

HOME &Country

Published by the Ontario Ministry of



Agriculture and Food
Rural Organizations
and Services Branch
in the interests of
Rural Women

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Vol. 53

April, May, June 1987

No. 4

Rural Organizations & Services,
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Deadlines

Please observe the following deadlines when submitting stories or photographs to Home & Country magazine.

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 1987: May 15

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 1987: Sept. 15

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH 1988: Dec. 10

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 1988: Feb. 15

Front Cover

Brigid Pyke is the first woman president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Raised in the city, she and her husband, Bob, their three children and Bob's brother and his wife, operate a 1,200 acre dairy farm on Wolfe Island, Gananoque. Brigid says she chose the OFA because she feels she can make the most impact there. Read more about the leader of Ontario's largest farm organization on page 4.

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Fitness for Fun!?

Editorial

Carol Stewart-Kirkby



I'm writing this having just returned from a noon-hour fitness program at the Guelph Y. And I often ask myself that very question — why?

For those of you who don't know me, I should tell you that exercise has been a foreign idea to me most of my life. Yes, I participated in a number of team sports as school physical education classes required. But the notion of enjoying exercise was unfathomable!

As the media began to inundate me with mounting evidence that I should exercise, I took the plunge and headed off to the YM-YWCA with several colleagues here at the Guelph Agriculture Centre. (I should tell you I said "no" to them many times before saying "yes".)

Now, after almost nine months of going on the average twice a week, I actually miss it if I don't go. And, if I'm free at lunch, I tend to eat a whole lot more over that hour, which is very detrimental to MY body! The bottom line is, I feel better about myself, even though I know I'll never look like Raquel Welch no matter how fit I am!

I want to make a second point about fitness. I've discovered it doesn't really matter what you're doing, what's more important is that you are doing something.

Before I come to Guelph each morning, I drop my son off at the baby-sitter's, just a couple of blocks from our Milton home. Every single day, I see two women, I'd say about 50 or 60 years-old, briskly walking. I can usually tell how late or early I am by where they are on the street. It doesn't seem to matter if it's raining, snowing, windy, sunny, those two women are always on their walk.

Walking is very good exercise and recently there has been some attention given to power walking. The easiest way to describe it here is to say it's walking with umph! There is an article on power walking on page 19. I would encourage you to read it and then give it a try, perhaps with a friend. For me, having someone else along on my trips to the Y is a big help. It's much harder to stick to a program by yourself. And I think if I stopped the car one morning and asked the women walking along, they would agree — the buddy system works for exercise.

* * *

I would like to thank the women who helped me to compile the ideas on getting new members (see story on page 6). Often, there are ideas and solutions within the organizations we are most familiar with and yet we overlook them. If there's a group that's successful at recruiting new members in your area, ask them how they do it. Perhaps you can use some of their ideas. And likewise with other problems or situations within your own group. Maybe you would like to do some fundraising, but don't know how. Ask someone in a group that has successfully raised funds. Don't be shy!

* * *

I know many of you are involved in agriculture in the classroom projects/activities, be they small or large. I would like to hear about these programs. Please drop me a line at the address on this page.