



ccec credit union

common interest

Keeping our Money Working in Our Community Since 1976!

AGM Report *by Emma Kivisild*

When you join CCEC and buy a member share, you become an owner of the credit union. Then, like anyone who owns a financial institution, you go to the Annual General Meeting to find out what is happening with your investment. “Have I hired good people to run the joint?” you wonder, and, “Is my money really going into the community?”

And if you are a CCEC owner, you might also think “So many cool people are part of this thing, is there any chance of me seeing what the other members are doing?”

The AGM is where all these questions are answered—briefly, yes, yes, and yes, at the AGM. This year’s meeting, where we looked back at the year ending September 30, 2006, and forward to 2007 and beyond, happened in January at Heritage Hall. Forty-one member/owners attended.

2006 was an exciting year for CCEC, and Board co-chair Andrea Reimer and General Manager Jill Kelly reported on the many initiatives your credit union completed. Most noticeable, of course, are the renovations at the credit union. We also spearheaded a “banking for the underbanked” project, and continued our

involvement in groups including the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Canadian Community Investment Network Co-op, the GLBA, and the BC Co-operative Association. We attended events around Vancouver, and took action at provincial, national and international credit union gatherings.

The Board took important steps toward the future in 2006, with a marketing brainstorm session and strategic planning. The four major areas for which goals were established in these sessions are: financial strength and security; organizational health and sustainability; membership; and community leadership. Specific objectives are attached to each of these to advance each goal in a particular direction (*see article on page 3*).

Jill guided us through the numbers in the financial statements, and what they mean. The credit union is in very good shape, and profitability has improved. Obviously, Board, Credit Committee and staff are doing a good job.

One of the ways in which we are improving our earnings while keeping our money working in our community is by lending. Loans were up 4.7% this year, to 74.5% of total assets. Cindy Johnson and Brenda Campbell of the Credit Committee reported on loan activity. CCEC experienced a big jump in our commercial mortgages, reflecting the need for second



mortgages in aging housing co-ops. As always we continue to lend with an eye on more than the dollar sign.

We elected new credit union officers—that is, members of the Board of Directors and the Credit Committee, and it was a spirited election this year. Thank you to everyone who decided to work for their credit union and run for office. (And I was elected to the Board!) While ballots were being counted,

...continued on page 2

CCEC's HOURS

Monday11am - 5pm
Tuesday11am - 5pm
Wednesday11am - 5pm
Thursday11am - 5pm
Friday11am - 6pm
Saturday10am - 1pm

COMMON INTEREST

Common Interest is published quarterly by CCEC Credit Union to provide our members with information & opinions on CCEC & its members' activities. Stories, announcements, photos & volunteers are welcome. Contact Kelly Milton at CCEC Credit Union, 2250 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC V5N 5P9
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mona Lisa Armirsetia
Kirsten Daub
Michelle Fortin
Ross Gentleman
Emma Kivisild
Catherine Ludgate
Lew MacDonald
Andrea Reimer
Alan Woodland

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David Fleming	Reina Sorto
Cindy Johnson	Laura Sturm
Heinz Kreutz	

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Paul CoulterClearing Administrator
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Linda ReadManager, Administration
Nikki SharpTeller
Reina SortoTeller
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Common Interest is written and coordinated by Kelly Milton & contributing authors. Editing & proofreading by Wendy Frost, Diane Leblanc & Paul Coulter.

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...continued from page 1

members were canvassed about housing concerns. The Board will be using the results of this informal survey in the planning of education initiatives for our members in the coming year.

A highlight of the AGM is always the presentation of the Roger Inman Memorial Award for Community Economic Development. This is a moment when owners can see their money doing great community work. This year's winner, the Rhizome Cafe (see member profile Fall 06), is a vibrant gathering place that opened on Broadway in 2006 and has already become an important part of many communities. Rhizome offers healthy menus, and accessible meeting and event space.

When co-owners Vinetta Lenavat and Lisa Moore came to Vancouver, and conceived their dream of a community space for our city's many different groups, banks turned them down for a loan, saying their venture was too risky. Finally, the



*Newly elected Board Member
Emma Kivisild*

Women's Enterprise Centre and CCEC advanced them the capital they needed.

