

COMMUNIQUÉ



ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

For the past seven years, the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council has been supporting, promoting, and stimulating development in the co-operative economy in Nova Scotia. Our work has been extensive, important, and clearly focused on delivering results.

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.

This year, our annual meeting was one of our most successful yet, with 185 people in attendance at our various meetings and our workshop. We saw many members and partners present, with the majority staying to celebrate with us at our banquet.

Annual meetings were held for each of our co-operative enterprises, Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, Equity for Nova Scotia Businesses Co-operative Limited, and Investing in Nova Scotia Enterprises Co-operative Limited. Thank you to all those who participated... You helped us to make these meetings very successful.

We offered a co-operative workshop in the morning, which was facilitated by Doug Logan of Impact Performance Group. It was a very successful program, with many members showing a great deal

of interest in the subject 'Building the High Performance Co-operative'. Thank you to Doug for helping us to make this portion of the day possible.

Additionally, our banquet was a great hit! Our guest speaker, Alvin Law, did not disappoint. True to his word, he both delighted and astounded us all; while making us keenly aware that we can always overcome adversity in life. The key is to never give up. As Mr. Law would say, 'there's no such word as can't'!



Alvin Law, our keynote speaker for 2006, displays his 'laws of life'

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CALL FOR INNOVATION PROPOSALS

In September 2003, the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council launched the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council.

This council is being led by a group of senior decision-makers throughout our co-operative and credit union businesses, and these individuals have agreed to promote, stimulate, and manage an innovation

agenda within the co-operative sector over the next decade.

The concept of innovation within the co-operative sector is not new. We have been growing and expanding our product lines and services since our beginnings. We know that our co-operative leaders and members have ideas for innovation that

they would like to pursue if they had the time, expertise, and resources. And, we also know that our ability to innovate, to add value, and to continue to grow in new and exciting ways is very important to our future.

Our goal is to work with local co-operatives in spawning and stimulating

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UP-COMING EVENTS

AUGUST 7
NATAL DAY

AUGUST 31
DEADLINE FOR INNOVATION COUNCIL
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SEPTEMBER 4
LABOUR DAY

OCTOBER 25
ANNUAL WINE &
CHEESE RECEPTION

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innovation within their businesses. It may be an idea that you have for a new product or service that can be commercialized, or developing or enhancing a system or process to do business more efficiently and profitably.

The Innovation Council is now seeking expressions of interest from our co-operative members for innovation ideas that they wish to explore, if they had the technical and financial support to do so.

Please describe and submit a brief outline of the following to the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council no later than August 31, 2006:

- ★ Your idea
- ★ Why do you think this idea is 'innovative'?
- ★ Why have you not pursued this idea before now?
- ★ Who will lead and manage an innovation initiative within your co-operative?
- ★ What strengths do you feel your organization has in moving forward with an innovation idea (technical expertise, strong management, resources, etc)?
- ★ What is the size of the market potential for this idea, from your perspective?
- ★ How much do you think it would cost, financially, to take this idea



Determine your innovation goals and develop a plan... The Innovation Council wants to hear from your co-operative!

from the idea stage, through the development process, and into the marketplace?

Those not selected for support this year will be eligible for review again in subsequent years.

We do hope that your co-operative will give serious consideration to submitting an idea for 'innovation' and we look forward to receiving your submissions!

To send us submissions, or more information on the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council, please contact Dianne Kelderman at (902) 896-7291 or email her at diannefk@tru.eastlink.ca.

'We have been growing and expanding our product lines and services since our beginnings'.

DISTRICT FIVE GETS NEW BOARD MEMBER

Bridget McConnell has lived and worked in Nova Scotia for most of her 40 years. In the last 20 years she has been a baker, caterer, small business manager, boat builder's apprentice, courier, entrepreneur, home renovator, and has earned a Bachelors Degree in Psychology, while managing to raise three children.

For the last 12 years, Bridget has been involved in the co-op world, first as a member, and soon as a highly involved volunteer. In 2001, Bridget became a director on the board of Charles Court Housing Co-operative in Halifax. Her term on Charles Court's board saw her in

many roles; first as the membership chairperson, then the treasurer, and finally the vice-president. In 2002, Bridget joined the Nova Scotia Advisory Council for Co-operative Housing and in 2005 completed the Workshop Leader Training Program provided by the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. Bridget has gone on to lead successful workshops on many topics.

