



Awards Banquet

MANITOBA COOPERATIVE
AWARDS PROGRAM

2022 Award Recipients

Distinguished Cooperator | Linda Ferguson

Cooperative Merit | Dale Pouteau

Cooperative Achievement | Westman Communications Group

Youth Leadership | Credit Union Young Leaders of Manitoba

2020 Award Recipients

Cooperative Achievement | Fireweed Food Co-op

Cooperative Merit | Gary Epler

Cooperative Merit | Sandra Hardy



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Award Descriptions

DISTINGUISHED COOPERATOR

This award recognizes and honours Manitobans who have made significant contributions to the development and success of the cooperative community through long, varied and meritorious services in volunteer, elected or employed positions within cooperatives and credit unions. This individual will have contributed to a variety of co-ops, including co-ops on the local, regional and national level. Current, former and retired employees, elected officials, volunteers and members of cooperatives and credit unions are eligible for nomination. The nominee must have lived in Manitoba and contributed to cooperatives and credit unions.

COOPERATIVE MERIT

This award recognizes and honours Manitobans who have made significant contributions to the development and success of a cooperative through service in volunteer, elected or employed positions within a single cooperative or credit union. The contributions of this individual to their co-op have enabled their co-op to grow and thrive. Current, former and retired employees, members, elected officials, volunteers and others who have supported the cooperative or credit union are eligible for nomination. The nominee must have lived in Manitoba.

COOPERATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

To recognize and honour cooperative organizations in Manitoba that have implemented projects and ventures that embody the cooperative values and principles and that benefit cooperative members and their communities. The achievement must be apparent within the last 10 years and have already demonstrated recognizable benefits to the members and community. Cooperative and credit unions are eligible for nomination but must be operating in Manitoba.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

The award recognizes significant contribution by young people, aged 30 and under, in cooperative endeavours. This award may also recognize the commitment and achievements of individuals or organizations in mentoring youth and supporting their successes as young cooperative leaders. Individuals, both youth and adults, and organizations are eligible for nomination. The nominee must have lived/operated in Manitoba.

Distinguished Cooperator

LINDA FERGUSON



“Village Canadien has experienced several other Manitoba firsts during Linda’s time on their Board...”

Linda was raised on the family farm in the Riding Mountain area, just north of Neepawa. During the growing up years Linda participated in 4H clubs, both in beef and sewing. That involvement nurtured her commitment to community service.

Fast forward about thirty years and Linda was looking for a place to live where she could keep her two shelties. Village Canadien was that place! That was in April 1999, and she had no idea what a housing co-op was, but that soon changed. She has served on the board of Village Canadien since 2001 serving as treasurer, vice-president, and president.

Linda also served on the board of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHFC) for 6 years, four of those as Treasurer. She urged CHFC to find a way for housing co-ops to refinance their high interest rate, locked-in mortgages. It took a great deal of lobbying,

but it finally happened and Village Canadien was the first co-op in Canada to refinance. Village Canadien has experienced several other Manitoba firsts during Linda’s time on their Board - the first to merge with another housing co-op, the first to purchase the leased land on which their first phase was built, and the first to completely refurbish their building envelope. Although her time on the CHFC board helped to open doors for these accomplishments, it was the hard work of the manager, David Gawthrop, and the whole staff and board of VCCL that made these accomplishments possible.

Linda has served as a director on the Board of the Manitoba Cooperative Association, Columbus Centennial Housing Cooperative, Manitoba Association of Teachers of English, and the Citizens on Patrol Program. Other housing cooperatives call on Linda from time to time to chair a meeting for them or to share her co-op housing experience.

VCCL is now engaged in refurbishing and upgrading another site in their Co-op family and are also planning to build a 55+ apartment building at their River Road/St Mary’s location...a dream that Linda has cherished for many years.

Cooperative Merit

DALE POUTEAU



“Dale believed in continual investment in the facilities and the services offered to ensure the co-op remained relevant in the marketplace.”

Dale Pouteau was raised on the family farm near Mariapolis, Manitoba. He began his co-op career as a Crop Supplies Supervisor at Mariapolis Co-op in 1983 and in 1988, he accepted the General Manager position. In 1992, Dale moved to Saskatoon to become a Retail Advisor with Federated Co-operatives Ltd. In 1994, he moved back to Manitoba as the General Manager of St. Leon Co-op. In 2000, Dale worked closely with the boards of Mariapolis Co-op and St Leon Co-op as they initiated the amalgamation of the two retails to form Pembina Co-op. In the following years, Minto Co-op and Homewood Co-op also joined Pembina Co-op.

Pembina Co-op served a large portion of Southern Manitoba through its retail centres in thirteen communities, with the majority of communities having a population less than 1,000 people. Dale believed in continual investment in the facilities and the services offered to ensure the co-op remained relevant in the marketplace. This commitment also pertained to the employee development as front line staff were trained and encouraged to take on management positions within the retail. The combination of these strategies, along with support from the board and a strong commitment from the employees enabled Pembina Co-op to grow from \$25 million in sales to over \$150 million over that past 20 years.

