

# “Coop Du Grand-Bois” in Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton creating bonds of solidarity



## THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

With approximately 713 permanent residents, the community of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton is a small village located in a most beautiful and picturesque area of the Eastern Townships. Over the past ten years, thanks to the creation of the “Coop du Grand-Bois;” a Municipal and community initiative, the Municipality has evolved; rich in people power, services and involvement. The purchasing and creation of the Coop du Grand-Bois created a place where the citizens of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton gather to meet, socialize and grow. Through municipal initiated strategic planning and a democratic approach, citizens contributed to the process of the vision and priorities for the community that included mak-

ing the Coop project a reality.

In December of 2009, the Coop was incorporated as a solidarity cooperative and the building at 12 Principale, Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton was purchased. In a common effort of hard work, positivity and sheer joy, the place was cleaned, furnished and made functional. In the fall of 2011, the Coop du Grand-Bois opened its doors. With more than 200 members, and fifty members and directors who volunteer on a regular basis, the support of local businesses and projects, the success and effects of the Coop has transformed the community and charmed all who visit.

La Coop du Grand-Bois is a community hub for the people of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton. Offering a family kitchen with healthy meals and a village atmosphere, a shop with fine cheeses, fresh bread, croissants, gourmet products, artisanal care products, maple products, artistic works and, the Coop also houses the post office, offers free high speed internet, a photocopy service, a mini library, and those who wish can have their medication delivered to the Coop from Eastman for pick up.

In addition to all the services offered, it is above all a meeting place where people can exchange and develop bonds of solidarity. The Coop strives to be suc-

cessful in covering its operating costs through its commercial activities (bistro, grocery store, post office), it is always in need of financial support to ensure the proper functioning of its community activities and the costs associated with the premises. To increase its funding, fundraising activities and the recruiting of new members is vital.

Whether or not you are a member of the Coopérative de solidarité Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton (Coop du Grand-Bois), you can contribute to its development by participating in its activities, consuming products from its store, coming to its store for a meal or snack or volunteering your time. Becoming a member means that you can: - To participate in decisions, have the right to speak and vote at general meetings, - To enable the cooperative to prosper and thus contribute to the revitalization of a village, create employment and make local products and services available, -To be part of a group of dynamic and committed people, -To contribute to the development of solidarity in our community and our world, Because you love Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton!

For more information, to become a member or to sign up for their newsletter, contact: 450-297-3787 or info@coop-dugrandbois.com



PHOTO: COURTESY

## Singing to a sold out crowd

By Gordon Lambie

The BU singers were turning people away at the doors of Centennial Theatre on Friday night for their sold-out concert, "Gospel and other good news." Over the course of two and a half

hours, the student and community choir sang more than two dozen songs ranging from the old and familiar to recent pop hits, bringing their audience along for the ride through songs of reverence, celebration, heartache, and righteous determination.



GORDON LAMBIE

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