



Winter/hiver 2003



Russell Mawby speaking at CHASEO's Fall Education Day.

## The Changing Landscape of Affordable Housing Development

**T**HE CITY OF OTTAWA'S HOUSING DIRECTOR, Russell Mawby, was the guest speaker at **CHASEO's Fall Education Day** event on November 22nd. Mr. Mawby is optimistic that we will see more and more government support for affordable housing.

"We are, I believe, entering into a renaissance of housing in Canada... when housing was understood to be an essential part of how we built a great Canada" says Mawby. But while he thinks government will grow increasingly interested in housing again in the coming months and years, it's unlikely that we will ever see a return to the housing programs of the high growth years of the 70's and 80's. Those models, largely based on 100% financing and on-going subsidy, are just not viable now that the baby boom is leaving the productive years and heading into retirement.

Policy makers are increasingly coming to grips with the connections between housing and other issues like health, education and employment. "Solutions to social problems are solved with good housing policies" adds Mawby. "So if you want to reduce child poverty, income supplements that just go into higher rents are not going to do the job—you need affordable, stable housing. If you want people to stay in school and participate in the work force, you need affordable places for them to live" he adds.

*/ Con't on page 3*

## Increase in Vacancy Rates Masks Affordable Housing Crisis

The average rental apartment vacancy rate in Ottawa increased by 1 percent to 2.9% according to the Rental Market Survey data released on December 2, 2003 by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. However, the vacancy rate of 2.2 percent for Canada's 28 metropolitan areas is still well below the average rate of 3.2 percent for the last ten years.

Despite the modest increase in vacancy rates, the underlying housing affordability problem for tenants remains the same. In Ontario, about */ Con't on page 4*

## L'augmentation des taux d'inoccupation masque la crise de logement abordable

Selon les résultats de l'Enquête sur les logements locatifs publiée le 2 décembre 2003, le taux d'inoccupation moyen des logements locatifs à Ottawa est monté de 1 % pour atteindre un taux de 2,9 %. Par contre, le taux d'inoccupation dans les 28 régions métropolitaines de recensement du Canada de 2,2 % se situe ainsi beaucoup plus bas que la moyenne de 3,2 % observée au cours des dernières dix années.

*/ Suite à la page 5*

# CO-OP CONTACT

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## CO-OP NEWS

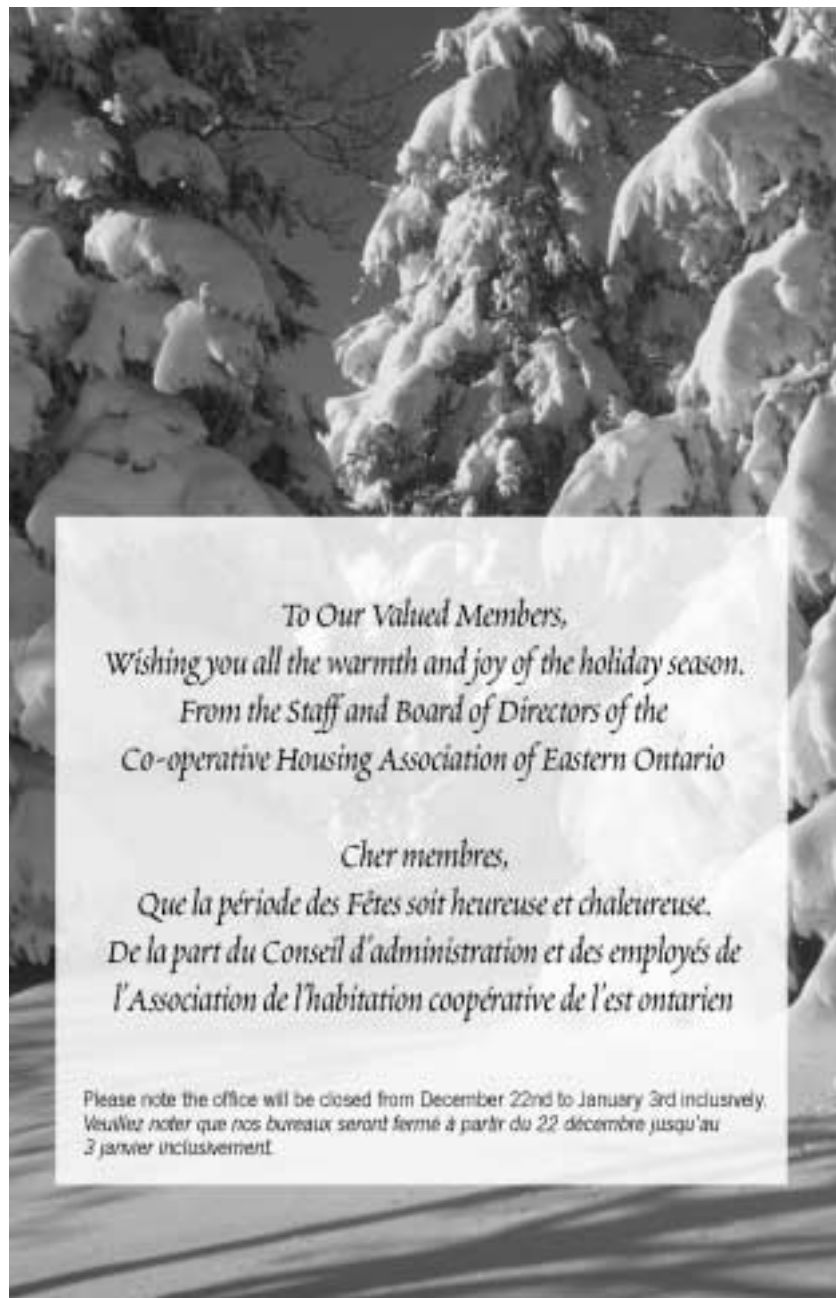
### *News clips about friends & members*

