



NEWS AND VIEWS

OCTOBER, 2007

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ACCA *News and Views* will be published at the beginning of each month. Please submit news items or information you would like to share to acca@acca.coop.

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Rise and Shine Breakfast Forum



Don't forget to register for ACCA's **Rise and Shine Breakfast** on October 15, 2007. Come celebrate Co-op Week at our popular Rise & Shine Breakfast.

The theme of this year's Forum explores "Principle Six: Co-ops Helping Co-ops." We have a stellar panel lined up including:

- Dave Mowat, CEO of ATB, former CEO of VanCity
- Ted Zettel, President of Organic Meadow dairy co-op
- Francoise Morissette, author of *Made in Canada Leadership*; and
- John Restakis, Executive Director of the BC Co-op Association.

Costs are \$50 each or \$350 for a table of eight.

[Information](#) and [registration forms](#) are available on our website (follow the links). Space is limited so register early!

Student Research Positions with BALTA

A re-posting for two Research Assistant positions within BALTA research projects is available from the [ACCA website](#). We hope to fill the positions ASAP.

The positions are open to students currently enrolled in any BC or Alberta college or university. To apply, students should send applications to:

Tim Brigham
BALTA Academic Coordinator

Tim.Brigham@royalroads.ca

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS OCTOBER 26, 2007



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Current Course Offerings from ACCA

ACCA is pleased to offer the following courses.

Co-operative Basics

Learning Objectives

- Co-ops from other business forms
- Clarifying principles
- Build a sense of pride in the history
- Learn about other co-operatives
- Identifying the co-operative advantage
- Basic roles of the delegates and directors

Date, Time, Location and Price

January 9 and 10, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Please note: This is a two-day workshop.
Executive Royal Inn, 8450 Sparrow Drive, Leduc
Members: \$500 + gst; Non-Members: \$550 + gst

Financial Analysis and Planning for Non-Financial Managers

Learning Objectives

- Understand budgets and their role in internal control
- Understand the key information contained in financial statements and statement relationships
- Identify sources and uses of cash
- Calculate ratios for liquidity, return on equity and return on investment
- Discover aids to financial decision-making and comparison.

Date, Time, Location and Price

February 22, 2008: 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
February 23, 2008: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Please note: This is a one and a half day workshop.
Executive Royal Inn, 2828 – 23 Street NE, Calgary, AB
Members: \$385 + gst; Non-Members: \$435 + gst

Parliamentary Procedures

Learning Objectives

- The different types of motions and when to use them
- How to know which motion gets priority
- How to make motions and debate them
- How to amend a motion
- How to amend an amendment
- Participants should be prepared to participate in an intense learning session

Date, Time, Location and Price

March 1, 2008, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Executive Royal Inn, 2828 - 23 Street NE, Calgary, AB
Members: \$450 + gst. Non-Members: \$500 + gst

The Essentials of Board Governance

Learning Objectives

- Understand your responsibilities as a Director
- Explore different approaches to governance
- Examine ways to:
 - Pursue future focused board leadership
 - Enhance the board-ownership relationship
 - Delegate effectively to management
 - Develop systems of accountability
 - Improve the board's governance capabilities
 - Recruit effective board members.

Date, Time, Location and Price

March 20 and 21, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Please note: This is a two-day workshop.
Holiday Inn – Red Deer, 6500- 67th Street 403.342.6567
Members: \$575 + gst; Non-Members: \$605 + gst

For more information please visit the ACCA website at www.acca.coop or contact the ACCA office at 780-963-3766.



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Lobbyist Act Supplementary Submission Update from Bob Wyatt (Muttart Foundation)

Dear Colleagues:

I'm sorry that it's taken so long to give you an update on the proposed Lobbyists Act proceedings. There have been a couple of other distractions lately. I'm sure some of you experience that from time to time.

Last Thursday and Friday, the Government Services Committee held public hearings on the bill.

I was gratified that the vast majority of presenters were from the voluntary sector, and I'm grateful that some of you were able to come out for the presentation of the joint submission. Our colleagues from Volunteer Alberta, the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, the Canadian Mental Health Association – Edmonton Region, Disability Action Hall and the Environmental Law Centre, among others, did a masterful job of presenting the concerns of the sector.

The committee heard from all of the voluntary-sector organizations, as well as from others, about the administrative burden that would be caused if the bill was enacted in its current form. They heard about the overbreadth of the definitions of what constitutes lobbying and who is a public official. They heard about the potential impact on people willing to serve on boards of directors, of the problems faced by making the senior staff person liable to fines for failure to report and the chaos that would ensue when someone from the voluntary sector was asked to serve on a government committee or task force.

