

FWIO President's Perspectives

Two years ago as I wrote the first of my many communications through *Home & Country*, I was inspired by the flocks of migrating Canada Geese on their flight path over our house, on their way to their northern nesting grounds.

It is now November. Canada Geese are again on the wing, unerringly following their direction to southern waters.

Like the geese, I have now completed the cycle and reached the end of my journey as President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. As the flight leader, I have been dependent on those who have flown by my side and have contributed to the strategic planning which will enable us all to attain the goal. In spite of adjustments to the flight plan and limitations of time, space and resources, we, like the geese, have flown with confidence and assurance.

As I return from my Area Convention visits, I am buoyed by a new feeling of excitement, anticipation and pride in our organization and its future. We are welcoming new members and their new ideas to our Branches; and, we are beginning a new program of outreach by organizing new Branches to meet new and different needs of other women in our communities.

We continue to focus on "Women and Their Environment," on our own personal development, and on the nurturing of the family and the community. We maintain our belief in the dignity and self-respect of rural people. And we have faith that, working together in cooperation and concern, we can restore self-esteem and reinforce the importance of the people who produce our food.

In their unerring pattern the geese fly

south, strong in the knowledge that their needs will be met in spite of the dangers and obstacles along the route.

A few, though, remain on the shoreline of Lake Ontario for the winter, trusting that someone will meet their needs. But they have lost the excitement of the challenge, the feel of the wind beneath their wings, the elation of soaring free. They squabble and bicker over the scraps thrown their way. They live a narrow existence. They envision no new horizons.

I'm glad we are fliers. I'm also grateful that you have been - as I requested in 1989 - "the wind beneath my wings."

Thank you.

Peggy Knapp
November, 1991

Women's Institute signs up



New village signs - recognizing the community organizations - stand at each entrance to the village of St. Pauls in Downie Township, Perth County. The St. Pauls Women's Institute, Perth South District, provided the sign boards. President, Marlene Coulthard, and First Vice-President, Roberta Dundas, donated the WI logo. Each of the other organizations donated their own logos. The Women's Institute members will also look after the flowers in the planter in the years to come.

Taking part in the unveiling ceremony are (from left to right): Ron McKay, President, Downie Optimist Club; Annabel Thompson, Reeve, Downie Township; Bert Vorstenbosch, Warden, Perth County; Roberta Dundas, First Vice-President, St. Pauls WI; Mary Otto; Betty Boyce, 4-H Club Director, Stratford Area; Betty Vink, Second Vice-President, St. Pauls WI.

(Photo courtesy of the Stratford Beacon-Herald).