

FECHIMM wishes you the very best for this Christmas holiday !

On behalf of the board members, the administrators and the employees at FECHIMM, I hope that this period filled with joy is only the beginning of a very good year.

*Louis-Philippe Dupperé
Chairman of the Board*

New English section of www.fechimm.coop

The English version of our website www.fechimm.coop is now available. Members of cooperatives and English seekers of housing units can now find the information they need on the services of the Federation and the procedure to follow to get in to the cooperative housing mode.

**Metropolitan Montréal mobilization symposium
The enthusiasm was there**

Participants at the Metropolitan Montréal mobilization symposium, held at the Centre de villégiature Jouvence in Orford in the Eastern Townships, last November 14, 15 and 16, were very happy with their experience and enjoyed the diversified menu proposed to them. The satisfaction rate of the 53 participants from 28 cooperatives exceeds 97 %.

Apart from the workshops, representatives from the different cooperatives particularly appreciated the occasion to get to know each other better, to share their experiences on a variety of subjects and also to consider projects in common.

Count on the success of our coops

Members of cooperatives took advantage of the workshops to share with everybody their exemplary management methods. To complete the workshop given by Daniel Fortin of the Caisse d'économie solidaire on financial management, Lise Thibodeau of the *À tout hasard* housing cooperative presented the original approach developed by her cooperative on the matter.

At the very popular workshop on participation, Raymond Villeneuve of *Coop Chez nous Chez vous* completed the presentation given by Nathalie Genois, teacher at the Quebec Federation (FECHAQC). With intensity, he explained to the delegates how his collective enterprise solved many problems using firmness, giving priority to actions and a transparent approach, without any favoritism.

Interculturalism

The workshop on interculturalism, given by Hubert M. Makwanda, intervention counsellor (diversity) at the Fédération des caisses Desjardins, enabled the participants to deal with a problem inherent to montreal reality, that is the difficulties of different cultural origin communities living together.

Conference with Sylvie Fréchette

The conference given by Sylvie Fréchette, the gold medallist olympic winner in synchronized swimming at the Barcelona Olympic Games, was also one of the important moments of the symposium. Her speech in

favor of determination as a basic ingredient for success touched a lot of delegates, though some couldn't see the relation between her experience as an athlete and the challenges a housing cooperative faces.

Organized by the Confédération québécoise des coopératives d'habitation (CQCH) in collaboration with FECHIMM, the symposium was made possible thanks to the support of the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité (CQCM) and the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ).

The new Liberal government seems favourable to developing community housing

The reelection of Jean Charest's liberal government in Quebec should favour the development of community housing if you believe the commitments his party made when campaigning. Indeed, the liberals promised to relaunch the AccèsLogis program for five years with a minimum of 3000 new housing units per year.

The coalition for community housing, of which the Cooperative Movement is a member, greeted this promise, considering it would allow us to continue developing community housing units everywhere in Quebec where many projects are already started. The coalition is also of the opinion that this commitment will enable us to continue to fight against poverty social infrastructures all the while stimulating the economy.

A commitment for a long term boost was expected not only by the organizations that have projects in hand, but also by the many social and public actors convinced of the need for such a boost. During the last few weeks, more than 1000 organizations, from everywhere in Québec, have supported the demand to relaunch the AccèsLogis program over a 5 year period.

The Movement is campaigning

FECHIMM and the housing cooperative Movement took an active part in the campaign. All the members of the housing cooperatives were made aware of the importance to be heard through the campaign « Act together ! ». Initiated by the Confédération québécoise des coopératives d'habitation, the goal of this campaign was to publicize the demands of the Movement. In Montréal, consciousness-raising meetings with the candidates of the various parties and FECHIMM's management were also arranged.

The Board of directors is busy

We have a new secretary on the Board of directors. Sylvain Belisle from the coopérative d'habitation Le Cagelais took over from Lise Thibodeau of the Coopérative À tout hasard after she resigned.

Mr. Belisle was elected secretary by the members of the Board of directors at their last November 19 meeting. The vacancy left by the departure of Lise Thibodeau will be filled at FECHIMM's next annual general assembly on April 17 and 18, 2009.

FECHIMM is very grateful for Mrs. Thibodeau's contribution and her exactness, her energy and her management expertise were greatly appreciated by her fellow administrators and by the employees.

The chairman of FECHIMM in Africa

At the end of November, the chairman of the Board at FECHIMM, Louis-Philippe Duperré, was delegated by the Confédération québécoise des coopératives d'habitation (CQCH) with Rooftops Canada to be part of a two-week study in Tanzania and in Kenya on their housing cooperatives, their financing and microcredit needs.

