

Laundry Co-op incorporates, receives charitable status

After nearly three years of effort, the Community Laundry Co-op is both an incorporated co-operative and a registered charity. Up until now, our three founding organizations – First United Church, Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC) and McLeod Stewarton United Church (now Centretown United Church) – have had official responsibility for the Co-op. CCHC was responsible for Human Resources and First United, financial management. Now, we are finally taking over the full responsibility ourselves.

The first step was to incorporate as a Co-operative with the province of Ontario. This allows the Co-op to operate as a legal entity and ensures that we follow the appropriate rules.

As an independent organization, we also need Charitable Status from Canada Revenue Agency in order to qualify for some of our grants, and to be able to issue tax receipts.

In addition to obtaining government approvals, we have been developing the policies and procedures that enable us to take on the added responsibility effectively. This includes doing payroll, issuing tax receipts and providing documentation and reports to government. It's a lot of work – but we're ready to take it on.

When we started planning for the Laundry Co-op over 10 years ago, we had no idea it would take this long to obtain our official status. We are incredibly grateful to our founding organizations for their patience. Their support has allowed us to put our members and their needs first and to deal with the formalities when we were able.

Marg Fallis

Member, Community Laundry Co-op Board of Directors

Join us for our 10th Anniversary Celebration

On October 21, 2009 the Community Laundry Co-op (CLC) will host a celebration to commemorate its tenth anniversary. In celebrating the Co-op's positive contribution to the community over the last ten years, the event will include a review of the Co-op's history, remembrances, updates on recent work of the Co-op, recognition of benefactors, and story-telling by Co-op members.

It is an excellent opportunity for Co-op members, funders, founders, and supporters in the community to meet and share their experiences with the Co-op. Refreshments will be served and there will be doorprizes! This promises to be an exciting evening, which offers not only a time to reflect on the Co-op's past achievements, but also the opportunity to look forward into the CLC's continuing role in community building, 'one load at a time'.

The celebration will take place **Wednesday, October 21 at Heartwood House from 5:30 to 7:30 pm**. For more information, contact Laundry Co-op Coordinator Marianela Santamaria at (613) 244-4524.



Community Laundry Co-op Chair of the Board of Directors, Karen Fee, left, presented Marjorie Kort with the Sharon Moon Award at the Co-op's AGM in June. (See story on page 2).

Annual General Meeting a success

On June 3, the Community Laundry Co-op held its Annual General Meeting at Heartwood House in Ottawa. Incoming Chair of the Board of Directors, Karen Fee, welcomed a group of dedicated members, founders, volunteers and supporters to the event.

The Co-op achieved two major milestones in 2008-09:

- **Incorporation of the Co-op**
- **Contract with the Ottawa Mission**

Laundry Co-op Coordinator Marianela Santamaria-Gonzalez delivered her operational report:

2008 SELF-SERVICE LAUNDRY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **86** new members were recruited
- Co-op was at **71** per cent of used capacity; this reflects the **4,598** loads of laundry (self-service)
- **120** volunteers who in total recorded **3,761** volunteer hours. It seems every year more committed volunteers are driven into the Co-op!
- **312** different members came to the Co-op each month to access the Co-op services. As well, vouchers are now being distributed by other community agencies, including Sandy Hill and Somerset West Community Centres.



2008 COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED)* PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- Co-op received an industrial washer and dryer
- CED began its contract with the Ottawa Mission
- As a result, the CED is now doing an average of **173** loads per week
- **17** CED trainees worked hard to provide top of the line laundry service
- Special thanks to the Co-op's community volunteer driver, Pat Shaulis, and Bill's Parcel Delivery.

*Through the Community Laundry Co-op's CED Program, members do laundry contracts on a commercial basis for clients. This means that low-income individuals, many of whom have difficulty finding employment, can participate in a mentoring program and develop life and work skills while contributing to the Co-op and the community.

Sharon Moon Award

This year's Sharon Moon Award was presented to Marjorie Kort, a CLC founder and former Board Member representing the Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC) (*see photo on page 1*). Kort is described as one of the Co-op's most enthusiastic supporters, who took on the task of persuading CCHC to fund the Co-op during its beginnings ten years ago. As a nurse who has held several social service positions, it can be said that wherever there is a community cause in need of support – you will find Marjorie. "It's great to receive recognition from a program I have so much respect for," said Kort. "Sharon Moon was one of my icons – a strong leader in the Centretown community." The award, named in honour of a long-time Co-op supporter and volunteer, is presented annually to a volunteer who has contributed significantly to the Co-op's ongoing success.

Leslie Irvine Award



This year's Leslie Irvine Memorial Award was presented to Jinyu Chi and Kathy Erb (*pictured above, right*). The award is presented annually to active participants of the Co-op who are dedicated members and volunteers. Congratulations!

Co-op holds storytelling workshop

During three sessions in April of this year, CLC members, volunteers and board members participated in storytelling workshops under the leadership of Sherri Yazdani and Marta Singh. Since one of the most rewarding parts of being involved with the Co-op is hearing the stories of our members, we felt that training in storytelling might create a forum whereby the community could learn about our organization and its impact on the lives of ordinary people in a unique and creative way.

