges focusing on leadership and movement-building strategies from a global, national and local perspective. For more information, go to www.CoopsCanada.coop/Congress2007.

June 25 – 29 & July 2 – 13: The Bologna Summer Program for Co-operative Studies, Vancouver, BC & Bologna, Italy. This program gathers together outstanding scholars and leaders in the co-operative movements of both Italy and Canada to deliver a unique blend of co-operative theory and practical experience to program participants. For information, visit www.bcca.coop.



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