

57 Years of Making a Difference

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council just completed its 57th year of operation. While gauging of our performance is best done by you our members, shareholders, and partners, I think it is fair to say that the Council continues to be recognized provincially, regionally, and nationally as a leader in economic development.

We are squarely focused on our co-operative principles, and also on delivering results, partnerships, and innovation that will impact the co-operative economy for years to come.



2005 was another stellar year, with significant progress being made on all of our priority areas. Sector growth approached seven percent, with

assets of the whole sector, including finance and insurance, now at nearly \$5 billion. Clearly, we are a significant part of the Nova Scotia economy, particularly in rural areas. Some 7,000 Nova Scotians are employed in our sector.

Some highlights of the past year include:

- ★ 26 new co-operative enterprises incorporated
- ★ 52 existing co-op members received growth and development support

- ★ Our small business financing program was expanded from an \$8 million program to a \$33 million program, with \$13.6 million being disbursed to 186 Nova Scotia businesses
- ★ Our short-term equity fund made investments in nine enterprises, resulting in an additional leveraging of \$732,000 in debt financing from our credit unions
- ★ Signed a formal MOU with NSBI
- ★ \$1 million proposal was submitted to ACOA to grow and expand the equity fund
- ★ Lead advisor on a successful CEDIF offering for Shean Co-operative (at last report over \$600,000 was raised for debt restructuring and business renovations)
- ★ Launched, in partnership with the federal Rural Secretariat and St. FX University, a two year, \$400,000 micro credit project that will result in micro credit becoming a standing product offering through our local credit unions
- ★ Our innovation council agreed to proceed with a health care co-operative venture, to be unveiled during Co-op Week 2006
- ★ Secured a representative seat at NSBI, currently filled by our Innovation Chair, Jim MacConnell
- ★ Secured a seat on the Premier's Advisory Council on Innovation
- ★ Currently negotiating a collaboration agreement

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Making Waves in More Ways Than One Coastal Community Radio Co-operative Limited

Coastal Community Radio is a not-for-profit community radio co-operative located in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. The co-operative community radio station features 100 percent east coast music, arts, culture, and tourism information presented in a 24 hour a day broadcast, targeted for the Cape Breton listening audience locally on 89.7 FM, and an inter-

national audience worldwide at www.coastalradio.ca. The station does not simply feature east coast artists... it plays them exclusively, 24 hours a day! The station prides itself on promoting east coast artists of all genres including folk, Celtic, roots, jazz, country, pop, and rock. Listeners get to hear music sets ranging from Cape Breton's Gordie Sampson, to Newfound-

land and Labrador's Great Big Sea, to New Brunswick's Glamour Puss Blues Band, to Prince Edward Island's Lennie Gallant. The station works very hard to expose new developing east coast talent as well.

The station began broadcasting on a temporary license

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Spring 2006

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Up-Coming Events:

- NSCC's Annual General Meeting with Guest Speaker, Alvin Law - June 14, 2006
- Announcement of the 2006 Distinguished Co-operator Awards Recipients
- Workshop: Building the High Performance Co-operative with facilitator, Doug Logan - June 14, 2006 at NSCC's AGM



Making Waves in More Ways Than One Cont'd Coastal Community Radio Co-operative Limited

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from the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) in January 2005 to help support and promote Cape Breton's hosting of ECMA 2005. The response to an all east coast music station has been tremendous. Listeners from all over the world have been tuning in via the internet and the local listeners have been tuning in to 89.7 FM with incredible loyalty. All live broadcasts and remote broadcasts were produced as a community service, free of charge. As a result of the quality special event broadcasts during its first

year of broadcasting, the Coast 89.7 FM received an ECMA nomination for Radio Station of the Year at the 2006 ECMA Awards in Charlottetown. The station has had over 2 million visitors and listeners to its website and online station since January 2005 and has now launched an online east coast music store to help east coast artists sell their products.

This radio co-operative is now ready to take its next major step and apply for a permanent community radio license from the CRTC; which, if successful, would require upgrading of its broad-

casting capability. This upgrade will enable The Coast to broadcast its radio programs throughout all of Cape Breton county. Coastal Community Radio Co-operative, with the help of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, is currently exploring various funding possibilities to finance the proposed expansion, including creating a Community Economic Development Investment Fund (CEDIF) as well as funding under NSCC's Short-Term Equity Fund. The future for this co-operative appears bright indeed!

