



# CDSS Communiqué

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## President's Report

Linda Bell

It is not without a dash of trepidation I take on the role of President of CDSS. Our outgoing president, Kathie Cram leaves some pretty big shoes to fill. Luckily, she is not going too far and remains on the board as past president. Kathie has been a mentor and friend for many years, and indeed was instrumental in showing me there were other options in social work other than micro-level practice. Kathie was my very first instructor when I started the social work program and it was from her that I first came to understand the concept of community development.

I decided to join CDSS three years ago in order to learn more about my chosen profession and meet other people who are doing the same kind of work I am. I am honoured to be given the opportunity to deepen my CD and leadership skills as President. Our board members come to the table with a depth and variety of knowledge and experience that I know I will learn a lot from.

This year we are challenged with increasing our membership and renewing our efforts to provide a regular newsletter and ongoing professional development opportunities.

Additionally we wish to send a small contingent of members to the CDS international conference in St. Louis, so the challenge of fundraising is before us. We would like to take our CD workshop 'on the road' to help achieve both of these goals. This year we also will also be getting more focused on the planning for Saskatoon hosting the 2008 CDS international conference.

There is a lot of work ahead of us, but I believe we are up to the task! We have new board members and there is definitely a buzz in the air! Can you hear it?

## Engaging Communities Conference

By: Kathie Cram, Past President

In November 2005 CDSS hosted our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on "Engaging Communities". Our aim was to provide an opportunity for practitioners to deepen their understanding of how we can meaningfully work with communities, across differences to both build on strengths and solve social problems. For us "engaging communities" is rooted in the first

Principle of Community Development: "Promote active and representative participation toward enabling all community members to meaningfully influence the decisions that affect their lives".

We worked with Michael Bopp a well known community developer from Alberta who has a lengthy history of

working with Aboriginal people from Canada and other parts of the world. Michael helped us try to develop a good process, so that participants could learn from each other, as well as from the keynote and the panel members.

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### Annual Conference

#### participant quotes:

"Solutions to community problems are in the power of the knowledge in their stories".

"Listen and guide. People have the tools and abilities to solve their own problems."

"Don't expect others to follow until you role model the path".

## Engaging Communities Conference Cont'd

Michael's keynote address was engaging and captivated people's attention as he told his stories about working with Aboriginal communities. He talked about the importance of engaging the spirit of the people, rooting our practice in conscious principles and the fundamental value of community self determination.



The panel members from the not-for-profit sector, government and Aboriginal communities talked about their experiences with engaging communities, including the successes and challenges.

Many of the CDSS Board members and our conference committee had been to

conferences that claimed to be "engaging", but in fact the process and structure was confining. This year we really tried hard to make sure that people had time to reflect about the issues, talk to one another and build their networks. To facilitate this we:

Asked moderators to engage the panelists in a deeper reflection about the issues they faced.

Opened up questions for the plenary floor.

Structured round table conversations around some of the issues that emerged in the panel presentations.

We attracted a pretty good crowd of 110 people from all parts of the province. An analysis of the conference evaluations shows that most people were pleased with the conference. Ratings were high for both Michael's keynote and the panel presentations. The take home messages warm my little heart:

*"Solutions to community problems are in the power of the knowledge in their stories".*

*"Listen and guide. People have the tools and abilities to solve their own problems."*

*"Don't expect others to follow until you role model the path".*

## Social Justice Coalition Revival in Davidson

On Saturday November 26 2005 there was a gathering in Davidson to revive the Social Justice Coalition (SJC). This is a provincial group that was very active in the 1980's when the Devine government cut many programs that were designed to assist those living in poverty, women, workers, etc.

Last June a small group of people met in Regina and decided to see if there was any interested in resurrecting the SJC. There was interest and the day in Davidson was planned.

Transportation to the day long meeting in Davidson was provided by the Sask. Federation of Labour who hired two STC busses (one from Regina and one from Saskatoon).

The event began with a presentation on the History of the Coalition by Barb Byers (Canadian Labour Congress) who gave an overview of the political climate at the time, and some of the creative actions taken by the Coalition to raise awareness, such as 'selling' the premiers

house and wanted ads for Conservative MLA's.

The group then engaged in some discussion about current issues and how a provincial coalition could help. There was consensus that a Social Justice Coalition that was provincial in scope was again needed to speak out about social justice issues in our province. Many people expressed a realization that simply having an NDP government is no guarantee of a socially just society. It is still incumbent upon us to speak out against injustice.

During lunch we were educated and entertained by a group called *The Reel Anti-Supplements*. Music and skits were used to highlight issues those with mental illness face in our province.

After lunch a Steering Committee was struck who will look into structure and some actions based on the input from the group.



The hope for this Coalition is that it will lobby, educate and organize around issues such as (but not limited to) welfare rights and increased benefits, the minimum wage, a clean environment, racism, part-time workers and equality.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Social Justice Coalition, please contact Bonnie Morton or Peter Gilmore at the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry (306)-352-6386, or Don Anderson at the Sask. Federation of Labour (306) 924-8572.

