

Reflections from ROS

with Joyce Canning

(Rural Organizations and Services)

I wonder how many of you saw the article by Jim Romahn in the Spring '85 issue of **Today's Country Women** called "Grunts"?

For those who may not know Jim, he is the agriculture reporter for the Kitchener-Waterloo Record. In the article he is berating farm women for forsaking the Women's Institute in order to establish new rural women's groups which better meet their needs. BUT, before you start cheering too loudly, he doesn't let the Women's Institutes off scot-free.

Says Jim, "Some in the Women's Institute must share the blame because they have acted like sanc-

timonious stuffed blouses, reducing their chapters to know-it-all enclaves of critics, sniping from the do nothing sidelines. They busy themselves with tea and trivia, leaving their beleaguered brethren little choice but to seek solutions elsewhere.

Between January and April of this year notices of seven branches disbanding have come through the office at Guelph. That's an average of almost two a month! Why is this happening in some communities? Could it have anything to do with the attitude implied in Jim's statement? Are older members of the branch

willing to allow younger members to join, to try new ideas, to perhaps depart from the traditional ways if it suits their needs, to plan programs that are of interest to younger women? Ask any of the branch members where younger people are joining (and staying — that's important) and I guarantee you'll get a resounding yes to all of the questions above.

Take a good look at yourself, ladies. Does your group fit Jim Romahn's description? If it does, even remotely, then it's time you welcomed an injection of new blood before it becomes too late for the transfusion!

Why not co-sponsor a program?

Co-sponsoring is a word you may have heard recently in your county or district. Here's an explanation of co-sponsoring which may prompt your branch or district to become involved in working on a program.

Co-sponsoring refers to two or more groups joining together to

sponsor an Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food program, and of the two groups, the ministry could be one. For example, the ministry and the Anywhere WI Branch could co-sponsor a program, or Anywhere WI and Someplace WI could work together.

How do co-sponsors participate? Many ways. An organization can use its funds for renting a hall and buying supplies for instance and then recoup that money from the sale of tickets to the program. A co-sponsor can actually help to work on the program itself and assist with arrangements such as advertising and promotion.

There are benefits to the co-sponsors. A group will receive community recognition for its part in the program and can use that opportunity to publicize its purpose. Money can sometimes be made by co-sponsors and the content of the program, supplied by OMAF is pre-prepared.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring an OMAF activity please contact your local rural organization specialist.



Provincial opportunity

Two provincial convenerships, **Citizenship and World Affairs** and **Agriculture and Canadian Industries**, will be vacant as of the November annual meeting of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. If you would like more information on these positions, please contact your provincial director. If you would like to apply, send your resume to your provincial director and a copy to FWIO secretary **Marcie Johnston**. (Addresses are on page 2).