They also heard suggestions. Various presenters suggested that many problems would be avoided if the bill contained a threshold, by which an organization would not have to register unless its lobbying activities amounted to something equal to 20% of the time of a full-time employee. There were suggestions – including some from some of the MLAs on the committee – that perhaps the reporting should have to be done by the public officials, not by people approaching public officials.

Download the Supplementary Submission:
www.acca.coop/SupplementarySubmission.pdf



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Yet it was also clear that committee members (and supporting staff) are not as familiar with our sector as we might have hoped. They were using terms that mean different things in our sector than they intended. There was some difficulty accepting the concept that most voluntary-sector organizations are public-interest organizations. There were suggestions that organizations should report because they're lobbying for money – a suggestion that was well dealt with by a number of presenters who pointed out that many organizations receiving money do so to deliver government-mandated services.

There was significant angst about dividing not-for-profit organizations into public-interest vs. private-interest organizations. (They seemed to understand the concept that registered charities are a class where there is no private interest, although somehow the issue of fundraising worked its way into that conversation.) In answer to questions posed to me, I suggested that they could look at the Charitable Fundraising Act and use the definition contained there as a starting point.

I also didn't have the feeling that the committee members understand the concerns about the definition of "associated persons" within the prohibition against lobbying while holding a contract to provide advice. It's not that the presenters failed to make the situation and potential clear; they did. But I'm not sure it "registered" with the committee.

For those of you who are particularly interested, the transcripts of the 1.5 days of hearings are available on the Government Services Committee website (www.assembly.ab.ca/governmentservices).

Copies of newspaper stories that appeared in the [Edmonton Journal](#) and the [Edmonton Sun](#) about the hearings and the bill. You'll see in both stories that there are some who take a different view of the situation than does the joint submission. In the case of the lawyer from Ontario, I think his comments ignore rather significant differences between legislation, and ignore the issue of a threshold. Similarly, the Democracy Watch concerns assume certain changes that haven't been made yet.



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The threshold is a major issue. The federal legislation and that of most other provinces do provide for a threshold, sometimes in the legislation, sometimes in regulation and sometimes in a Commissioner's ruling. I made clear in my submission that we want a threshold written in the bill so as to provide certainty. A regulation can be changed by Cabinet at any time. Normally, this process is used where regular or speedy changes may be necessary. We don't think that reason exists in this case. And the problem with a Commissioner's ruling is that the legislation specifically says that a Commissioner's ruling or interpretation bulletin is not binding. Thus, it's little comfort, particularly when faced with fines described by one presenter as the highest in Canada.

So what happens now? The committee has set several meeting dates in October, during which they will discuss recommendations for possible amendments to the bill. (They're also considering the proposed Conflict of Interest Act.) We may get some idea from these meetings where they're heading and what additional work may be needed. It may be that we need to organize ourselves again and ensure that every MLA hears from us before a report gets back to the Legislative Assembly. I'll monitor the transcripts of those meetings (to the extent that they remain open) and keep you advised.

For the time being, I encourage you to continue to ensure that your MLAs, and other MLAs with whom you have relationships, do not believe that we have faded away on this issue. Let them know that we remain concerned. We appreciated the opportunity to appear before the committee, but it is the whole Assembly that will decide on what the final Act says. We have to let them know that if we do not get the major changes that we have suggested, we are going to face major issues, individually and collectively. Remind them of the changes we want:

- exemption of all public-interest not-for-profit organizations or, at the very least, registered charities, unless they employ a consultant lobbyist
- introduction into the bill of a threshold



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- elimination or reduction of fines
- narrowing of the broad definition of public official
- narrowing of the broad definition of what constitutes lobbying, so that, for example, policies and directives aren't included
- elimination of the “associated persons” rules

I'd like to continue hearing from you about reactions you get from MLAs and others to your representations. If you send a letter to MLAs, please send me a copy (hard copy or electronic) so that we know what's being said, and where we may need to deploy follow-up resources.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for your help and support. This wasn't a situation where people “blindly” signed on to the joint submission. Many of you have taken a great deal of time to familiarize yourselves with the bill and with the issues it causes. You've already done a great job in contacting MLAs, as evidenced by comments made by committee members. We've pulled together as a sector to act with unity. We're demonstrating to ourselves (and our colleagues) as well as government that the sector cannot be ignored. And that's a long-term benefit for all of us.

If you need any further background, or I can help your organization in any way, please let me know, and I'll do whatever I can.

Best regards to all!