#### **New Appointment on Rooftops Canada Board**

**Amanda Shaughnessy** has recently been appointed to the Board of Directors of Rooftops Canada Foundation. Amanda is the coordinator at Coop Voisins in Ottawa and a veteran CHASEO instructor. She is filling a vacancy created when CHASEO Member Services Manager, **Olga Tasci**, completed two three year terms on the Board.

Rooftops Canada is the international development program of co-operative and social housing organizations in Canada.

**Congratulations Amanda!**



## Introducing the Co-op Staff Association

When I introduce myself, I say I am with ACHEEO... when I use that word, I often hear 'God bless you' in reply. What I mean to say is I belong to the **Association of Co-op Housing Employees of Eastern Ontario**. We are a group of about twenty co-ordinators that get together every six weeks or so to discuss issues that effect us as employees and that affect the Co-ops in which we work.

Each Co-op is different and has a character of its own. As administrators we prioritize issues to reflect the needs of our community. Through ACHEEO we are able

to gain other insights into the approaches that other communities have taken.

In my eight years as a co-ordinator, I have heard of and experienced situations that I could not begin to describe. Most of us work in isolation every day. We are guided by the direction given by our Boards. We are pushed by the needs of the City, the members and corporate obligations (like pay the bills, answer the phone, tell maintenance what is the most important thing to do, and fill out a survey at the same time.) Although ACHEEO can be a social experience, it is more an opportunity

to ask others how they have dealt with difficult situations; a chance to be educated about policies and procedures; an opportunity to be encouraged to continue; an opportunity to share how Boards, members or committees have approached different issues and what is on the horizon for us as employees and for the Co-ops where we work and live. Yes we usually have fun and go for lunch after our meeting, but it is the sharing of this common knowledge, the support of our peers and the opportunity to think about and discuss work issues in an environment free of telephones and administration deadlines that is the prime objective.

I would encourage every Co-op with staff to ask them to attend these meetings. It enables your staff to gain insight into the problems and opportunities that we face on your behalf every day. We return to work feeling empowered and encouraged.

*Curtis Johnston is the co-ordinator at Carpenter Co-op in Ottawa.*



### The Changing Landscape...

*Con't from page 1*

In Russell Mawby's view, the co-operative model and its principles are a good fit in this new approach. "Co-ops have much to offer in promoting and supporting the successful, integrated communities we increasingly say we want" notes Mawby. He sees a model that integrates housing in economic and community development where housing provides more than

just shelter, but integrates and supports the social, physical and economic needs of people living in the community.

Co-ops could and should see themselves as a resource to not just what we know as the housing sector, but to this evolving idea of housing and community building, in the broadest sense.