In a recent profile in the *Courier* newspaper, Lenavat and Moore talked about community: "The alliances that we're building with organizations that are of like-minded politics, those are the

a special thanks to all our members who donated door prizes to our AGM

*ADAR Massage and Doula Services
Allworld Packaging
BC CASA
Café Ético Coffee
carol weaver creative
CAW Local 3000
CCEC Credit Union
Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada
Co-op Housing Federation of BC
Commercial Drive Massage Therapy
Contemporary Art Gallery
DoDa Antiques
East End Storefront Co-operative
Friederike Rahn
Fugu Phone
Full Bloom Flowers
James Wallace
JJ Bean Coffee Company
Kelly Milton & Jacana Gallery
Ken Gerberick
Poplar Pottery Studio
Sherry Hebler Interiors
Terracotta Pottery - D'Arcy Margesson
Theatre In the Raw
The Organic Grocer
The Wise Club
Vancouver Co-operative Radio
Western Canada Wilderness Committee*

strongest alliances for us," Moore said.

Rhizome joins an illustrious list of member groups that have won the Inman Award over its 14 years, including the Compassion Club, Spartacus Books, the Philippine Women Centre, and the Hebrew Assistance Association.

And yes, the CCEC AGM would not be complete without the door prizes, donations from member businesses. This year's loot ranged from pottery to phone time. We are a busy bunch!

HOLIDAY HOURS

We will be closed the following days:

Saturday, May 19
Monday, May 21
Saturday, June 30
Monday, July 2

Strategic planning at CCEC by Alan Woodland

As part of our strategic planning process, the directors of CCEC Credit Union have been having a conversation around the question: Where are we headed? In 2006, the Strategic Planning and Development Committee was established to support this conversation, and we'd like to report back to the membership on our work. The board agrees that the following four goals will guide the Credit Union over the next few years.

Financial Strength and Security

The credit union aims to generate funds through ethical, responsible and sustainable business activities, sufficient to support the development of our members and the community. To reach this goal, the credit union continues to focus on lending to members. In the first three months of the year, our loan portfolio increased by \$1.3 million dollars. And in response to attractive interest rates, members brought us more than \$1.0 million dollars of growth in term deposits. We're well on our way to another

year of strong operational results. **Organizational Health and Sustainability** The credit union staff supports the growth and development of our financial co-operative. For the credit union to have a sustainable future, we must maintain the high level of personal service that CCEC members have come to expect. This means that we will invest in technology and training and introduce new services to keep up with changes in the market

place. The board of directors is committed to a safe and

secure environment for employees, and through the Human Resources Committee and management, plans for promotion and succession in the organization. We want to have the right resources to meet the changing needs of the membership.

Membership Young people and groups with new ideas are coming into the credit union, increasing our membership and bringing "new blood" to CCEC. We welcome them! The board is developing a communications plan to reach out to like-minded communities and

raise the profile of the credit union within our community. Apart from providing financial services, the credit union is committed to increasing the financial literacy of our members and helping people achieve more economic security in their lives.

Community Leadership The credit union supports groups committed to social equity and co-operative solutions. We see ourselves as a "financial community centre." To

increase awareness of CCEC in the community, the board is planning a series of workshops to stimulate dialogue

around important issues, such as climate change and innovative housing solutions and to identify new ways the credit union can help members to make a difference in these areas.

All of this work is designed to make the credit union more than just a place to do your banking. We continue to differentiate CCEC from the big banks (and big credit unions) by being an active agent of social change, building financial capacity and economic security amongst our membership.

Why not tell a friend about the credit union? Join the movement!

Our new Board of Directors & Credit Committee members

EMMA KIVISILD

I was on the Credit Committee for nine years, where I learned about lending—things like evaluating risk, and assessing limits. After a short break from CCEC, I am excited to be serving on the Board for the first time. So far, I have mostly learned that I have a lot to learn. In my life outside the credit union (I know, it's hard to believe), I am an artist and a writer, with ties to many co-operatives, from housing

to bookstores to radio to food.

After several years in Kits, I have recently returned to the East End.