## Striking a Chord, Building Relationships and Making a Difference

By: Kathie Cram, Community Development Consultant Public Health Services, Saskatoon Health Region

Sometime in the 1980's a group of single parent women living on social assistance in British Columbia got together to see what they could do to help people understand their circumstances and build support for progressive public policy change. They decided to author a board game that would simulate the experiences of single parent women living in poverty. The "Poverty Game" was brought to Saskatchewan and adjustments were made to reflect the realities in our province. It was housed with the Inner City Ministry and the College of Nursing, and played several times during the last three decades.

Sometime in 2004 a couple of visionary leaders in Public Health Services (PHS) asked members of the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition (SAPC) if they could work together to revitalize the 'game' and use it as a professional development tool for their staff. A small group, comprised of PHS staff and two members of SAPC, support from social work practicum students and with some seed money from PHS started to work together to this end. Some PHS staff played the "game", and were so touched by the experience that they recom-

mended it be made available to all their staff and to other professionals including people working the Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE). A formal launch of the "game" as made at a fall gathering of PHS staff and people are lining up to participate. Almost simultaneously DCRE approached SAPC to introduce the "game" to their staff. A small group of people played the "game" and have recommended that all their staff have the opportunity to participate in it.

During the course of organizing, members of PHS staff and SAPC have developed strong, respectful relationships. These relationships are at the core of the work and allow people to bring their gifts, contacts and resources to the work. Pretty soon extra resources were added from PHS and the Community University Institute for Social Research (CUISR). Community members suggested that the name "game" be removed because they thought it was not appropriate to call the experience a "game"; it is about the hardship of people's lives and about building alliances for change; so it is now called the Poverty Awareness Workshop. The group has also decided that the workshop must be facilitated

by people who are living in poverty.

When this project started it began with a small group of people who embraced the idea that we all have our wisdom to bring to our work. Now, requests are starting to pour in, and the group is having to set priorities and do some long term planning for sustainability.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Kathie Cram at 655-5383.

*During the course of organizing, members of PHS staff and SAPC have developed strong, respectful relationships. These relationships are at the core of the work and allow people to bring their gifts, contacts and resources to the work*

## Thank you , Kathie!

All of us at CDSS would like to extend a big Thank-You to Kathie Cram who steps down this year as President of CDSS. Kathie has been President of CDSS since 2003 and brought with her to the position a passion for Community Development, an immense breadth of understanding of the issues and a delightfully wacky sense of humour.

Kathie's dedication and leadership

has brought a renewed energy to CDSS and has challenged us to 'dream big'. One result of Kathie's vision for CDSS is a successful bid for CDSS to host the CDS International conference in 2008!

Thankfully, the Board has not lost Kathie as she stays on for another term as Past President...good thing too as we are not nearly ready to say goodbye!



CDSS Past President, Kathie Cram

# Recreating The World: A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities

By Michael Bopp

Reviewed by Linda Bell

*In community development processes, the most powerful strategies for change always involved positive role modeling and the creation of living examples of the solutions we are proposing. That is way, as development practitioners, we must strive to be living examples of the changes we wish to see in the world.*

When Susan Sebo showed up at a CDSS board meeting a few months ago with the book *Recreating the World, A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities* by Michael and Judie Bopp, I was immediately intrigued.

Seeing a gleam in my eye, Susan very kindly lent me the book to explore more deeply. On first glance this book appeared to be very engaging and readable, and as I read through it, I grew more and more impressed with the breadth and depth of the work and have now acquired a copy for myself.

It has turned out to be a good investment, as I have been looking for resources to help me better understand my role as a community developer.

This book is a great starting point for me, providing a grounding in principles and theories and an extensive supply of tools for everyday practice.

Many different models and strategies are described to provide an understanding of community development.

Michael and Judie's community development work is strongly grounded in principles and values. In Part 3 of the book, the authors lay out sixteen principles to guide action. Throughout the book, case studies are presented to give examples of what the authors are talking about and these stories bring the theories alive.

For example, to deepen the reader's understanding of the Principle of Learning, a story is told of one of the author's first experiences in the field working with a community in the Yukon. After many visits to a local elder and telling her ideas for improving the community, one day the elder says "Why don't you just shut up and listen. You talk too much. You should listen".

This experience was instrumental in creating the authors' awareness that learning is fundamental to what community development workers must be doing.

Each chapter has a corresponding section of resources in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of

the book that are extensive and full of stories, games, activities and tools that will enrich any community developer's practice. Some examples of these tools are:

### 1) Rules for Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback

-a series of guidelines for both giving and receiving feedback that highlights bonds of unity between both parties and is grounded in respect.