*For a full transcript of Mr. Mawby's speech, log on to CHASEO's website at [www.chaseo.org](http://www.chaseo.org) in the Latest News section of the main page.*

**"I have seen schools with 200% turnover in classrooms because families keep moving, staying one step ahead of eviction because they can't afford the rent."**

*Russell Mawby, Director  
City of Ottawa Housing Branch*

## Fall Education Day 2003— Best Ever!

*Close to 90 people registered for this year's Fall Education Day at City Hall, the best attendance yet. Co-op members and staff had 9 workshops to choose from and heard from guest speaker, Russell Mawby (Director, City of Ottawa Housing Branch), during lunch. Many thanks to instructors, staff and board members who helped make this a fantastic event!*



### Co-op Housing Information Package Gets a Tune-up

CHASEO handles many enquiries from people who want to live in housing co-ops. Our Co-op Housing Information package is a useful document that answers common questions about co-op housing and provides a listing of co-ops by area to contact. Many co-ops also keep copies of the package on hand to give out to potential applicants. We are currently updating the package and welcome your suggestions for improvement. The updated information package will be distributed to all CHASEO member co-ops in the new year.

### Being a Co-op Cost Cutters Customer Pays!

**Shamrock Co-op** (Waterloo, Ontario) won a trip for two to Costa Rica thanks to a contest offered by **Color Your World**. The draw took place at the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto's annual Awards Night last November. All housing co-ops with purchases with Color Your World's Co-op Cost Cutters program between February and August 2003 were entered in the draw—one chance in 124! The co-op, in turn, will hold a draw



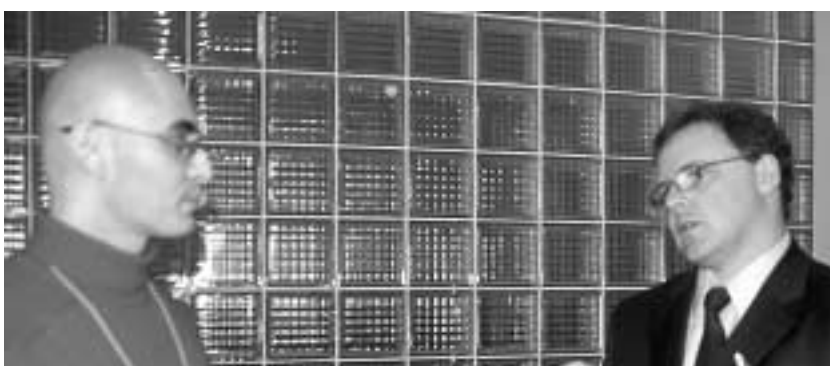
of its own with all their members in good standing.

### Increase in Vacancy...

*Con't from page 1*

270,000 households are already paying more than 50 percent of their income on rent. Statistics Canada says that Ontario lost over 40,000 rental units between 1996 and 2001 due to demolition or conversion to condominium ownership. In Ottawa, CMHC reports a net reduction in rental housing from 60,096 to 60,045.

CMHC Chief Economist **Bob Dugan** confirms the lack of affordable housing noting that, "at the most affordable level, there is still an inadequate supply of units. Therefore, there is a need to add to the affordable rental stock. This fact is reinforced by evidence that a large proportion of low income families have to pay more than 30 per cent of their income for rent." */Con't on page 8*



## Journée d'éducation de l'automne de 2003 : la meilleure à date!

*Environ 90 personnes se sont inscrites à la Journée d'éducation d'automne cette année à l'hôtel de ville, ce qui représente notre meilleur taux de participation à ce jour. Les membres et le personnel des coopératives avaient le choix de 9 ateliers et ont assisté à une présentation du conférencier invité, Russell Mawby (Directeur du Logement de la Ville d'Ottawa) à l'heure du dîner. Nous tenons à remercier les animateurs et animatrices, le personnel et les membres du Conseil qui ont contribué au succès de cet événement formidable!*

## La trousse d'information sur l'habitation coopérative est mise au point

L'AHCEO reçoit de nombreuses demandes de renseignements de personnes qui aimeraient vivre dans une coopérative d'habitation. Notre trousse d'information sur l'habitation coopérative est un document utile qui répond aux questions fréquentes portant sur l'habitation coopérative et qui comprend une liste des coopératives selon leur emplacement. Plusieurs coopératives ont aussi

des exemplaires de cette trousse en main et la fournissent aux candidats et candidates potentiels. Nous sommes actuellement à mettre cette trousse à jour et nous vous encourageons de nous faire parvenir vos suggestions visant l'amélioration de celle-ci. La trousse d'information mise à jour sera distribuée à tous les membres de l'AHCEO au cours de la nouvelle année.

