



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Celebrating the success of the Stouffville Co-op are (at left) Doug Watson, general manager, and some of the store's staff of 25.

**BUSINESS: Stouffville Co-op a success story after fighting for survival**

# Co-op reports jump in crop sales

BY JOAN RANSBERRY  
STAFF WRITER

The Stouffville Co-operative (better known, simply as the co-op) has reason to boast these days.

After nearly being forced from its location several years ago, the co-op bounding back and recording a record year in profits.

The co-op along with its partners, the Goodwood and Cedar Valley co-ops, are reporting \$455,000 in sales, along with a service revenue of a whopping \$9.5 million.

Watson attributes a large part of the profits to an upswing in the crop area

through the sales of fertilizer, chemicals and seeds, and an improvement in market share.

Make no mistake: co-op manager Doug Watson will have a smile on his face during the general meeting in Goodwood next Tuesday to announce the success story. And the smile — a long time coming, will be sincere.

The co-op has suffered its share of bumps along the way. The Canadian National Railway and GO Transit were negotiating an Edward Street land deal several years ago, and the co-op — stationed at its location since 1943 — got caught in the middle.

The business was eventually served with a notice to vacate the premises.

The eviction notice threatened the local co-op's future and jobs were on the line. Through a story in The Stouffville Tribune, the business took its plight to the public.

Armed with the determination to make things work, Watson and his staff defied the eviction notice, dug in his heels and the business carried on serving the local community.

The issue was finally resolved with GO Transit now owning the land and offering its tenant a fair partnership.

"GO is a good landlord," Watson said. "Everything is fine now."

The Stouffville Co-op, the Uxbridge co-op and the Cedar Valley co-op all work together to play a vital role in the communities they serve.

"Yes, we serve agriculture, the pet owners and home gardeners," said Watson. Together, the three outlets employ 25 people.

The Stouffville Co-op is owned by about 3,000 people.

"It provides feed, agronomy products and services, consumer products and services and petroleum to York and Durham regions," Watson said.



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## \$760,000 donation a boost for hospital

Markham Stouffville Hospital has officially benefitted from the generosity of a long-time area resident.

Frank Douglas Pringle of Markham left \$760,000 to the hospital in his will. Pringle, whose descendants first settled in Markham in 1836, died at the age of 88 on March 11, 1996.

The legalities of his estate were recently completed and the money has been given to the hospital foundation over the past two years.

Along with the hospital, Pringle also left \$5,000 contributions to the Salvation Army, St. Andrew's United Church, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and Markham Museum.

Born May 20, 1907, he was one of seven children of William and Laura Pringle. He grew up in Markham, attending both Markham Public School and Markham High School. He had a 40-year career as a teacher, working at schools in the Whitevale and Mount Joy communities. During the Second World War, he served in the Royal Canadian Air Force as an instrument mechanic.

Gina Rosen, president of the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, said Pringle's legacy stands as the largest donation ever left to the hospital. The monies were used for capital equipment purchases, including a dual-headed gamma camera which has a number of diagnostic uses.



**FRANK PRINGLE**  
Long-time Markham resident helped hospital