### 2) Core Group Development

-including: What is a core group?, Four Critical Functions of Core Groups, Core Group Life, The Four Stages of Core Group Development

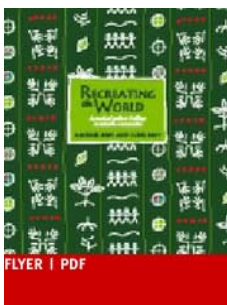
### 3) Getting Community Programs

Funded: Notes and Guiding Questions for Personal Development

-including: advice on program design and development, building bridges between community and funders, guiding questions, and budget notes.

I appreciated the opportunity to learn from the wisdom of this community developer who has decades of work experience with indigenous communities in the Americas, Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the former Soviet Union.

This book would be a valuable addition to the library of anyone who works with communities.



Four Worlds Press  
Calgary Alberta  
Canada  
2001  
ISBN - 0-9688233-0-0

In Saskatoon Michael's book "Recreating the World" can be acquired at:

Turning the Tide Bookstore  
525 11th Street East  
Saskatoon, SK - Canada - S7N 0G1  
955-3070

# Community Development .....Getting Started

Are you interested in Community Development? Would you like to gain an understanding of this holistic and dynamic way of working with communities?

The **Community Development Society of Saskatchewan** is offering one-day workshops in **Community Development Basics**.

Topics include:

- Definition – an understanding of what Community Development is.
- Getting at the root causes – upstream vs. downstream approaches
- Ways of Doing Community Development
- Traditional vs. Community Development Programming

We are offering these workshops to groups in communities all across Saskatchewan. For more information contact Kathie Cram at: 655-5383 or Linda Bell at 956-6147.

Visit our Website at:

[www.cdssociety.sk.ca](http://www.cdssociety.sk.ca)

Are you looking  
for a  
Professional  
Development  
Opportunity?



Workshop Participants



## CDSS Board of Directors 2005/2006

At our Annual General Meeting the following Board of Directors was elected:

**Linda Bell**—President

**Kathie Cram**—Past President

**Susan Sebo**—President-Elect

**Charmaine Tremblay**—Secretary

**Joanne Hritzuk**—Treasurer

**Reg Beardsworth**—Member at Large

**Peter Krebs**—Member at Large (webmaster)

**Vanessa Charles**—Member at Large

**Lisa Workman**—Member at Large.

-please see our website for contact information

The following people have agreed to work with CDSS as Board Associates:

Kristen Squires

Amy Stensrud

Carolyn Rogers

Cheryl Loadman

Edmee Korsberg

Harold Baker (CDSS Archivist)

## Community Development Society of Saskatchewan

Community Development Society of Saskatchewan Inc.  
P.O. Box 722 Saskatoon SK S7K 3L7

We're on the Web!  
[www.cdssociety.sk.ca](http://www.cdssociety.sk.ca)

CDSS is a volunteer-based organization located in Saskatchewan with a provincial Board of Directors elected by its membership at its annual general meeting held in November. Professionals and volunteers with an interest in community development principles and processes is invited to become members of CDSS. CDSS is a self supporting organization which is largely financed through membership dues. Community developers are employed in a wide variety of settings including Health Districts, Social Services, Community Agencies, Education, Aboriginal, Agriculture, Financial Institutions from both urban and rural settings within Saskatchewan



CDSS was founded as a chapter of the International Community Development Society (CDS) following the 1991 Annual International Conference of CDS held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

## Upcoming Community Events

### CUISR Brown Bag Luncheons

**Jan 19:** CUISR - "The Impact of KidsFirst Saskatoon Home Visiting Program in Families' Lives" by Nadia Stadnyck, Tammy J. Butler and Nazeem Muhajarine.  
Location: Mamawopiwin Room (2nd floor). Community Service Village (50625th St E)

**Feb 16:** "Eco-Trust Feasibility for Sask. Eco Network" by Jennifer Fillingham  
Location: Mamawopiwin Room (2nd floor). Community Service Village (506 25th St E)

**Mar 16:** "Perceptions, Benefits and Challenges Relating to Children's Breakfast Program in Saskatoon Elementary School" by Carol Henry  
Location: Mamawopiwin Room (2nd floor). Community Service Village (50625th St E)

For more information:  
Kama Soles, Communications Coordinator  
Ph: (306) 665-3176  
e-mail: [kama.soles@usask.ca](mailto:kama.soles@usask.ca)

2006 National Conference on CED and the Social Economy  
Rooting Development in Community  
March 15-18, 2006, Vancouver, BC

The 2006 national conference is being organized by the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), The British Columbia Community Economic Development Network (BCCEDNet), the Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program (CEDTAP) and hosted by Fast Track to Employment.

The event will offer keynote speakers, site visits, workshops, plenary sessions, networking and social events to the 600 participants that are expected.

<http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca>

"The Race/Culture Divide in Education, Law and the Helping Professions"  
5th Annual Conference of Researchers and Academics of Colour for Equality (R.A.C.E.), in conjunction with the Centre for Social Justice and Anti-Oppressive Education  
May 4-6, 2006  
University of Regina, Regina, SK