

Co-operative Spotlight

January 2011

An overview of
Saskatchewan co-operative sector
news and activities

Save the Date!

You are invited to attend the **Saskatchewan Community Economic Development and Co-operatives Conference** on Friday, April 8th, 2011 at Mount Royal Collegiate, Saskatoon.

The keynote speaker is John Restakis, Executive Director of BC Co-operative Association. Drawing from his new book *"Humanizing the Economy - Co-operatives in the Age of Capital,"* John will examine the roles of reciprocity and co-operation as essential elements in the rebuilding of community life.

This one-day conference will focus on building engaging, sustainable, enterprising and inclusive communities by offering a number of workshops and panel discussions.

Topics will include:

- Co-ops 101
- Regional Co-operative Development
- Food Security
- Youth Engagement Strategies
- Financial Health for Your Organization

and many more.

Registration opens in February. For more information visit www.sask.coop/events.html or contact Carla at 244-3702 or Carla.Paul@sask.coop.

 Saskatchewan
Co-operative Association



2011 Co-op Camp Promotion Begins

NEW THIS YEAR: ON-LINE REGISTRATION!

Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program is pleased to begin promotions for our 2011 Co-op Camps. We will be offering 8 camps this summer, for youth ages 12 and up.

New for 2011 is on-line registration. Heather Hale, SCYP Program Officer says, "Youth will be able to register and pay for camp on our website. We hope this will make the registration process easier for campers and for SCYP office staff. Camp staff will also be able to register on-line. This will be up and running at the beginning of February."

"This year, we are offering camps at the Junior level for youth aged 12 and 13, the Introductory level for youth who are 14 and 15, Intermediate level for 15 and 16 year olds and Graduate level for youth who have completed Intermediate," explains Hale. "We are also pleased to be offering the Senior Graduate program again this year for those who have completed the Graduate program in recent years."

Promotional materials, including posters and brochures, have been sent out to SCA member organizations, and Saskatchewan co-ops and credit unions. Schools and community organizations will be receiving the information in the next two weeks.

SCYP is also seeking staff for the program. "Co-op Camp is staffed by volunteers from the co-op sector, who are supported by their co-op or credit union to attend, or by alumni of our program. Having a sufficient number of experienced staff is crucial to ensuring the success of our camps," Hale says.

For more information about co-op camp, visit our website at <http://youth.sask.coop>. To register as a staff member, go to http://youth.sask.coop_staff_intro.html. To register a participant, go to http://youth.sask.coop_youth_intro.html.



Co-operative Council of Regina Luncheon

MYRNA BENTLEY: CO-OPERATIVE EXPERIENCE IN MALAWI

Myrna will be sharing information about her recent work experience with Credit Union Directors and staff while working in Malawi. She will also provide insights into the country, the Credit Union system, and the people of Malawi.

The luncheon will be held Thursday, Feb 3, 2011 at 11:45 a.m. at the Best Western Seven Oaks Hotel. The cost is \$20.00. To register please email your name, company and contact information to blauj@sasktel.net. **Registration deadline is Jan 31, 2011.**

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Organic Growers Host Webinars in February

Throughout the month February, Canadian Organic Growers will be hosting a series of webinars discussing organic agriculture issues. Seminar topic will include:

- Making the Transition to Small Scale Organic Produce Farming
- Record Keeping for Organic Growers - Part 1 & 2
- Crop Planning for Organic Vegetable Growers - Part 1 & 2
- Transition to Organic Livestock Production

The workshop on crop planning is being given by two members of la ferme coopérative Tourne-Sol which is a worker co-op. They maintain that their method of vegetable growing allows them to earn a living on 7 acres of rented land. This co-op is one of a growing number of co-ops where the members live and farm together.

Interested in attending any of the above webinars? Don't miss out on this interactive learning opportunity! For more information or to register, please visit the Canadian Organic Growers web site at www.cog.ca.

Free Youth Event

SCA and Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan are hosting a youth engagement night on February 11, 2011. Featuring pizza, co-op youth opportunities and information about Co-op Camp and the Canada World Youth program.

Where: Saskatchewan Community Youth Arts Programming (SCYAP) 253 3rd Ave

When: Feb. 11, 2011, 5pm-7pm

Ages: 14-18

Cost: FREE

Deadline Extended for IMPACT! Youth Conference

IMPACT! Youth Conference for Sustainability Leadership has extended its application deadline to midnight, February 4, 2011.

The 165 participants selected to attend this free, national, bilingual, hands-on conference will:

- Be inspired by Dr. David Suzuki's key-note address
- Collaborate with expert leaders and facilitators to explore and build tangible multi-industry and system sustainability solutions
- Network with a diverse group of young Canadian sustainability leaders
- Develop practical skills to lead sustainability initiatives following the conference

For details or to apply, please visit the IMPACT! website at <http://www.impactyouthsustainability.ca/>.