His trip allowed him to confirm the very positive impact of the loan made by FECHIMM to the Nakuru cooperative on improving the living conditions of its members. He also noticed the ever crying needs of a great part of the population of the two countries.

When he arrived in Nairobi in Kenya, Louis-Philippe Duperré was stunned by the extreme concentration of population in such a tiny territory and their difficult living conditions. « Around 500 000 people live jammed together in sheet-metal shelters, without any access whatsoever to water, which they must buy in cans, without any electricity and without any of the most basic sanitary services », he tells us.

In Tanzania, the president of FECHIMM made contact with representatives of the UN *Habitat* program and with representatives of *Women Advancement Trust* (WAT), partner of Rooftops Canada in the country, on the same level as the National Co-op Housing Union (NACHU) in Kenya.

Louis-Philippe Duperré came back more convinced than ever of the relevance of the loans made by FECHIMM to NACHU for developing projects in Kenya. He will submit his report to the Board of directors who supports this fairtrade financing practice.

Big increase in participation at the workshops

The number of participants at the workshops offered by FECHIMM jumped 45 % in 2008 compared to the previous year. In all, 845 members took part in a workshop in 2008, compared to 582 in 2007.

The increase is mainly due to having a lot more workshops on the calendar. In 2007, 9 workshops had attracted 71 participants. The 44 workshops given in 2008 attracted a total of 323 participants (it shows that it is more and more popular but does not say if it is because of the contents or because it is more appreciated by the participants, which could interest the reader more).

Among the more popular workshops, you will find the ones on maintenance, member selection, financial management along with the one on the role and responsibilities of the board of directors.

Increasing popularity of the workshop credits

The increase in the participation of the workshops means the workshop credits offered by the Federation to its member coops are used more and more. In 2007, approximately 50 credits worth \$40 each were used. That number has doubled to 100 in 2008.

The efforts displayed during the year to publicize the workshops, essentially by sending monthly information emails, explain their popularity. The calendar for the coming workshops of the first quarter of 2009 is published in page 4 of this edition of the FECHIMM Express.

Watch out for snow accumulation

With winter on its way, the Régie du bâtiment du Québec is asking property owners to be vigilant with important snow accumulations we could receive this season. It recommends to keep an eye on snow accumulation on the roof and to clean the roof if necessary.

In order to do this, keeping in mind the security rules, the Régie recommends to contract out the work to companies that have the appropriate equipment. It also suggests that the landlords have a plan in the case of important snow accumulation at the beginning of the season.

Signes précurseurs

The pamphlet on the subject published by the Régie reminds you that, most of the time, there are precursory signs of possible collapse of the roof. Among other things, cracks appear on the interior walls, inside doors jam or rub, unusual crunches or ceiling deformation.

It is also important to make sure that the air plugs and the evacuation pipes for the gas, fuel or solid fuels appliances are free of snow or ice so that they can function safely. The balconies must be cleared of snow at all times, especially if they are used as emergency exits in case of fire, for example. The same goes for all the exit doors of the buildings and the evacuation issues leading to the street.

For more information, you can consult the Régie du bâtiment website at www.rbq.gouv.qc.ca.

2009 membership fee : the advantages of paying early

Once again this year, cooperatives who pay their membership fee early will be eligible for a special attendance prize at the 2009 AGA. In order to be eligible to win one of two portable computers, cooperatives must pay their membership fee before January 5, 2009. A member of the cooperative must also be present at the time of the drawing, on April 18, 2009, at FECHIMM's annual general assembly.

Education credits

When renewing their membership, member cooperatives of FECHIMM also receive education credits they can use for the various workshops offered by the Federation. The amount of the credits varies according to the number of units in the cooperative.

- \$40 for cooperatives with 15 or less units
- \$80 for cooperatives with 15 to 30 units
- \$120 for cooperatives of 31 units and more

The rebate-coupons will be sent to the cooperative next March and must be used in the course of 2009.

My email for a computer

2 CHANCES TO WIN AN ALL EQUIPPED PORTABLE!

FECHIMM and Insertech Angus are back again proposing a new version of the «My email for a computer » contest. This year, the member-tenants of federated cooperatives have a chance to win an all equipped MSI* portable.

To participate, all you have to do is visit our website at www.fechimm.coop before April 16, 2009 and put your name down on our distribution list. The contest is also available to members already registered on the list. They only have to reconfirm their registration to the draw which will be held at the 2009 AGA on April 19.