Over the three sessions, participants were invited to reflect on their own stories of what brought them to the Co-op and share experiences that demonstrated how CLC made a difference in their lives. Sherri and Marta taught participants various storytelling skills, including use of body language, tone of voice and how to shape experiences into story lines through tell-listen exercises. Participants worked on developing their stories every week through homework assignments and by the end of the workshop, were able to share them together. Guests at the upcoming 10th Anniversary Celebration will be treated to some of these stories.

Co-op members enjoy a day at Fitzroy Harbour

On Thursday, July 23, members from the Co-op travelled to Fitzroy Harbour for the day. Everyone met at the Co-op and headed over on a bus that was rented for the trip. Although the weather was not ideal, members enjoyed themselves and the kids



were even brave enough to get in the water for a swim! One of our members, Tamadur, especially enjoyed the trip and told us, “it was a nice day that we spent in Fitzroy Harbour, we really enjoyed it. We want to go back again and again and again!” Thank you Sadie, thank you Laundry Co-op group, thank you Fitzroy Harbour! “Today I played and swim at the beach. It was so much fun. We ate hotdogs and hamburgers. Mmmm, that was yummy. I made new friends – a lot!”



**By Yahasira
Community Laundry
Co-op member and
volunteer**

CED contracts thriving

While the CLC’s contract with the Ottawa Mission is its largest, the Co-op also additional contracts with the Jewish Community Centre, First United Church, Carlington Community & Health Services, Centretown Community Health Centre and Somerset West Community Health Centre.

The Ottawa Mission contract continues to grow. Nineteen CED trainees (as opposed to eight trainees the previous year) work on the contract five days a week, with a few additional loads for other community organizations throughout the week.



2009 Co-op Wish List: Donations needed

The Co-op is currently in need of the following items. If you have an item you would like to donate, please contact the Co-op Office.

- 3-in-1 printer, or 4-in-1 printer
- Microwave and microwave stand
- Industrial mop and bucket
- Funds for First Aid and CPR Training
- Industrial washers/dryers (2)
- Computer mouse (wireless)
- New floors (industrial tiles)
- Obus forme back support
- Large laminator
- White board (2)
- Bulletin board
- Step-stool (mini-ladder)
- Self-serve washers/dryers (2)
- Laundry baskets
- Ironing board cover

Laundry Co-op partners with VRTUCAR

The Community Laundry Co-op is committed to “keeping it green,” and to forging community partnerships. That’s why the Co-op became a member of VRTUCAR, an Ottawa-based car sharing service, where members have access to a fleet of efficient vehicles and pay only when they drive, by the hour and the kilometer – for as long as they need the car.

Part of the Community Economic Development (now called Laundry Services) program requires loads of laundry to be picked up and delivered to the Co-op’s clients. However, Co-op staff now use the VRTUCAR service to deliver laundry when the volunteer delivery driver is unavailable.

“It works really well for us,” said Co-op Counsellor Sadie Litchfield. “VRTUCAR has been really generous in providing us with reduced rates, because they are appreciative of the work we do.” She explained that VRTUCAR is a kind of co-operative in its own right, since its success is based on the co-operation of the members who use the service.

For more information on VRTUCAR, visit www.vrtucar.com.

Co-op volunteers needed

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED) COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Through the Community Laundry Co-op’s Community Economic Development (CED) program, members do laundry contracts on a commercial basis for clients. This means that low-income individuals, many of whom have difficulty finding employment, can participate in a mentoring program and develop life and work skills while contributing to the Co-op and the community.

Two new members for the CED committee are needed to strengthen the program during this year. Come and see how exciting a social business is!

Intention: To strengthen the program while we undertake the Ottawa Mission contract, and to increase awareness with local organizations and businesses about the innovative CED program of the Community Laundry Co-op

Commitment:

- 4 hours per month including a monthly committee meeting.

GRANTS COMMITTEE CHAIR

This volunteer works to strengthen the Co-ops’ financial situation through chairing the group responsible of the fundraising activities of the CLC. This includes writing grant proposals, seeking new grant opportunities and creating new fundraising opportunities.

Intention:

- To provide the Co-op with a long term stable financial situation

Commitment:

- 4-6 hours per month including a monthly committee meeting.

One of the Committee’s critical success factors is to have participants enjoy themselves while they work, so meetings usually take place over potluck dinners in Committee members’ homes.

We are looking for people who are energetic, positive, outgoing and have good communications skills. Connections to community funding sources and experience in fundraising would be great assets to the committee.

FRENCH-ENGLISH TRANSLATORS (VOLUNTEER POSITION)

A French-English Translator is needed to translate quarterly newsletters from English to French.

Intention:

- To facilitate the approach of the Self-Service Laundry and the Community Economic Development programs to the entire community.
- To increase bilingualism and diversity in the Co-op

Commitment:

- 10 hours every 3 months.

CONTACT US

Community Laundry Co-op

Heartwood House

153 Chapel Street

Ottawa, Ontario

K1N 1H5

Tel: 613-244-4762

Email: info@communitylaundrycoop.ca

Website: www.communitylaundrycoop.ca