In May 2006, Bridget was elected regional director of Housing Co-operatives in Nova Scotia and in that capacity, attended CHF's AGM in London, Ontario as a member of their board of directors.

At present, Bridget McConnell serves as

JUST US! WAKES UP MEXICO MARKET

Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-operative Limited is expanding into the eco-tourism business in Mexico.

The fair trade coffee company, based in Grand Pre, has applied for funding to conduct a feasibility study on building a small hotel and fair trade eco-tourism business at a rainforest in Oaxaca, Mexico, with a local coffee farmer's co-op as business partners.

The fair trade system provides coffee growers and other producers in developing countries with prices that guarantee they can survive economically.

The hotel, which would perhaps house 50 to 100 guests, would be built near rainforest land owned by the coffee farmer's co-operative, which they are trying to preserve from development.

The eco-tourism business would bring in small groups and provide a real experience of the local culture and environment, while still providing a high level of comfort.

The UCIRI Co-operative has been trading with Just Us! for years and have long discussed teaming up on a project. They hope to have the hotel open in about two years, with small test tours before that.

Congratulations to Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-operative on their continued vision, innovation, and expansions. The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council wishes you the best of luck going forward!

the President of Tri-Sack Housing Co-operative in Lower Sackville, and was elected to the board of directors of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council representing the housing sector in district five at the NSCC AGM in June.

Welcome Bridget!



ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

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With that in mind, I am pleased to share with you some of our achievements, progress, and results of the past year.

26 new co-operative enterprises were incorporated, most of whom received support, assistance, and guidance from our organization.

42 existing co-operative members received growth and development support in areas such as advocacy, business planning, and access to financing. Also, access to direct development support was made available for housing, funeral homes, abattoirs, fisheries, workers, service-based, health, and manufacturing co-operatives.

Our work directly helped to create and maintain over 1,380 jobs this past year.

Our small business financing program, in

'Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail...'

partnership with Credit Union Central, local credit unions, and the Office of Economic Development, was expanded from an \$8 million program to a \$33 million program, with \$13.6 million being disbursed to 196 businesses to date.

Our Short-Term Equity Fund made investments in eight enterprises, resulting in an additional leveraging of \$612,000 in debt financing from our credit unions.

We were the lead advisor on a successful CEDIF offering for Shean Co-operative (over \$600,000 was raised for debt restructuring and renovations), and several other CEDIFs are in the works for the coming months.

And these are only but a few highlights! As Emerson once said, 'do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail'.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, we wish to extend our sincere thanks for your attendance and participation at our 57th annual meeting and banquet. We trust that you enjoyed your time with us.

It was a very successful event and we



(left to right) Dianne Kelderman, Alvin Law, & Marinus Van de Sande

appreciate the support you have shown.

We are very proud of the contributions that the co-operative sector is making to the economy of Nova Scotia, and we commit to continuing to do our part.

Here's to another year of setting the standards for economic development in Nova Scotia! Here's to another year of making a difference!

Submitted by Dianne Kelderman, CEO

CO-OPERATIVE IS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Fresh Air Foods Co-operative Limited is an abattoir located in Middleton, Annapolis County. This co-operative was established to provide a provincially inspected abattoir for local farmers producing organic, free-range, and conventional poultry. The goal of the co-operative is to profitably market locally grown farm products.

The current processing plant was purchased in 2004, and shortly thereafter they began processing operations. At the time, the co-op was known as Mid-Valley



Poultry Co-operative. Later, it was re-named Fresh Air Foods. This processing facility is certified organic by the Maritime Certified Organic Growers (MCOG) and is inspected by the Nova Scotia Department of Agri-

culture.

Fresh Air Foods started out small and is growing step-by-step. Initially, they only processed poultry, but have since expanded and now have a red meat butcher shop that deals with beef, pork, and lamb. The next step will be to expand into a full scale red and white meat abattoir. This goal is expected to be reached by the fall of 2006. In November 2005, another milestone was reached when a full-time manager, Jonathan Gee, was hired.

Also, there is a retail store at 188 Marshal Street in Middleton. This provides consumers with another location to access these quality meats and other Maritime organic foods.