DAVID FLEMING

I joined CCEC three years ago and now it's time to give back to the CCEC community. I am a part-time student, work full time and I'm the president of CUPE Local 2396. I have a wide variety of work and volunteer experiences and I hope to be a valuable addition to the Credit Committee.

MICHELLE FORTIN

Michelle is Executive Director of Watari Research Association (winner of the 1999 Roger Inman Award). She has also played for many years on The Leafheads, CCEC's softball team.

A special thanks to all those who ran for election at our AGM.



Microcredit *when lending is a tool to lift people out of poverty*

by Catherine Ludgate

The announcement last fall that Dr Muhammad Yunus was being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on microcredit brought increased attention to this worldwide phenomenon of lending to the poor.

The announcement read in part: “Lasting peace cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which to break out of poverty. Microcredit is one such means. Development from below also serves to advance democracy and human rights. Every single individual on earth has both the potential and the right to live a decent life. Microcredit has proved to be an important liberating force in societies where women in particular have to struggle against repressive social and economic conditions.”

What exactly is Microcredit? Wikipedia says: “It is the extension of very small loans (microloans) to the unemployed, to poor entrepreneurs and to others living in poverty who are not bankable. These individuals lack collateral, steady employment and a verifiable credit history and therefore cannot meet even the most minimal qualifications to gain access to traditional credit. Microcredit is a part of microfinance, which is the provision of financial services to the very poor; apart from loans, it includes savings, microinsurance and other financial innovations.”

We might not apply exactly this definition at CCEC – we don’t think of people as being unbankable, rather, we would probably argue that they are traditionally underbanked. Certainly, at CCEC, we have been embracing

versions of microcredit since our establishment.

Dr Yunus was able to draw attention to the potential success of microcredit, when he lent \$US 27 to a group of Bangladeshi women who were manufacturing bamboo stools in their community and who were in debt to the local moneylender for both the currency

to buy raw materials and the market in which to sell their finished goods. This allowed the women to break their chain of debt and set up their business for

themselves. This also ran against traditional lending rules that would not expect a group of very poor women, with no collateral, to repay a loan.

Since that experiment with lending to “unbankable” women, the use of microcredit has spread around the world, usually based on the same principles that are applied at the Grameen Bank:

- *small lending circles are formed within a community*
- *each member of the lending circle borrows a very small amount from the financial institution, and each member of the circle guarantees their own repayment and the repayment of all other members of the circle*
- *future loans are advanced only as the original loans are paid back; the success of the lending circle depends on the success of each*

individual borrower

- *monthly meetings of the lending circle are held, and the success or setbacks of each borrower are discussed by the whole group*

The idea that each member “guaranteed” every other borrower’s loan within a lending circle has been the most criticized

and misunderstood principle. In fact, whether in Bangladesh or here in Vancouver, lending circles have provided an amount of moral suasion and self-help in paying back loans, but borrowers

have not had to actually cover the loans of others in default. Actually the overall repayment rates of microloans are about 98% – a very fine repayment rate that any bank would enjoy.

Without other supports such as savings and insurance (and cash services), lending alone doesn’t help the poor. When microborrowers get in trouble with their loans, it is typically because there has been some emergency or catastrophe in the family, and the borrower focuses on the family crisis to the exclusion of the loan payment or the business development for which the loan was advanced. One could argue that lending alone then is short sighted, that a responsible lending agency would design savings plans and insurance offerings that support families in times of need.



Dr. Yunus and friends

...continued on page 5

Join us for *An Inconvenient Truth*

The planetary emergency of global warming and what we can do about it

CCEC would like to invite its members to join us for an evening workshop on *An Inconvenient Truth*. Our Board co-chair and Executive Director of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Andrea Reimer, is one of 18 Canadians who have been trained by The Climate Project® to deliver the global warming slide show developed by The Hon. Al Gore that was featured in the Oscar-winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*.

The Climate Project (TCP) is a movement to educate and engage citizens, and governments into solving the growing climate crisis. As a non-profit group, TCP works to make the public aware of the urgency, impact and need for action to confront global warming through

education, research and citizen action programs. This includes the training of 800+ lecturers from around the globe who will deliver the compelling science-based slide presentation to more than a million audience members in 2007. Andrea was selected from a pool of thousands of applicants and has agreed to deliver this important message to the community.

