

"Share the Work – Share the Power"

By Corry Martens

"Share the Work, Share the Power" - this was the theme of the Third Annual Meeting and Conference of the Ontario Farm Women's Network (OFWN), held in Mississauga on March 1 and 2, 1991.

Financial and committee reports were presented and approved on the first day of the meeting. The following resolution submitted by the OFWN Child Care Committee was approved - that OFWN strongly urge Ontario's Farm Safety Association to publicly and consistently recognize and support both developing and existing rural child care programs.

Child care for the farming community remains an area of great concern. The latest 1990 figures from the Farm Safety Association revealed that almost 15% of the farm accident victims were under the age of ten. Of the 38 farm fatalities last year, 8 were toddlers, aged one and two! And this figure doesn't take into consideration the near misses!

Elections were also held. The Secretary, Carol Rock, and the Treasurer, Liz Wagner, were re-elected. Board members re-elected for a one year term were: Marg Elliott, South-Western region; Beverlie Nelson, Mid-Western and Niagara region; and, Anne McKenzie, North-Eastern region. New Directors elected included: Kristine Carpenter, North-Western region; Margaret Appleby, Central region; Susan Klein-Swormink, Eastern region; and, Lorraine Lapointe was elected as the Francophone Director.

"Sowing Circles of Hope," a video telling the story of elderly women in rural Canada, was the introduction to a discussion led by Bill Hughes, Vice-Chairman of the Ontario Council on Senior Citizens. The video and discussion highlighted some of the problems, such as lack of services, loneliness and isolation, specific to an aging population in rural areas.

The topics of other discussions were "Communications - A Team Approach" by Lera Ryan and "Stress Management - Balance or Burnout" by Kathy Sum-

mers. Karen Ketcheson of Statistics Canada was also on hand to explain the changes in the new Farm Census forms.

Keynote speaker at the banquet was Pat Hayes, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture. He brought the farm women attending the conference a commitment of moral and financial support from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Hayes, speaking for the Minister, stated: "In less than three short years, you've managed to bring forward vital issues affecting farm women across Ontario... You make the voices of individual farm women heard. You have played a vital role in bringing attention to the issues of rural day care and farm safety... These efforts have brought women's concerns into the mainstream of farm policy."

The second day of the conference started with a media workshop presented by Laurel Campbell, Media Relations Officer for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Jim Fitzgerald, General Manager/Editor for the **Rural Voice**, and Jim Rohman, agricultural writer for the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*.

The Honourable Anne Swarbrick, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, addressed the conference and expressed her interest in farm women's needs. She extended an invitation to the OFWN Executive to meet with her in the near future.

The afternoon was devoted to "Breaking Barriers," a report that determined the representation and role of women at the decision-making level in Ontario's agricultural organizations. The study was undertaken by a team of graduate students from the University of Guelph School of Rural Planning and Development in co-operation with a Steering Committee of the OFWN. The resulting document will serve as a guide for future developments and strategies of the OFWN, as well as a basis for similar studies in other provinces.

Eloise Calhoun closed the conference with an up-beat speech on "Living in the 'I Can and I Will' Zone." Evaluations of the conference ex-

pressed a great deal of satisfaction from the participants.

Corry Martens is Editor of the Ontario Farm Women's Network Newsletter.

Congratulations

Anniversaries

Bridgeport WI	45
Copetown WI	70
Springmount WI	70
Oakhill WI	75
Shirby WI	81
Inglewood WI	85
Onondaga WI	85
Richards Landing WI	85

Life Memberships

Union WI
-Anna Troup
Beaverton WI
-Lil Allen
-Kathleen Morrison
-Hazel Walton
-Nina Wood
-Mabel Anderson
-Isabelle Gillespie

Certificates of Merit

Crowland WI
-Evelyn McKenney
-Mary McCutcheon
Union WI
-Helen Krzyzanowski
Beaverton WI
-Reva Hutton
-Velma Hood
-Betty Lamb
-Brenda Lightfoot
-Catherine McRae
-Frances Mangan
-June Mitchell
-Islay McPhee
-Donna Ross
-Charlotte Rickard
-Ada Silburn
-Doris Temple
-Regina Van Boxtel
Belhaven WI
-Margaret Wilkinson
-Lillian Kydd
-Margery Johnson