

HOME & Country

A magazine for rural women

Home & Country is a publication for rural women's groups in Ontario. It is published by the Rural Organizations and Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Home & Country has two objectives.

- 1. To provide a communications link between rural women's groups in Ontario.
- 2. To provide educational material relating to organizational and individual leadership development.

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Front Cover

Lennox District Women's Institute reports it is "full of excitement" and sent our two cover photos to prove it.

Members are busy promoting WI throughout the district, posting Women's Institute signs at three major entrances to Napanee. Pictured from left to right are Rowena Raycraft, Barb Weese, Nancy Bye and Lorraine Martin.

As well, members' work with recycling cans was rewarded with the Citizens of the Year trophy from the Town of Napanee. Presenting the trophy is Mayor Chris Seeley, and accepting from left to right are Nancy Bye, Lorraine Martin, Marion Wannamaker, Rowena Raycraft and Barb Weese.

Guest Editorial

Like a flashlight...

By Isabel Anderson

I experienced mixed feelings when asked to deal with the motto An Institute is like a flashlight--when its energy is not renewed it gets dim and fades away.

My brief time as a member had not made me knowledgeable enough to discuss with confidence the energy that keeps the Institute going. I was, however, very aware of the dreadful results of the fading away of a source of energy. This awareness has grown over the years as a result of the many times my car has refused to start because, somehow, the lights did not get turned off when I went shopping.

I appealed for help to a friend. She gave me a huge pile of Home & Country magazines and advised me to write a poem. Realizing that one must have some understanding of a topic before attempting to write a poem about it, I tackled the magazines first.

As I skimmed over accounts of the history of Women's Institute, I realized the organization has been around for almost 100 years and is showing no sign of power failure. Furthermore, the atmosphere at our branch meetings, the kindness and warmth, the interest in new causes, the readiness to volunteer for jobs, gives evidence that there is no fading away of energy.

But exactly what is this energy and where does it come from? I tried to answer the question by carrying the analogy of the flashlight a step further. A battery can produce warmth and light and can make things move. The warmth reminds me immediately of the friendliness and kindness among members; the sincere words of thanks and admiration for skills and talents. This is what makes us feel good about ourselves and gives us confidence to volunteer for tasks.

The light, which is another form of energy, makes me think of the attitude of openness, the willingness to learn new things, which allows our members to meet the changing needs of modern society. We must keep ourselves informed about community and world affairs so we will be able to make wise decisions about current needs and causes.

Last comes the movement or action which a battery can produce. This corresponds to the work accomplished by the Institute which is, of course, made up of all the tasks accomplished by individual members. Whether the task is to attend a conference, knit a sweater for a display, hold an office, work on a committee, or send a card to a sick person, it contributes to the growth of our branch and the total organization of the Women's Institute.

Isabel Anderson is a new member of Bonnechere Valley WI.