

THROUGH THE Grapevine

BY FWIO PRESIDENT
MARGARET BYL



It is hard to believe that summer is over and many of you are volunteering at the Fall Fairs throughout the province. We've had a great spring and summer and look forward to a warmer than usual fall season!

In May, FWIO and the Erland Lee (Museum) Home were the recipients of the Stoney Creek Chamber of Commerce Achievement Award for Community Service and were honoured at a Gala Dinner.

At the FWIC Convention in Fredericton, New Brunswick, President Marie Kenny retired and we welcomed a new National President, Linda Hoy and President Elect, Joan Holthe. Evelyn Peck is the new Executive Officer to FWIC. The Plenary Sessions were very informative and Ontario's resolution with concerns for the environment and safety of animals during Federal Celebrations (Balloon Resolution) was passed. An emergency resolution was also put forward and passed which would request the Minister of Justice and the Federal Minister of the Status of Women to support the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses by increasing funding immediately to expand the capacity in Canadian women's shelters

The New Brunswick WI did a fantastic job of arranging meals, entertainment and road trips and everyone had a great time meeting old friends and making new ones. Willy the Worm made an appearance and funds were collected in support of FWIC. Donna Henderson drew the winning ticket for the beautiful quilt that she had hand-crafted as a fundraiser as well. The FWIC Erland Lee Award of Appreciation winners were Peter White and Leendert Byl.

At the Erland Lee (Museum) Home, Alyssa Gomori has joined the team as Curator and is doing a great job working with the Museum Volunteers and developing programming for students and coordinating tours. We were fortunate to have a Summer Student, Mariel Rutherford to help with events at the Museum thanks to a grant from the Canada Summer Student Program. We have had a number of WI Branches visit and several groups from the UK have made arrangements to meet and tour at the Lee. Please watch for details of upcoming events and workshops.

Unfortunately, the Provincial Office and the Museum were also the target of vandalism and theft. Approximately \$10,000 in damage was done. Repairs to the damages are nearly completed.

New sidewalks were poured from the washroom block to the Carriage House and from the existing poured sidewalk to the Office Entrance, thanks to the generous donation of Hollie and Marlene Archer. We would also like to thank Regional Board Director, Alana Robinson for her donation to purchase 2 defibrillators for the Museum.

Pat Marcotte of Wahnapiatae will receive FWIO's Woman of Excellence in Agriculture Award at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in November. Jess Walther was FWIO's recipient of the Peace Garden Scholarship; Caroline Simons of Belleville, winner of the FWIO Provincial Scholarship; and Huma Rana from Cambridge is the Helen Mc Kercher Scholarship winner for 2015. The Provincial Scholarship topic for 2016 is: *After researching the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, how could Women's Institutes help to advocate change for young women's education?*

The Restructuring Committee has worked hard for the past 2 years and has submitted its recommendations to the Board. After lengthy discussions and deliberations by the Provincial Board, it was decided to allow the membership to review the comments and have a choice in what will happen to their organization. A form has been sent to all levels of FWIO for discussion and voting at your Area Conventions. Members can choose to accept the recommendations of the Committee, the Board or a mixture of both. Voting Delegates and Regional Board Directors will then be able to represent the wishes of the Members in their Areas at a final vote which will be held at the AGM on November 26, 2015.

The Strategic Plan and Policies and Procedures have been updated and will be available shortly. Your Provincial Board, Coordinators, Officers, Committees and staff continue to do a wonderful job for WI.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at your Area Conventions!

Yours for Home and Country, Margaret Byl