Global warming is real, its impacts can already be seen and Canada needs to take action now to confront the climate crisis. Join us on Wednesday, June 6th at 7pm-9pm at Videoin Studios to see what we can do for our future.

For more information please contact Kelly Milton at 604-254-4100 or kmilton@ccec.bc.ca.



join us on
wednesday june 6th
7pm - 9pm
at videoin studios (1965 main street)
for
aninconvenienttruth
A GLOBAL WARNING

Microcredit

...continued from page 4

Without an understanding of how to build a credit history, or what the fine print means on an offer from a credit card company or leasing agency, borrowers can do more harm to themselves than good in short order. For example, one of the places that newcomers to Canada get into credit trouble – and quickly – is by signing up for highway robbery cellphone plans. In other parts of the world, cellphone plans are considerably cheaper, and it is unusual for incoming cell calls to carry charges. Not so in Canada. Thousands of newcomers misunderstand the cell contracts they are signing on arrival, and soon find themselves with black marks on their new Canadian credit bureaus, unable to borrow from reputable financial institutions.

There are some dark clouds,

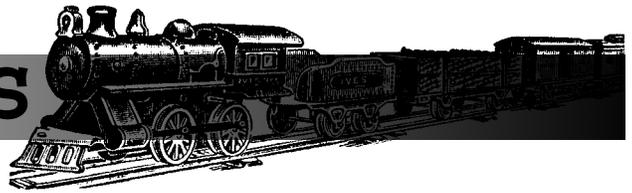
however, on the horizon for microlending and microcredit. With proof that the poor are bankable and do pay back, the initial lenders to the poor are being joined in the marketplace by lenders-come-lately – large groups like ING Direct and Citibank – that waited until this population proved lucrative. And while the marketplace may be big enough for lenders of many stripes, we can be certain that the lenders-come-lately will not be investing in the high-touch investments of financial literacy, flexible payment schedules and other microservices like disability insurance and developmental savings accounts. The very lessons that we've learned about how to build robust and sustainable microcredit offerings will be ignored by lenders who have now identified the so-called "wealth at the bottom of the pyramid."

For credit unions like CCEC,

thinking about responsible lending – lending tied to financial literacy, and coupled with savings and insurance – is part of our DNA. But figuring out how to offer the whole range of services that poor borrowers need is a challenge. It is "high touch" and therefore expensive.

For thirty years, CCEC has been providing loans to persons considered unbankable elsewhere. They have been able to borrow money at CCEC and in the process have improved their credit history and assets, and therefore become "bankable" to other financial institutions. When we lose those members to other financial institutions, we forget to give ourselves credit for being there at the time of need. It would be great if all borrowers stuck with us, but in the bigger scheme of things, we remember that we've helped build strong communities along the way.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



◆ **DOXA Film Festival**
May 22 -24 (see page 8)

◆ **Farmers Market**

Featuring farm fresh fruits, vegetables & plants, quality local crafts & delicious edibles. Live music & more.

East Vancouver at Trout Lake:

9:00 am to 2:00 pm Saturdays



May 19 to October 6, 2007 **Riley Park at Nat Bailey Stadium:**

1:00 pm to 6:30 pm Wednesdays

June 6 to October 24, 2007

West End at Nelson Park:

9:00 am to 2:00 pm Saturdays June 16 to October 6.

◆ **EAT! Vancouver**

May 25 to May 27, B.C. Place
Great opportunity to learn behind-the-scenes culinary magic from professional chefs. Interactive cooking activities for kids,

cookbook signings, and more.

◆ **Vancouver Francophone Summer Festival**

June 14 to June 24

One of the most acclaimed cultural rendezvous in French. This festival reflects the multicultural character of the international Francophonie. www.lecentre culturel.com

For more community events visit www.ccec.bc.ca

Need money before payday? Don't go to Money Mart! *by Wendy Frost*

Here at CCEC, we see our members more and more frequently turning to short-term loans through Money Mart and other payday loan companies to make up shortfalls until that next paycheque comes through. While these payday loans may seem like the perfect solution to a one-time emergency lack of funds, all too often they can result in falling deeper and deeper into debt. When you go to Money Mart for a payday loan, you're required to provide Money Mart with a cheque that's postdated to your next scheduled payday. This postdated cheque includes both interest and what Money Mart refers to as a "cheque-cashing fee." A \$200 payday loan can cost you \$222.30, payable within two weeks, which amounts to an interest rate of 290%.