During his career, Dale also contributed towards the CRS through his participation on the Executive Management Committee, the Central Training Committee and the Fertilizer Development Committee at FCL.

Dale would like to thank his wife Wendy of 30 years and their four children for their continued support throughout his career with the Co-operative Retailing System. He is very appreciative of the support and guidance he received from the numerous Co-op directors he has worked with throughout his career along with the dedication of the people that formed the Co-op team.

Cooperative Achievement

WESTMAN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP



WESTMAN

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

“...WCG makes good on its pledge to tirelessly contribute to the well-being of each community it serves.”

As a local cooperative, building stronger Manitoba communities through financial aid, human resources, and advanced communications services is essential to who Westman Communications Group (WCG) is. Founded in 1977, WCG has evolved into a leading-edge telecommunications company proudly connecting Manitobans to Internet, TV, and Phone services.

WCG is deeply committed to its members and the communities it serves. As a testament to this, WCG has instituted notable programs to bring value for them beyond providing affordable quality telecommunications services.

The *#ConnectingWestman* Tour returned after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19 related restrictions. The Tour continues to positively impact the communities it visits and has been warmly received by each community in this year's four stops. Charity barbecues hosted in Minnedosa, Dauphin, Neepawa, and Roblin raised funds through donations from the community, with WCG making their donation by matching the amount raised.

The Westman Award of Excellence Program has been supporting deserving students intending to pursue technology-related post-secondary programs in Manitoba since 2001. This program has bestowed financial support to 38 students in 2022 and has granted over \$450,000 in scholarships to students since its inception.

With these programs, along with participation and sponsorships in countless events and initiatives across Westman, WCG makes good on its pledge to tirelessly contribute to the well-being of each community it serves.



Youth Leadership

CREDIT UNION YOUNG LEADERS OF MANITOBA (CUYLM)



*“CUYLM empowers up
and coming leaders to
share ideas, connect
with peers and senior
leaders, and collaborate
on activities...”*

The Credit Union Young Leaders of Manitoba (CUYLM) executive committee plans initiatives, events and communications that provides a free network of young credit union professionals from across the province who are passionate about providing cooperative, socially-responsible financial services to our communities.

CUYLM empowers up and coming leaders to share ideas, connect with peers and senior leaders, and collaborate on activities that promote and enhance our cooperative credit union system. CUYLM represents nearly all of Manitoba's credit unions and their young leaders work in a large variety of roles in the system. What they all have in common is an eagerness to learn and try new things and a passion for personal and professional growth. They are the next generation of leaders and innovators who work together to shape the future of the credit union system.

CUYLM is known for their leadership conference which is held every second year in Manitoba. The executive committee is also very proud of the recent launch of their Mentorship Program and Learning Commons hosted on their new website.

The Manitoba Cooperative Association

2020 COOPERATIVE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic we were unable to gather and celebrate our award recipients at our usual Annual Cooperative Awards Banquet in 2020. We invite you to celebrate these award recipients and recognize their achievements along with our 2022 cohort during this year's Co-op Awards Banquet.

2020 Cooperative Achievement

FIREWEED FOOD CO-OP



Fireweed
FOOD CO-OP

“Fireweed is dedicated to growing a stable market for sustainably produced food...”

Fireweed Food Co-op (formerly Farm Fresh Food Hub) is a nonprofit co-op for producers and buyers of Manitoba-grown, sustainably produced food. Fireweed was founded under the belief that small-scale, mixed farming is the most resource-efficient kind of agriculture.

As members are both food consumers and producers, Fireweed is dedicated to growing a stable market for sustainably produced food in the region. They envision a food system that is collaborative. One that prioritizes not only regenerative ecological practices but fair labour practices. One that is dedicated to providing good food for all.

In addition to running the South Osborne Farmers' Market, in 2020 they reached a long-term goal by launching the Food Hub initiative. They are finally able to provide a warehouse and distribution centre, connecting small producers with larger local buyers.

Through all these activities they do their best to be mindful of their economic and social responsibilities. This is an ongoing learning process for the board, staff and members. Fireweed Food Co-op takes the cooperative principles as a guide and they try to do their best in a constantly changing world.

2020 Cooperative Merit

GARY EPLER



“...[Gary] helped grow the credit union membership and footprint from \$40 million to \$450 million.”

Gary Epler was raised and farmed in the Brunkild area of the RM of Macdonald. He has been active in local recreation, Church, and several farm groups. He has been a strong cooperative supporter. Gary started farming in 1968 and became a member of the Brunkild Co-op Elevator Association under the marketing arm of Manitoba Pool Elevators until the Association dissolved. The elevator and property were sold and all the profits and MPE Equity was returned to its members in 1992. During those 24 years Gary served on the Board and held positions as Vice President, President and as a MPE Delegate.

After becoming a member of the Rosenort Credit Union in the early 1980s, Gary started on his 28 years of serving the Board in various positions. First on the Credit Committee, Vice Chairman and Chairman and also serving as a delegate for Manitoba Central, District 8. Being a part of a strong dedicated Board of Directors, management and staff helping grow the credit union membership and footprint from \$40 million to \$450 million with the main branch in Rosenort with two other in Altona and the other in Winkler.