To learn more about The Coast



Jay Bedford at Coastal Community Radio Co-operative (The Coast 89.7 FM)

89.7 FM, visit their website at www.coastalradio.com or tune in for a listen!

Written by Shaun Shea, BDO

"... As the old Chinese proverb says, may you live in interesting times..."

57 Years of Making a Difference Cont'd

- with Enterprise Cape Breton
- ★ Working with the Department of Housing on a mortgage guarantee program that will enable financing to be secured for our community-owned housing projects
- ★ Met with NSCC's School of Business to explore opportunities for collaboration, including having co-op information and materials in the business curriculum

- ★ Provided financial support for Nova Scotia youth to participate in the ACYL Program

The opportunity for new co-operative development is endless! Co-operatives and credit unions across all regions of Nova Scotia are engaged in local opportunities whether it be an RV Park in Port Hood, a funeral home in Lake Ainslie, wind energy in the Valley, or health care in the central region. As the old Chinese proverb says

'may you live in interesting times'. These are indeed very interesting and exciting times for the co-operative movement across Nova Scotia. Here's to another year of setting the standards for economic development! Here's to another year of making a difference!

Written by Dianne Kelderman, CEO



Womax is (left to right): Eileen MacNeil, Sharon MacKinnon, Audrey MacNeil, & Kim Hoeg

An Idea Get's Its Wings Womax Manufacturing Co-operative Limited

Womax Manufacturing Co-operative Limited is a worker co-operative that commenced operations at North Sydney in December 2005. The co-operative produces and markets a line of household cleaning products made from all natural ingredients and pure essential oils. Eileen MacNeil, part owner and marketing diva of the co-op explains 'our products combine superior cleaning and disinfecting

powers with uplifting aromas. The feedback we have received from our customers has been very positive - housecleaning is not longer a chore - it can be fun!'

The cleaning products are manufactured at their North Sydney facility under a special licensing agreement with Dusting Divas of British Columbia. Womax has an exclusive agreement with Dusting Divas to produce and market the cleaning products

under the Dusting Divas trade name throughout Eastern Canada, the New England states, Quebec, and Ontario. The worker co-operative also operates a home and business cleaning service under the Dusting Divas trade name in Cape Breton. This service has become especially attractive to people suffering from allergies, asthma, and sensitivities to conventional clean-

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Wind Energy

Wind turbines, solar panels, ethanol plants, biomass generating facilities; these are all methods of developing energy in ways that are 'green' (i.e. sustainable and with low impact to the environment). They also are suitable to small scale production at local levels and are effective drivers of economic and social community development.

Renewable Energy An Excellent Fit for Co-operatives & Community Development

Your Co-operative Council is always looking for contemporary and future circumstances where the co-operative ownership model excels. Distributed, small scale renewable, 'green' energy facilities constitute one such area as evidenced by thousands of examples within developed countries throughout the globe.

I recently attended a one-day conference hosted by REIANS, the Renewable Energy Industry Association of Nova Scotia. It didn't take long to recognize the promise and the problems that renewable energy faces within our province. As well, it didn't take long to recognize that co-

ops, as they have in similar situations throughout the world, can play a major part in the development of this sector. Denmark is a European country that is quickly touted as the model for development of renewable energy facilities on a community level that are owned and operated by co-ops. Spurred into action by the 'energy crisis' of 1973, momentum for locally produced renewable energy has resulted in approximately 25 percent of its electrical needs being met through wind turbine generation. Today, there are over 150,000 Danes that own shares in the country's 5,500 wind turbines, of which over 75

percent are owned by local co-ops. In addition, Denmark's major export is wind energy based products, services, and technology, with wind manufacturing activity bringing about three billion Euro into the Danish economy and employing 20,000 people.

Wind energy has played a major part in revitalization of its rural communities. Not only does it provide power at a low and stable cost structure, it provided an economic stimulus to those communities through sale of excess power back to the

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Introducing Jonathan McClelland Western Region Get New Business Development Officer

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council is pleased to announce Jonathan McClelland as our newest Business Development Officer. Jonathan accepted the position in April and we know that we will see great things from him.

Jonathan McClelland
joins NSCC's Team

Jonathan is an Agricultural Economist, experienced in Community Economic Development. His experience includes working for the Western Valley Development Authority in various roles, including Agricultural Development Officer, Economic Development Officer, Economist, and Research and Policy Developer. In 2004, he earned the title of BR & E Consultant through Business Retention and Expansion International.