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Making Choices: Consumers and Their Impact on Canada's Agriculture and Food

The Consumer and Market Demand network is co-hosting a conference with the Agricultural Institute of Canada the conference “Making choices: Consumers and their impact on Canada’s Agriculture and Food” on November 5-6, 2007 in Edmonton Alberta. The conference will generate discussion and debate, and provide a forum to showcase and learn more about the current and future drivers – economic, health, political and social - that will undoubtedly impact our integrated agriculture and food systems.

For more information and to register for the conference, please see the AIC website at <http://www.aic.ca/conferences/upcoming.cfm>. You can also download the preliminary program from the [ACCA website](#).

AB CEDNet Co-op



The AB CEDNet Co-op AGM will be held at the Students’ Union Building U of A on Friday November 16, in conjunction with the start of the Parkland Institute’s Fall Conference – *From Crisis to Hope: Building Just and Sustainable Communities*. The AB CEDNet Co-op AGM will occur at 2:30 pm, followed by a CED Learning Event at 5:00 PM. The learning event will be an “in conversation” with Yvonne Chiu from the Multicultural Health Brokers’ Co-op and Joe Anglin from the Lavesta Area Landowners’ Group.

A reception co-sponsored by the Network and Parkland Institute will follow at 6:15 PM, leading up to the keynote address at the opening of the Parkland Institute’s conference.

Please watch the AB CEDNet website for upcoming details! www.abced.ca



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Co-operative Development Foundation Adopts New Governance Structure and Board

The [Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada](#) (CDF) has a new board and governance structure. The change comes from a recently completed governance review. The new structure, which was adopted in June, is one outcome of a recently completed governance review and a five year strategic plan that will have CDF raising \$1.5 million annually by 2011.

Adopted at the CDF Annual Meeting held this September, the new CDF board of directors comprises four members of the CCA board and five members elected from co-operatives and credit unions across Canada. Members of the new board are:

- Michael Barrett ([Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Ltd](#))
- Barry Delaney ([Envision Financial](#))
- Wayne McLeod ([Credit Union Central of Manitoba](#))
- Heather McLachlin ([The CUMIS Group](#))
- Gary Seveny ([Alterna Credit Union](#), retired)
- Norma Tomiczek ([Co-op Atlantic](#), CCA Board)
- George Keter ([SaskCentral](#), CCA Board)
- Jill Kelly ([Credit Union Central of British Columbia](#), CCA Board)
- Claude Gauthier ([GROWMARK, Inc](#), CCA Board)

The CDF board will operate under a new set of roles and responsibilities. It will provide due diligence to ensure sound management of the foundation, leadership to strategically guide and champion the organization, fundraising and revenue generation, continuity to ensure effective relations with CDF staff and new board members, and accountability to ensure transparency with donors and the larger co-operative movement. For more information contact Julie.breuer@coopscanada.coop



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PFRA Prairie Shelterbelt Program

Shelterbelts provide many benefits for prairie farmers. They reduce the wind around the yard, thus protecting buildings, reducing heating costs and controlling snow. They protect livestock from the cold winter winds. Shelterbelts provide wildlife habitat, protect the soil and trap snow for additional moisture. They also trap and store greenhouse gases.

The benefits of shelterbelts remain the same; however, there have been recent changes to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada-PFRA Prairie Shelterbelt Program, including:

- 5 acre (2ha) minimum to qualify for the program (last year it was 40 acres.)
- New rating guide – in the past applications have been approved on a first come first serve basis. Each application will now be rated based on the type of planting, number of seedlings applied for, and species composition.
- Hybrid poplars will now be sent as a mix and not available as a single species so we can send the species most suitable to the area, and also avoid monoculture problems.
- New application form which lists all of the species available.
- No more free plastic mulch. In the past, the Shelterbelt Enhancement Program provided free plastic mulch for weed control. That program has now expired. Clients must now purchase their own plastic mulch. However, PFRA still supplies the plastic mulch applicators.

While there are changes to the Program, some things remain the same:

- The trees are still free of charge (clients must pay the shipping)
- Applications are still accepted from June 1 to March 15 for May delivery.
- Applications are available at the County/MD offices; at PFRA offices; at 403-340-4291, toll free 1-866-766-2284 or at http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/shelterbelt_e.htm
- Seedlings are shipped to the local Counties/MDs where the client will pick them up
- Trees arrive at the County/MD in early May
- Land preparation is important to successfully plant the trees
- Weed control for 3-5 years after planting is vital to the establishment of the seedlings

If you have any questions about the program or would like an application, please call Don George at 403-340-4291 or toll free at 866-766-2284.

Don George

PFRA Agroforestry Specialist

Red Deer



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