

Co-op volunteers recognized at Annual General Meeting

A group of about 40 board members, funders, Co-op members and volunteers gathered at the 2007 Annual General Meeting (AGM) to mark what has been a banner year for the Centretown Laundry Co-op.

Held May 9 in the Heartwood House gallery, the meeting was an opportunity to review the progress made by the Co-op over the past year, to consider a way forward, and to show appreciation for the valued support of volunteers.

CLC Program Co-ordinator Marianela Santamaria presented the Operational Report, outlining usage and volunteer statistics for the year. She noted that 134 new members were recruited to the Co-op during 2006, up from 118 the previous year. In addition, the Co-op went from a volunteer base of 151 in 2005 to 350 in 2006. "The opportunity to be part of the Dragon Boat Races in June 2006 provided increased volunteer hours as well as increased visibility in the community," she said.

The Community Economic Development (CED) program also enjoyed continued success over the past year, selling 800 loads of laundry. "Ten trainees worked hard to provide top of the line laundry service," she said.

The AGM was an opportunity to recognize the volunteers who have been invaluable to the success of the Co-op since its inception. Recipients of this year's Sharon Moon Award were Sister Mary Ellen Francoeur



Marg Fallis (centre), Chairperson of the Board of Management, presented Sister Huguette Raby (right), and Sister Mary Halder (accepting the award for sister Mary Ellen Francoeur) with the Sharon Moon Award at the Co-op's Annual General Meeting on May 9.

and Sister Huguette Raby. The award, named in honour of a long-time Co-op supporter and volunteer, is presented annually to those volunteers who have displayed exceptional dedication to the Co-op.

Sister Francoeur, a member of the Sisters of Service, began volunteering at the Co-op about eight years ago. The grassroots effort to listen to, reach out to, and welcome those who were being forgotten and neglected by society drew her to the project.

Sister Raby also began volunteering at the Co-op eight years ago. A member of the Sisters of Charity, she learned of the Co-op in 1999 through her work at the Bronson Centre, and became actively involved as an operational volunteer in the areas of member and funding outreach within her community. Altogether, Sister Raby has volunteered about 1,200 hours.

Centretown Laundry Co-op changes its name

Not long after moving from the Bronson Centre to Heartwood House last year, members of the Co-op as well as the Board proposed a name change for CLC.

After careful consideration, the Board voted unanimously in favour of a new name at the June meeting - The Community Laundry Centre. The suggestion came from member Amy Holmes, who also sits on the Board as a representative.

"We wanted to better reflect the area served by our laundry facilities and offer a name that would fit in with our upcoming incorporation in early 2008," said Communications Committee Chairperson Karen Fee. This change will become official in the new year, with the launch of our new Website and incorporation.

CLC volunteers at 2007 Nortel Dragon Boat Race Festival

For many members of the Centretown Laundry Co-op (CLC), volunteering is a way to learn, develop valuable skills and experience, and to have fun with friends all while giving back to the community. An enthusiastic group of Co-op members and volunteers did just that at this year's Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival, held June 23 and 24 at Mooney's Bay Park.

The event brings together over 200 corporate and community teams who paddle to raise funds for local charities – over \$1 million has been raised since 1998. CLC was among the beneficiaries of the proceeds raised by the event.

About 22 Co-op members volunteered their time, assisting with the volunteer tent, pledge tent, charity tent, silent auction, at the docks, as well as with parking and security. "Everyone is very pleased to give back to the Co-op and to the Ottawa community," said Marianela Santamaria, CLC's program coordinator. "It's great exposure for us."

In 2006, the Co-op received The Dragon Boat Race Festival's 'Best Volunteer Award,' and Marianela said about half of those who volunteered last year returned for this year's event.

Member and volunteer Mireille Desmarais was among those who volunteered for the second year in a row, representing CLC in the charity tent. "It's fun talking to people about the Co-op, and what it has to offer," she said. "I really enjoy volunteering. We appreciate every little bit (of funding), and we put it where it's most needed."



Centretown Laundry Co-op member and volunteer Mireille Desmarais, left, joined Program Co-ordinator Marianela Santamaria, centre, and Laundry Co-op Counsellor Gabriela Huncikova in the charity tent at the 2007 Dragon Boat Race Festival, held June 23 and 24 at Mooney's Bay Park. A special warm welcome to the Laundry Co-op's newest staff member, Gabriela. She will be a great addition to the Co-op's committed team of staff and volunteers. Gabriela can be reached at gabrielah@centretownlaundrycoop.ca

Members get tutorial on Heart Smart Cooking

On June 26, a dozen volunteers and members of the community were treated to a cooking workshop featuring heart-healthy recipes. Arran Arbiter, a volunteer with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, offered the two-hour workshop. The recipes featured were easy to prepare, delicious, and filled with heart-healthy nutrients and vitamins. A dish prepared with quinoa (keen-wa) showcased the versatility of this unique seed, which cooks as fast as white rice, yet contains all nine essential amino acids, iron, magnesium, and fiber. Arran pointed out that "heart smart cooking is more about knowledge than it is about expensive ingredients and complicated techniques. Everyone can prepare a healthy meal for their families with the right ingredients and a couple of tips." The workshop was a collaboration between ALSO and The Centretown Laundry Co-op. ALSO has recently built a kitchen in their facility and was looking for partners to help offer programming in the facility. With the great attendance, good food, and fun time, it looks like more cooking workshops will be on the way.

If you would like to try Arran's quinoa yourself, consult the recipe below:

- Boil 2 parts of water for every 1 part of quinoa; for extra flavor, dissolve a stock cube in the pot before adding the quinoa. Simmer, with a lid on, for about 15 minutes, until quinoa has absorbed the water and is soft, like rice. In a sauté pan, lightly sauté, until soft, 1 diced red onion, half a bulb of crushed garlic, and a cup of sliced mushrooms, in a teaspoon oil (canola or olive). Drain a can of lentils, and mix into the sauté pan, and continue to sauté on low-medium heat. Once the quinoa is done, remove from heat, and toss the sautéed vegetables with 2 big handfuls of fresh spinach (if using frozen, add with lentils). Once the spinach is wilted, toss with the quinoa and enjoy!

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