If the funds are not in your account when Money Mart tries to clear the cheque, matters get even worse. The cheque will be returned NSF, which will cost you a total of \$30 in service charges from CCEC,

plus extra charges from Money Mart. They may then choose to send the NSF cheque back to us on collection, which may affect your account until the cheque is settled.

Throughout this process, charges are mounting up, your credit rating and your reputation with CCEC are suffering, and Money Mart is making astronomical profits off your difficulties.

These astronomical profits may even be criminal. At least, that's the contention of a Canadian class-action lawsuit being brought against Money Mart, which alleges that Money Mart's fees contravene the "Criminal Interest Rate" section of the Criminal Code of Canada. The lawsuit claims that Money Mart's fees are far in excess of the 60% annual interest rate allowed by law. In March 2007, a B.C. Supreme Court judge certified this



class action lawsuit; in other words, ruled that the lawsuit can proceed. According to the judgement, there are approximately 127,900 potential members of the class action.

So what can a CCEC member do, rather than go to Money Mart? Many of you may qualify for a line of credit. Sometimes known as overdraft protection, a line of credit is an allowable overdraft, attached to your chequing account. If, for example, you had a \$100 line of credit, you would be allowed to overdraw your account up to that amount, with no service charge. The only charge related to the line of credit would be a \$10 charge to set it up, and interest on the amount you are overdrawn, payable once a month. The interest rate on a line of credit is our prime rate plus 5.25%; currently, that's a total rate of 11.25%. Unlike many financial institutions, CCEC will set up lines of credit for small

...continued on page 7

Don't go to Money Mart!

...continued from page 6

amounts, even as low as \$50. For most people, a small to medium line of credit can be enough to get them through those occasional difficulties between paycheques.

If you already have a line of credit, but it's not sufficient to deal with an unexpected shortfall, a temporary increase to your existing line of credit can often be arranged. The maximum length of time for a temporary increase is two months, and the maximum number of temporary increases is three times

in any given year. The service charge for a temporary increase is \$5.

For those who don't have a line of credit, and who, because of their credit history and/or their present circumstances, would not qualify for one, there is one other possibility, and that is a temporary line of credit. You may qualify for a temporary overdraft, if you can show us that you will be able to repay it within one week. Like the temporary increase to a line of credit, you can only have a temporary LOC three times in any given year. Even if you don't

qualify for any of these options, in an emergency, there's often something we can do. And it does no harm to ask.

So if you're facing a short term problem in covering your expenses, come to CCEC before resorting to Money Mart. Very often, we can find a solution to your problem that will work for you *and* us. We'll be happy that we aren't having to bounce your cheques or deal with collection items, and you'll be happy that you're getting credit at a reasonable charge, and improving your credit rating rather than damaging it.

The Yes Camp

An action-packed week of adventure, co-operative learning and leadership training for teens age 14 to 16.

It's that time of year again when CCEC launches an annual campaign to raise funds towards scholarships to send CCEC teens to the YES summer camps. Every year for the last 20 years, CCEC has held a draw to give kids an opportunity to experience a unique, co-operative camp experience.

The Yes offers fun, learning and adventure set in BC's incredible wilderness. Learn new skills, make new friends, appreciate new values

and challenge yourself in an atmosphere of support and respect.

The Yes, which used to be known as Camp Rainbow, has

everything that makes a great summer camp: hiking,

canoeing, kayaking and campfires.

Throughout all of the fun outdoor activities, a focus is placed upon



environmental awareness and conservation.

Participants will learn how to be a leader while working as a member of a team, how to communicate, how to co-operate and how to build trust.