Aboriginal Co-op Development Program Issues Call for Proposals

The newly-created First Nations, Métis and Inuit Co-operative Development Program has issued its first call for funding proposals.

The program, created by the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) in consultation with national Aboriginal organizations, will fund between five and ten projects per year for the next five years, with an average grant of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Funding for the grants is coming from the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF) and Gay Lea Foods Co-operative. Staff time for the program is funded by the federal government through the National Advisory Services component of the Co-operative Development Initiative (CDI).

Funding will be available for a variety of purposes, including:

- Consultations between First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and existing co-ops on potential projects;
- Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies;
- Training opportunities for potential and existing staff and/or members.

A committee including representatives of Arctic Co-operatives Ltd., CCA, the Assembly of First Nations, the National Association of Friendship Centres, and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami will select the successful applications.

The deadline for applications is March 1, 2011. Go to www.coopscanada.coop/en/coopdev/FNMI_coops for more information about the program and to download the application form and application guide. Potential applicants can also call Mark Goldblatt at 613-238-6711, ext. 205 or e-mail the program at FNMI@coopscanada.coop.

Source: CCA NewsBriefs, December 16, 2010.



Who will you nominate?

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Merit Awards Program honours individuals and organizations that have made an outstanding contribution to co-operatives and credit unions in Saskatchewan.

Nomination forms will be available in the spring, but it is never too early to start planning to nominate a deserving Board member, employee or co-operative organization.

The annual CMAP awards are presented during Co-op Week. 2011 will mark the 32nd year the honour has been awarded to Saskatchewan co-operators and co-operatives.

Coteau Books

As part of Saskatchewan Co-operative Association's ongoing series of co-operative profiles, we interviewed Nik Burton, the Managing Editor at Coteau Books for over 13 years. Prior to that, in his 34-year career in the literary arts, he has been: a program officer at the Saskatchewan Arts Board; the executive director of the Alberta Book Publishers' Trade Association; and the first executive director of the Saskatchewan Writers Guild. Born and raised in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, Nik lives with his family in Regina. This excerpt is taken from the full profile, which is available at www.sask.coop.

Where is your co-operative located?

The Thunder Creek Publishing Co-operative, Inc., which operates under the registered title Coteau Books, has its main office in Regina, Canada, and a satellite, editorial office in Saskatoon, Canada.

When was it established? By whom?

Thunder Creek Co-operative was founded in June 1975, by four Saskatchewan writers, Geoffrey Ursell, Barbara Sapergia, Robert Currie and Gary Hyland. As poets, they were all experiencing difficulty attracting the attention of eastern Canadian publishers to their work, so they decided to start their own press, to serve their work and the work of their colleagues.

What is Coteau Books?

Coteau Books is a literary book publisher, producing books of fiction, poetry, children's literature, regional and literary non-fiction, and an annual cultural calendar/day book. Our authors are all Canadian, and we put a special emphasis on books from western Canada.

What have the greatest successes of the Co-operative been? How do you feel they were achieved?

Coteau Books has published nearly 400 original works by Canadian literary artists, and made these creations available to readers across Canada and beyond. This is a major accomplishment. Coteau-published books have twice won the Governor-General's literary award, once for fiction and once for poetry, and our titles have been finalists in these awards a total of eight times, in the categories of fiction, poetry, drama and children's literature. We haven't researched the issue, but rarely, if ever, has a small "regional" press been able to claim GG nominations in four genres.

What community need does the Co-operative address?

We were founded in order to provide an opportunity for literary artists from this part of the world to have an outlet for their best creative expression, as well as for the Saskatchewan and Canadian publics to have the greatest access possible to the written expression of their culture.

What are some of the challenges Coteau Books faces?

First, there is a massive paradigm shift going on in our society right now, from the world of things being recorded and available on paper, to things being in digital form and available via a variety of electronic media. This process is changing our world every day, in ways we have yet to determine. Through this electronic media, we face continued competition from the culture of the entire world and a need to maintain a presence of our OWN culture and reality in the midst of that tsunami of information/entertainment.

Second, we are facing both public sentiment and a policy environment that seems to believe everything on the internet, or in any digital form, should be available free of charge to significant portions of the population, if not everyone. While advantageous to the consumers, this attitude makes it extremely difficult for the creators of all this art/culture to actually survive to continue doing what they do best.

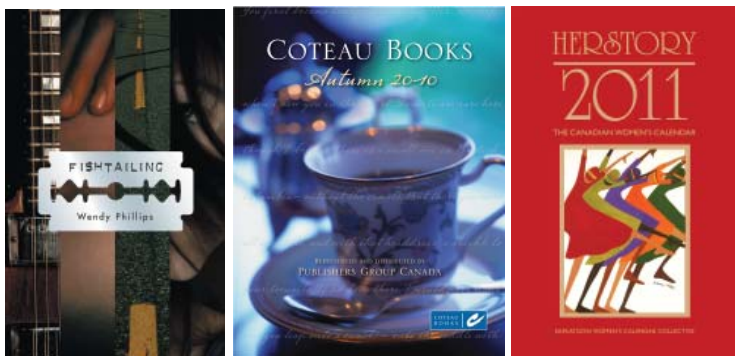
A third issue, specific to Coteau Books, is that, being over 35 years old, with three of the four founding members continuing to serve as members/directors, succession is becoming an increasingly important challenge.