Gary would like to thank his wife Rosemary of 51 years and their three children and families for allowing him the time to serve on these 2 co-ops.

2020 Cooperative Merit

SANDRA HARDY



“Sandra was instrumental in the fundraising campaign that raised over \$200K to offset the share prices for very-low-income members.”

Old Grace Housing Co-operative is a \$16 million, 64-unit housing co-op, located on two sites in Winnipeg’s Wolseley community. Completed in 2018, it has been designated LEED® Silver.

Sandra Hardy’s involvement with the co-op dates back to 2012, and the initial discussions to establish a co-op on the former site of the Grace Hospital. She participated in the discussion through which OGHC members developed a vision of a multi-generational, mixed income, environmentally conscious community that would also serve the housing needs of persons with disabilities and newcomer families, and blend well with the surrounding community.

Sandra’s initial involvement was as a member of the Finance Committee and initial Steering Committee. As the co-op’s vision solidified, she became involved with the project Steering Committee. This led to her chairing the working groups developing proposals that obtained provincial approval for OGHC to develop the site as a not-for-profit housing cooperative.

She then led the Co-op’s team participation in the Integrated Design Process and chaired the Building Committee for both Phases I and II. Sandra was instrumental in the fundraising campaign that raised over \$200,000 to offset the share prices for very-low-income members. She served on the Board of Directors for six years and as President for five.



Past Recipients

DISTINGUISHED COOPERATORS

2019

Mary Nirlungayuk

2018

Dale Ward

2016

Norval Lee

2015

Richard Lemoing

2014

Allan Morin

Ken Jenner

2012

Barry Gosnell

2011

Wayne McLeod

2010

John Sandborn

2009

Allen Merritt

Mel Willis

2007

Stan Scarr

2006

Glen Shellborn

2005

Glen Tully

Manfred Homann

2004

Walter Arndt

David Hughes

Donald Joseph

Pavelick

Maurice Therrien

Kai Winther

2003

Harold Foster

Gordon Maxwell

Sinclair

Wasył Topolnicki

John Mathias Lee

2002

Jacob Redekop

Jocelyn Peifer

2001

Edwin Meyer

Ken Edie

Bill Halpenny

2000

Barry Durston

Wilfred Harder

Charles Swanson

1999

Lorne Robson

Charles Williams

1998

Edward Braun

Paul Hacault

1997

Harvey Fulton

Roy Kilburn

Erdman (Ed) Klassen

D. Mac MacNabb

1996

George Klassen

Jack Martin

1995

Theodore Breuer

Wes Hosler

Glenora Slimmon

William Strath

1994

David Day

Maurice Gauthier

Hugh McMullan

Harry Peters

Lorne Strandberg

1993

Les Brown

Lloyd Steen

Henry Wiebe

1992

Rudy Comeault

Andre Goussaert

Raynald Labossiere

Raymond Siemens

1991

Andrij Kachor

Ronald King

Denis Maynard

1990

Monsignor Belanger

James Deveson

Alexander Runciman

Oli Sigurdson

Donald Slimmon

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

2018 The Wasagaming Foundation

2018 La Coop Vélo-Cité

2017 Stingers Credit Union

2012 Natural Cycle Courier

2010 Evan Bowness

2008 War on Music Worker Co-op

2006 Casera Credit Union

COOPERATIVE MERIT

2020

Gary Epler
Sandra Hardy

2019

Ernest Fraser

2018

Menno Plett

2016

Harvey Douglas
Robert Smith

2015

Ivan Sabesky

2013

Peter Vandermeulen

2012

Chris Dzisiak

2011

Marcel Daeninck

2010

David Kerr
Greg More

2009

Sandy Francis
Harold Stitt

2008

Judy Bewer
Rodney Crampton
Eric B. Irwin
Remi Tack

2007

Laurent Hacault
Marvin King
George Rideout
Emmanuel
VanDeVelde

2006

Calvin Shermerhorn

2004

John Castle
Elaine Clarke
Wayne Hacking
Eleanor Weedmark

2003

Peter Russell Jeffrey
Norma Jean McEwen
Kenneth MacBeth
Rogers
Nicholas Harry
Huminicki
Gary Cooper
Arlene Perry

COOPERATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

2020 Fireweed Food Co-op

2017 DSI Tandem Co-op Resources Ltd.

2016 Western Manitoba Seniors
Non-Profit Housing Inc.

2015 Pembina Consumers Co-op 2000 Limited

2013 Urban Eatin' Gardeners Worker Coop

2012 Red River Co-operative Limited

2011 Assiniboine Credit Union Limited

2006 Nor'West Co-op Community Health Centre

2005 Winnipeg Beach Art + Culture Co-op

2004 Assiniboine Credit Union Limited

2004 Birchwood Funeral Chapel

2003 Transcona Credit Union Limited

2001 Brandon Seniors for Seniors Co-op Inc.

1998 Winkler Consumers Cooperative Limited

INNOVATIVE COOPERATIVE

1997 Astra Credit Union Ltd.



THANK YOU TO THIS EVENING'S SPONSORS



Pembina



CREDIT UNION CENTRAL *of* MANITOBA