Ambitious plans are in store for this growing co-op. Fresh Air Foods has been successful by being innovative and catering to the region's needs. Their specialty is locally-grown, certified organic, and free-range chicken, pork, and beef. However, they also have a thriving busi-

ness where they provide custom processing, cutting, bagging, and flash freezing to local individuals who want to raise their own food. This valued service is provided to both organic and conventional growers. Making them a 'breath of fresh air' to the local marketplace.

You will find Fresh Air Foods products in many areas ranging from the



Halifax Farmer's Market, to the Yarmouth Natural Foods Market, to the Annapolis Royal Country Club, as well as in many more specialty stores and restaurants. For a full list of products and services, contact Jonathan Gee at (902) 825-4444 or visit www.freshairfoods.ca.

NSCC congratulates Fresh Air Foods on their progress and wishes them every success going forward!

Submitted by Jonathan McClelland, BDO

DISTINGUISHED CO-OPERATOR AWARD WINNERS

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council is proud to announce the recipients of our 2005 Distinguished Co-operator Awards. This year's winners are a talented, committed, and passionate group who have, collectively, contributed over 100 years to the co-operative and credit union sector. Each has made significant contributions by faithfully serving the sector, dedicating their time, talent, and energies to the movement.

MR. TOM WEBB, nominated by Sydney Credit Union Limited

Mr. Webb was a founding board member of Antigonish Community Gas Co-operative, a board member of North East Community Investment Fund, and a vice-president of Consumers Community Co-operative, all the while spending countless hours volunteering with numerous community organizations. Congratulations Tom!

MR. JOSEPH MOMBOURQUETTE, nominated by Caisse Populaire de Clare

Joseph has served as a director of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, vice-president of Meteghan Credit Union, President and vice-president of Caisse Populaire de Clare, as well as director of Senior Row Rental Housing, while contributing to the betterment of his community through generous volunteering with several com-

munity organizations. Congratulations Joseph!

MR. JACK STUEWE (posthumously), nominated by Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia

Jack served as a member, chairman, director, and President of Province House Credit Union, as a director, vice-chair, and chair of Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia, while demonstrating life long passion, support, and commitment to credit unions and his community through countless hours of volunteering. Congratulations Jack!

Our sincere thanks to each of our 2005 Distinguished Co-operator Award recipients for your contribution and commitment to the Nova Scotia Co-operative Sector!



(from left to right) Joe Mombourquette, Marinus Van de Sande, & Tom Webb

MARKETING CO-OPERATIVE CHANGES THEIR FOCUS

In 1999, co-operative activist Eileen MacNeil and her husband, Ken, joined forces with friends, Frank and Jane MacPhail of Sydney, to establish a co-operative to own and operate a gift and souvenir wholesale enterprise. The co-operative supplied many tourist and gift shops throughout Cape Breton Island with attractive souvenir items featuring a Cape Breton motif. The co-operative was aptly named 'Island Pride Marketing Co-operative'.



During the past couple of years, a number of changes have occurred in the business. The MacPhail's left the enterprise to concentrate on other business interests, and Eileen and Ken's daughter, Kelly, and son, Shane, have become co-owners, making this a truly family run co-

operative business. While the enterprise will still market souvenir items to tourist gift shops throughout Cape Breton, the co-operative's new focus is to provide promotional marketing products and services to businesses throughout Nova Scotia and beyond.

Eileen MacNeil reports that they have undertaken a lot of research of Canadian manufacturers and will represent only those who foster progressive management and employee practices and enjoy a positive reputation for quality and competitive pricing in the marketplace. Ms. MacNeil is very pleased with the development of their co-op's new focus and notes that already 90 percent of their business is marketing promotional products and services to businesses, while 10 percent involves marketing souvenir items to gift shops. Some of the co-op's new clients include Acadian Credit Union, Caisse Populaire du Clare Ltee, Atlantic Lottery

Corporation, Nova Scotia Government Employees Union, and Marine Atlantic.

To reflect the new direction of the enterprise, Eileen and family are in the process of changing the enterprise name from Island Pride Marketing Co-operative to Prime Appeal Marketing Co-operative. Their current website address is www.islandpridemarketing.com, where many of the co-operative's promotional products may be viewed and ordered. This will be up-dated as soon as the name change has been approved.

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council Congratulates Eileen MacNeil and her family on the development of their business to date, and wish them success in their co-operative's new direction and focus.

Submitted by Shean Shea, BDO



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