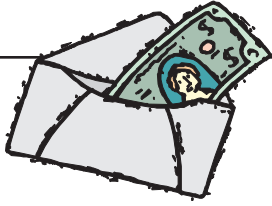


## L'augmentation des

*Suite de la page 1*

Malgré l'augmentation modeste des taux d'inoccupation, le problème sous-jacent du logement abordable qu'envisagent actuellement les locateurs et locatrices demeure le même. En Ontario, il y a environ 270 000 ménages qui consacrent plus de 50 % de leur revenu au loyer. Selon Statistiques Canada, l'Ontario a perdu plus de 40 000 unités de logement locatif entre 1996 et 2001; ces unités ont été soit démolies, soit converties en condominiums. À Ottawa, la SCHL annonce une réduction nette du nombre de logements locatifs de 60 096 à 60 045.

**Bob Dugan**, économiste en chef de la SCHL, a confirmé le manque de logements abordables et a déclaré / Suite à la page 8



## City to Fund 300 New Units

The City of Ottawa's *Action Ottawa* program is about to issue a call for proposals to develop up to 300 units of affordable housing worth 11.3 million in capital contributions. Of these, 15 will be wheelchair accessible. The funding is assembled from various governments, \$3.8 million from the City of Ottawa itself, \$7.5 million federal funds and possible further funding from the Province of Ontario.

In October, CHASEO participated in a City consultation on how *Action Ottawa* could best deliver accessible units. As a result of the consultation, the proposal call will have a target a total number of accessible units rather than a fixed percentage of units in each development. The City also agreed to recognize the increased construction costs of building adapted units.



## Universal Program Review & Housing

All City of Ottawa departments and programs have gone through a theoretical cost-cutting exercise to find ways to reduce \$120 million in its operating costs. Universal Program Review produced a 3000 page document that captures the impact of 5%, 10%, 15%, 20% and 100% budget reductions in terms of services to residents and in other specific ways.

The City's Housing Branch outlined their results in its three service areas: Residential and Support Services, Housing Programs and Affordable Housing Development. Housing Programs oversees down-loaded housing programs including 20 housing co-ops. Since this is a legislated responsibility under the Social Housing Reform Act, the law protects this area. Cuts to Residential and Support Services means more homeless people on the street as it would affect funding to emergency shelters, residential care facilities and rooming houses. With one dollar leveraging 3 dollars from other sources, the Affordable Housing Development area funds the *Action Ottawa* program to build more badly needed affordable housing. Over 12,500 people are waiting for subsidized housing in Ottawa, cuts that reduce the capacity to build more housing means the waiting list grows and families keep waiting for turnover in existing social housing. CHASEO will be urging councillors to keep housing resources intact in order

### Worried about the Universal Program Review?

Attend a Community Meeting with Key Note Speaker **Alex Munter**:

Date: Wed., January 14, 2004

Time: 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Location:

Sandy Hill Community Centre  
250 Somerset Street East  
(near Ottawa U)

For more information and to confirm your attendance please contact Shellie Bird:

Tel: 233-0228

E-mail: [cupe2204@on.aibn.com](mailto:cupe2204@on.aibn.com)

to avoid deepening the housing crisis any further.

As the City's budget process begins, housing co-ops should be concerned with potential cuts to other areas of municipal service such as, for example, water. With water rates already on the rise, co-op members could start to see the costs coming out of their pockets with increases in housing charges. The alternative to cuts is increased property taxes which also puts financial pressure on co-op housing budgets.

## Why 2003 was a Great Year for CHF Canada

This was a great year for the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, the national federation of housing co-ops. It was a year of record growth, with membership rising to over 820 housing co-ops.