What do you envision for the co-operative in the next 5 years?

In the next five years, if Coteau is to survive, it is going to have to become something much more than a "book publisher". It is going to have to become the "producer of content" where that content will be available in a multiplicity of forms and on a wide range of "devices". A co-operative model, which allows for the organization to function as frugally as possible, will be essential. At the same time as all this "new digital age" stuff is going on, there will be a very important role to play in cultural preservation, in serving the community that values and reflects on where we have been as a society as the best way of determining how to move forward. In other words, there is still a strong baby-boomer demographic that will be interested in more traditional material, available in traditional ways.

How can people find out more about your co-operative?

Coteau Books has a fabulous new web site at www.coteaubooks.com.



Publications of Coteau Books: new teen novel-in-verse, *Fishtailing*, by Vancouver author Wendy Phillips has been named a finalist in the White Pine Young Readers Choice Award in Ontario and been nominated for a Governor General's Award; Fall 2010 Coteau Books catalogue; *HERSTORY 2011*, the longest running Canadian women's day book is produced annually by Coteau Books.



International Year of Co-operatives 2012

CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISES BUILD A BETTER WORLD

LES COOPÉRATIVES, DES ENTREPRISES POUR UN MONDE MEILLEUR

The Canadian Co-operative Association wants to know how you plan to mark the International Year, and has started a blog at <http://yourideideas.wordpress.com> to kick off the 2012 conversation. As time progresses, much of this discussion will be moved to the official Canadian 2012 website (to be launched in the spring of 2011). In the meantime, this will serve as a space for co-operators across Canada to share their ideas and plans for 2012.

How would you like to celebrate the International Year of Co-operatives? What kinds of activities are you or your organization planning to mark this important year? Tell CCA by leaving a comment on the blog. Saskatchewan will also be planning activities. Contact SCA for more information.

PEI'S CEDIF Program Gets Green Light

A new program that will give Prince Edward Island co-ops and other community-based businesses access to investment capital has received unanimous approval from the province's Legislative Assembly.

A Community Economic Development Investment Fund (CEDIF) is a pool of capital raised through the sale of shares and intended to support local projects. Investors receive a tax rebate for contributing to the fund.

The Prince Edward Island Co-operative Council (PEICC) has been one of the strongest proponents of the program.

"We have the legislation passed at last," said Charles Crockett, PEICC's executive director. "Now we must get the regulations in place as soon as possible so interested co-operatives and businesses can begin to develop meaningful initiatives to attract investors to help build their communities."

Source: CCA Newsbriefs, December 16, 2010

Credit Union System Analyzed in New Report

A new report on the state of the credit union system shows that Canada's credit unions remain profitable, while the total number of credit unions has declined significantly over the past 20 years due to mergers, and membership growth since 2000 has been slow.

Credit Union Central of Canada recently published the second in a series of System Briefs analyzing the situation of credit unions in Canada. Highlights of the report include:

- The assets of the credit union system have grown at an average annual rate of 8.8 per cent over the past 10 years, bringing its total assets to \$125.9 billion.
- The number of credit unions in Canada decreased from 1,203 in 1990 to 721 in 2000 to 419 in 2009 as a result of mergers.
- The proportion of system assets controlled by Canada's largest credit unions has increased. The 10 largest credit unions (outside of Quebec) currently control 43 per cent of system assets, compared with 30 per cent in 2000.
- The average number of members per credit union was just over 12,000 in 2009, as compared to 6,300 in 2000.
- Credit unions have just over 5.1 million members, but attracting new members remains a challenge; membership has been increasing over the past 10 years "but at a slow, almost stagnant pace."
- On average, credit union members are older than the Canadian population as a whole, with 45 per cent of CU members over the age of 55.
- Credit unions are highly rated by their members in such areas as customer service.

The System Brief is available at <http://www.cucentral.com/SBNEWS13DEC10>.

1st Sask. Food Summit Visions Sustainable Food Economy

You are invited to help author the future of our sustainable food system at a two-day summit that will be held March 2 and 3, 2011 at TCU Place in Saskatoon. Sessions will discuss barriers/challenges and examine solutions/opportunities in:

- Access to Market/Competition
- Distribution
- Food Policy/Strategy
- Food Safety/Regulatory
- Land Use Planning & Food Production
- First Nations & Potential for Local Food Strategies & Initiatives

For registration forms and details, visit ccde.usask.ca/go/ag.



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