Jonathan has a strong interest in policy development and played an active role in the development and implementation of the Learn\$ave Research Project. He also was an ISO Auditor for the Western Valley Development Agency, which received its ISO9001:2000 certification on July 13, 2005.

As an economist and entrepreneur, Jonathan has an interest in determining how macroeconomic changes affect local industry and communities and, as such, he has worked in various sectors of the economy. One of his proudest accomplishments has been working with farmers in Annapolis Valley to establish a community-owned grain elevator. In 2000, RBC Royal Bank recognized the start-up of West Nova Agro

Commodities Limited as the best economic development project in Canada. During 1999 Jonathan worked for the Canadian Government compiling the Guide to the European Union's Regulatory Requirements Facing Canadian Agri-Food Exports.

In 2005, he started his own business consulting company, Western Valley Agri Consulting, through which he provides management consulting services to the agricultural sector.

Jonathan lives in Deep Brook, Nova Scotia, and will be responsible for business development services in the Western region of the province. We know that Jonathan will make an exceptional addition to our NSCC team, and we look forward to working with him. If you would like to contact Jonathan, please phone (902) 245-8776 or email him at jonathan@westernvalleyagri.ca.

"...One of his proudest accomplishments has been working with farmers in the Annapolis Valley to establish a community-owned grain elevator.."

Nova Scotia Co-operative Council

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Sign up for the
2006 AGM &
Workshop!
June 14, 2006

An Idea Get's Its Wings Cont'd *Womax Manufacturing Co-operative Limited*

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ing products.

The co-op is owned by four enterprising women from the North Sydney Area. One of the first things you notice when you walk into their facility is a large wall space devoted to motivational and inspirational phrases. Eileen MacNeil, who has been a community economic development activist for over 25 years, knows the importance of a positive business approach. The group takes a few moments at the start of each day to review recent achievements and make

plans for their day. When they are not producing products or completing cleaning contracts, they are busy researching the market for new opportunities and encouraging each other.

It was interesting to learn that the idea for the local business has its genesis in Soaring Sisters Enterprises Co-operative Limited, a not-for-profit co-op whose goal is to create sustainable business and employment opportunities for women, along with an opportunistic meeting with the founder of British Columbia based Dusting Divas, Maia Gibb. Eileen MacNeil, who is also a board member of Soaring Sisters, met Gibb at a conference

in 2003 and the idea to establish a worker co-op to produce and market the Dusting Divas products under license was born. The support received from Soaring Sisters helped to 'give wings to the idea', a phrase popularized by co-op pioneer Father Jimmy Tompkins.

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council and its members extend best wishes for success to this new co-operative. If you would like additional information about this enterprise, or its products and services, please contact Dusting Divas at (902) 794-3814 or email womax@ns.aliantzinc.ca.

Written by Shaun Shea, BDO

Renewable Energy Cont'd *An Excellent Fit for Co-operative & Community Development*

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'grid' as well as opportunities to participate in the wind energy economic sector. Currently, Denmark has set a goal of 50 percent

convincingly point out that we could be doing nearly the same thing, particularly when one recognizes the tremendous amount of wind energy that blows across our province. However, just as Denmark did 40 years ago,

Nova Scotia currently faces challenges associated with a regulated, monopolistic electrical utility, a general lack of government support for smaller scale renewable energy facilities, and various levels of concern regarding possible environmental impact.

Although such issues currently create significant obstacles for renewable power generation strategies that require use of 'the grid', power users are under no restrictions relative to developing a local power supply that would provide

power directly to local users. An example of such 'embedded' energy sources would be development within a local industrial park.

The interested users of such electrical power

would form an ownership co-op, possibly with financial support from the local credit union. As knowledge and interest grew, additional users would result in a growth in the co-op and necessitate the construction of additional generation facilities.

In summary, the opportunities that scaled, local, and renewable energy facilities, combined with co-op ownership and financed by the local credit union can bring to Nova Scotia's increasing challenged rural communities are significant. The Co-operative Council, as the economic development arm of Nova Scotia's co-op and credit union sector, recognizes the value of renewable energy to Nova Scotia communities and will continue to work towards development of this most important resource.

If you are interested in information regarding co-operatively developed, owned, and managed renewable energy, contact me at (902) 896-7293 or bobwill@eastlink.ca.

Written by Bob Williams, Director of Operations



of their electrical energy requirements being met by wind power by the year 2030.

Proponents of wind energy in Nova Scotia