
Resolutions are for everyone

I hope everyone had a good Christmas and that you were able to celebrate it with your families. For those of you who hadn't quite the Christmas you expected, I hope that you have had a good start to 1988.

I am sure most people, as usual, made New Year's resolutions and, as usual, have already broken some of them — I know I have. Speaking of resolutions, we had 32 resolutions at the November board meeting. I am sure this is a record. Resolutions are an important part of this organization and they show our members' awareness of problems in society. The resolutions were well-worded and the meaning and intent clear. A weak area seems to be in the accompanying support material. Occasionally there is none at all. Don't be afraid to tackle the writing of a resolution. (Instructions are on page 83 of the new handbook.)

If you feel there needs to be some action on a problem you have identified, the following is a guideline of some of the steps to be taken.

1. Make sure you research the problem well.

Between the Lines

Margaret
Munro



2. Decide whether it is a local, provincial or national issue.
3. Does it require a resolution, or letter writing by the branch and/or individuals.
4. If a resolution is decided upon, collect data supporting your reasons.

Duties of the branch resolution convener and her committee are on page 19 of the new handbook, while district is covered on page 32 and area is outlined on page 40. The resolution goes from the branch to the district annual meeting, to the area convention and then on to the FWIO Board. It must be voted on and passed on at all levels.

It is suggested that the area resolution convener also have a committee, to review the resolutions prior to the convention and to make sure that

each resolution has been properly submitted. **Even more important** is that a member of the branch submitting the resolution is present when it is being discussed prior to the vote.

It is not enough to have just the written resolution. Delegates who are responsible to vote want questions answered to their satisfaction before they make their decision on how they will vote. Situations pertaining to the resolution may have already changed. It is a shame to get a good resolution as far as the area and be lost because the members need clarification. This often happens. We have a democratic process in which you prove to members that the resolution is worthwhile.

It is the responsibility of the area resolutions convener to forward the prepared resolution with the **supportive material** by Sept. 1 to the provincial convener who is the provincial past president Charlotte Johnson. This gives her time to check it and possibly gather more supportive material or check if the resolution has been presented previously.

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Letter to the editor

Amendments to resolutions deserve more

Many people suggest Women's Institutes do something about some cause, some danger to the environment, some threat to our home and country.

In our complex world we usually find we must begin by trying for a change in laws or government regulations. We need the strength of our whole Institute to do this, and the first step is to pass a resolution in our branch, then at our district, and at the area convention.

Quite properly the WI regulations insist on due process, with documentation to ensure that the resolution addresses a real need. All this is time consuming, and the crisis may be past, and the patient dead before the remedy is ready.

Nevertheless the discipline of framing a resolution and shepherding it through the three levels forces our members to examine the wording in detail. The process is fair.

Would it seem equally fair that an amendment to the resolution should have to go through the same steps? Otherwise it is possible for a brief amendment, hastily passed at the area convention, to make a toothless mockery of a good resolution.

A brief example will illustrate. The resolution called for a change in the Nursing Homes Act to make the manager open his itemized accounts, on request, to the general public, the media and to government inspectors. The resolution pointed out that a

nursing home is not a private business, since \$2 out of every \$3 received comes from our taxes.

Trembling, frightened by the idea that we might rock the boat, or anger somebody somewhere, the words media and public were taken out, and the resolution passed (at the Guelph Area Convention). If we continue to do this kind of thing, we deserve all the patronizing fun that is made of Institutes. We deserve the dropping membership. All amendments should have the consent of the branch and district conveners at least.

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