

# Minister Applauds FWIO Commitment to Improving Rural Life

By Geraldine Campbell

This year, all branches of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario will be encouraged to undertake a special tree planting project. Not only does a tree benefit their environment and community, it symbolizes the growth of the FWIO in the community and into the future.

The FWIO commitment to improving life in rural communities was strongly endorsed by the special guest speaker, the Honourable Elmer Buchanan, Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, at the FWIO Board Meeting in March. The Minister, raised on a farm in Belmont Township in Peterborough County, began by stating that he "will always remember the values he learned from rural living." He recounted that it was the local institutions - the Church, 4-H, Junior Farmers,

and the Women's Institutes - that held communities together. And, the Minister added, "to a large extent, they still do."

Mr. Buchanan briefly outlined his Ministry's priorities: re-building rural communities, stabilizing farm finances, and a renewed commitment to a healthy environment. He also expressed that with their wealth of experience and local contacts, the FWIO was well positioned as an organization to help address some of the pertinent issues. "There's no better place to look for innovative ways to re-build our rural communities," he said. The FWIO was also pleased to hear the Minister applaud their work towards a healthier environment, and particularly when he expressed that they would be an ideal organization to help educate consumers.

Several questions were posed by

FWIO Board Directors to the Minister of Agriculture, covering the topics of severance bylaws, cross border shopping, and livestock management practices with respect to animal rights. One member of the Board surprised the Minister when she informed him that Durham Community College has been offering courses in cross border shopping.

The recent appointment of the FWIO President, Peggy Knapp, to the Advisory Committee on Environmental Responsibility, chaired by the Minister, is indicative of the respect and influence the organization has attained. Also, Joyce Anderson, the FWIO representative on the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), is busy chairing the Ontario Agri-Food Week Committee, sits on the Management Board of the Ontario Agriculture Training Institute (OATI), and was one of fifteen OFA representatives on the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. And these are just two examples of FWIO participation on high profile agricultural committees and organizations.

Mr. Buchanan also mentioned that the Ministry is looking for people to serve on the various agricultural marketing boards, commissions and regulatory agencies. He expressed that there is a real need for rural and women's representation, and encourages individuals interested in serving on a board, commission or agency of a particular Ministry to send them a resume and cover letter stating their interests.

*Geraldine Campbell is the Public Relations Officer for the FWIO.*



*Pictured above is the FWIO Executive. Standing from left to right is Margaret Atkins - Northern Regional Vice-President, Hilde Morden - Program Co-ordinator, Anna Jackson - Executive Secretary, Geraldine Campbell - Public Relations Officer and Donna Russell - Eastern Regional Vice-President. Seated in the front row is Margaret Eberle - President Elect (left), Peggy Knapp - President (middle) and Margaret Munro - Past President (right).*

## FWIC Child Care Survey

The FWIC Child Care Survey was formally released on April 4, 1991. It will be distributed to the appropriate departments and agencies of the federal and provincial government.