

4-H Homemaking Leaders' Conference

by Joyce Canning

The most beautiful sight in the world is to watch someone walk confidently down the road after you have shown them the way."

This was Fred Holterman's way of expressing the ultimate reward of leadership to 109 4-H Homemaking Club Leaders gathered at the Downtown Holiday Inn in Toronto on Wednesday morning, November 17. Faces beamed and heads nodded enthusiastically as Mr. Holterman continued to hold his audience's rapt attention for a two and one-half hour session on the art of communication. "We all have the same four basic needs," he said, "the need to live; the need to feel important; the need to be loved; the need for variety or challenge." To be a more effective listener he suggested the following tips:

- Take **TIME** for the other person
- Get the person to **TALK ABOUT HIMSELF**
- Give your **UNDIVIDED ATTENTION**
- Have **PERSONAL CONTACT**
- Use the **PERSON'S NAME**
- **DON'T INTERRUPT**

Another highlight of the two day Conference was a special luncheon held on Tuesday, November 16, when the Honourable Pauline McGibbon spoke to the gathering on The Changing Role of the Volunteer in Canadian Society. "You are very special people," she said, "and probably the most important characteristic you possess is **RELIABILITY**. The spirit of volunteerism is not found in every country in the world. Thus it is a challenge to arouse the interest and acceptance of newcomers to Canada in our voluntary organizations. The volunteer of the '80s is not the same as the volunteer of earlier years. To-

day's volunteers are busy people. Organizations must plan to make best use of a volunteer's *limited time*."

This last comment leads into another subject area which was given close attention at the 1982 Conference. Germaine Mageau, a Time Management Consultant from Kitchener led the group through a very interesting exercise to help them determine where their time was going and how they might squeeze a few extra minutes here and there to do other things. "The key to running an effective meeting," she said, "is to plan ahead and be organized. Have a plan on paper and *follow it*." Being an effective 4-H Leader means not only finding the time to hold the meetings but the time to plan ahead for them.



On Tuesday morning, November 16th a session called Focus on 4-H introduced the leaders to some areas of 4-H usually relegated to the background — how 4-H Homemaking projects get developed, the role of 4-H in the community and some basic facts about the Canadian 4-H

Council. Guest speakers, slide presentations, displays, and discussion groups all contributed toward making this a varied, informative and worthwhile morning. Thanks to Ruth Marcou, Regional Supervisor of Home Economists for North & Southwestern Ontario, for planning and organizing this session.

LEARNING SHOULD BE FUN and this theory was certainly put into practice by three group leaders on the first evening of the conference. Mrs. Dorothy Needles, a drama consultant, talked to the ladies about ways to encourage creativity and spontaneity in their club members when planning achievement day skits. Marjorie McDonald, Regional Supervisor for North & South Eastern Ontario, passed on many ideas for making both exhibits and project manuals more interesting, effective, and individual. Beverley Brown Carson, Home Economist for Haldimand/Norfolk shared her wealth of knowledge on the art of Social Recreation and gave her group lots of ideas for ways they could make their club members more relaxed and enthusiastic by interjecting appropriate games and activities into their meetings.

Leaders attending this conference also received passes to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and time was allowed on Tuesday evening for this activity.

What is the Provincial 4-H Leaders' Conference all about? One leader sums it up very succinctly with this comment: "It's a time to recharge your batteries. Before the conference I was feeling very negative and unenthusiastic about leading another club but now I can't wait to get back and give it another go!"