Basic A - July 15 - 21, 2007, Cowichan Lake, Vancouver Island

Basic B - July 22 - 28, 2007, Cowichan Lake, Vancouver Island

Basic C - August 5 - 11, 2007, Silver Lake, Peachland

Grad Camp - August 19 - 25,

2007

Cowichan Lake, Vancouver Island (for Advanced Camp Grads)

To contribute to the Camp Yes Fund please visit the branch today or call 604-254-4100. For more information on the camps visit www.theyes.ca. You can download an entry form for the CCEC scholarship draw at www.ccec.bc.ca.

Are you a young person looking for a great summer adventure?

Yes, I would like to enter the draw for CCEC's **The Yes** Camp Scholarship

Name CCEC Acc't #

Parent/Guardian's Name Tel # (.....)

Address Postal Code

Affiliation (name of CCEC member or fund-donor)

Email Address (print clearly)

Birth Date (you must be in between 14 & 16 years old in August 2007)



Please mail or drop off at CCEC Credit Union, 2250 Commerical Drive, Vancouver, V5N 5P9 or fax it to us at 604-254-6558. • Deadline for entries: June 7, 2007.

DOXA

2007 will be a year of firsts for the DOXA Documentary Film Festival, Vancouver's only festival exclusively dedicated to celebrating the art of the documentary. This year's festival runs from May 22-27th, and we've taken a major leap from last year by almost doubling our number of screenings. With more films being presented at more venues, documentary lovers can anticipate a wider variety of compelling subject matter, discussions and filmmakers in attendance, along with another first for DOXA – a live musical performance with after-party.

DOXA continues its tradition of kicking off the festival with a locally produced film. *The Edge of Eden: Living with Grizzlies* is the incredible story of Charlie Russell, a Canadian bear expert who has dedicated his life to raising orphaned grizzly cubs in the Russian wilderness. The delightful footage of Russell and the cubs shot against a spectacular backdrop underscores the environmental and ethical issues inherent in our exploitation of nature and our relationship to wild animals. Charlie Russell and accomplished nature documentarians Jeff and Sue Turner will be in attendance for this Opening Night Gala presentation (May 22, 7:30pm).

Several other home-grown films are featured at this year's fest. Local survivors of nuclear war and the subjects of *No More Hiroshima*, *No More Nagasaki*, the feature piece in our *The Art of War* program,

will be in attendance for a post-film discussion. And Vancouver's Fado musicians are lovingly depicted in *The Three of Portugal* (*Os Tres de Portugal*), featured in our *Música Inspiração* program. The festival closes with another local film, *Beyond Memory*, the world premiere of a moving and intimate portrait of BC families coping with a loved one's dementia.

DOXA is very pleased to present another world premiere of a Canadian film. *Toxic Trespass* explores the links between industrial chemicals and childhood illness, beginning with the alarming fact that, at birth, babies have up to 287 industrial chemicals in their blood. At this special screening we are proud to welcome director Barri Cohen and a representative from this program's sponsor, the national organization Environmental Defense.

More than a dozen international countries are also represented in the DOXA program. Local organization Cine Chile co-presents *The Pinochet Case* and *The General's Daughter*, two films spotlighting Chilean politics past and present. *Castells* depicts the proud and colourful Castilian tradition of building enormous human pyramids, where entire towns come together in jaw-dropping competitions with one another. In *Saudi Solutions* director Bregtje van der Haak gains unprecedented access into the lives of Saudi women with professional careers, a group that comprises less

than 5% of the population. Iranian *Kidney Bargain Sale* documents a much more controversial means of earning income – the legalized selling of human body parts. In this fascinating and sometimes surreal film, potential sellers can be seen standing on street corners and in town squares holding signs advertising their wares. One reads: 'Immediate offer! Kidney for sale, young man, 22, healthy, blood type O positive.'

And for something a little bit different, DOXA is thrilled to present the *Before the End of the World Tour*, our first ever live musical event. Former Blue Rodeo



and *The Hidden Cameras* member Bobby Wiseman will be joined by Toronto band *The Phonemes* and eclectic performance artist Jason Trachtenburg for a unique musical collaboration set to found slide shows and original super 8 films. The party starts Friday, May 25th, 7:30 pm at the Vancouver International Film Centre. Tickets are \$20 and include the event after party.

For more information about the entire 2007 DOXA line-up and ticket and pass prices, visit www.doxafestival.ca or call 604.646.3200.