And we made progress on our work in creating a new national agency to administer federal co-op housing programs. We have been working with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to finalize the details of the agency's scope of work and authority, and its budget. The governance of the agency—how the board will be structured—was the subject of the latest talks with CMHC.

This has been a long project, both for CHF Canada and our members, who have lobbied so hard for a new agency to administer co-op programs. It has taken us eight years to reach this stage, and it will take longer. We had hoped to be able to have an agreement with the government in place by the end of the year. However, we are making steady progress and hope to be able to announce a contract soon.

You can track progress on the agency on the Members' Network section of our Web site at <http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/agency.asp>. You can read the original proposal and the docu-

ments that outline what the agency will do.

In the new year, we'll be sending out a newsletter about the agency to all federal-program co-ops.

CHF Canada looks forward to another great year in 2004. **Start planning to attend our annual meeting in Quebec City on June 9-12.**

## Une année formidable pour la FHCC

L'année 2003 était une année formidable pour la Fédération de l'habitation coopérative du Canada (FHCC), la fédération nationale des coopératives d'habitation. C'était une année marquée par une croissance record, avec le nombre de membres s'élevant à 820 coopératives d'habitation.

De plus, nous avons réalisé des progrès à l'égard de notre travail visant la création d'une nouvelle agence qui administrera les programmes d'habitations coopératives fédéraux. Nous avons travaillé de près avec la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL) pour mettre au point les détails concernant la portée des travaux, les pouvoirs et le budget

de l'agence. Les derniers pourparlers avec la SCHL portaient sur la gouvernance de l'agence, c.-à-d. la structure du Conseil d'administration.

Il s'agit d'un long projet pour la FHCC ainsi que pour ses membres qui ont exercé beaucoup de pressions pour créer cette agence qui serait chargée d'administrer les programmes des coopératives. Cela nous a pris huit ans pour nous rendre jusqu'ici, et cela nous prendra encore plus longtemps. Nous avons espéré pouvoir conclure une entente avec le gouvernement avant la fin de cette année. Néanmoins, nous réalisons des progrès continus et nous nous attendons à annoncer la conclusion d'un contrat sous peu.

Vous pouvez suivre les progrès à l'égard de l'agence à la section du Réseau des membres sur le site Web de la FHCC à l'adresse : <http://members.chfc.ca/eng/pages/agency.asp>. Vous pouvez ainsi lire la proposition initiale et les documents portant sur les responsabilités éventuelles de l'agence.

Au cours de la nouvelle année, nous distribuerons à toutes les coopératives du programme fédéral un bulletin d'information portant sur l'agence.

La FHCC anticipe une autre année formidable en 2004. **Planifiez dès maintenant d'assister à notre assemblée annuelle qui aura lieu à Québec du 9 au 12 juin prochain.**

## Increase in Vacancy...

*Con't from page 4*

CMHC reports that there was almost no change in average rents for 2003. However, Ottawa remains the third most expensive Canadian city when comparing average rents for two bedroom apartments at \$932 with Toronto (\$1,040) being the highest and Vancouver (\$965) the second highest. These rents are well beyond the reach of low and moderate income households.

CHASEO is calling the new Ontario government to move quickly on its election promise to build 20,000 units of affordable housing over the next four years, in partnership with the federal government.

## L'augmentation des...

*Suite de la page 5*

« qu'au niveau des loyers les plus abordables, l'offre reste encore insuffisante. Plus de logements locatifs abordables sont donc requis. Cette situation est confirmée par le fait que de nombreuses familles à faible revenu doivent payer plus de 30 % de leur revenu en loyer. »

La SCHL annonce que les prix des loyers moyens ont demeuré presque inchangés pour l'année 2003. Par contre, la ville d'Ottawa continue à occuper le troisième rang au classement des villes les plus dispendieuses au Canada lorsqu'on compare les loyers moyens pour un appartement de deux chambres. Toronto est la plus dispendieuse (1 040 \$) et Vancouver occupe le deuxième rang (965 \$). Ces loyers sont inaccessibles pour les ménages à faible et à modeste revenu.

L'AHCEO fait appel au nouveau gouvernement provincial d'agir rapidement et de donner suite à ses promesses électorales visant à créer 20 000 unités de logements abordables au cours des quatre prochaines années, et ce en collaboration avec le gouvernement fédéral.

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