

International Connections

By Mary Janes



Like to meet new people? Like gardening, landscaping, arts and crafts? Interested in community service and environmental concerns? Like to travel? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, here are two opportunities just for you!

Michigan

The year 2006 will be the 8th year for the exchange program between the Michigan Association for Family & Community Education (FCE) and FWIO. One of the 2004 participants reported that "during these few days of learning and making friends with this similar organization" she attended a Mini College in Lapeer, visited Frankenmuth's Little Bavaria and toured the historic Lapeer County Courthouse. Anyone wishing to travel to Michigan and be a guest of the Michigan Association for Family and Community Education in the summer/fall of 2006 may obtain application forms from the FWIO Office. Applications must be submitted to the office before April 15, 2006.

New York State

Woman's National Farm and Garden

Association (WNFGA), New York Division hosted 4 FWIO members in August 2005. They reported a very successful and enjoyable visit. One participant wrote "We learned a lot about the goals of the New York Division, and we had the opportunity to hear each lady speak about herself. We came away with a warm feeling of how much these ladies care about their communities and that they are supportive of women's groups everywhere."

In 2006 FWIO members have the opportunity to host members of the WNFGA. If you are interested, please contact the FWIO Office for application forms. Applications must be submitted to the office before April 15, 2006.



"during our stay a great wealth of information of different fun programs was exchanged."

2004 Exchange participant

Action Plan for 2006

When you pay your annual Women's Institute fee locally, you are automatically a member of a global organization of women. Your opportunities for exciting learning experiences are endless. Consider the following action plan for 2006.

Good Idea!

- Host a member of the New York Division of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association, a sister society in ACWW
- Travel to Michigan as a guest of the Michigan Association for Family & Community Education, another sister society in ACWW

- Link with a society somewhere other than Canada by sharing letters, programs, photos, videos ideas through the ACWW Links and Penfriends Scheme
- Celebrate ACWW Day on April 29 by reading from The Countrywoman, ACWW brochures, the United Nations website or the ACWW History book, Working With Women Worldwide.
- Support FWIO's Caribbean Project and the ACWW Canada Area's Tanzania project.
- Attend the Canada Area Conference in Regina, tentatively set for October 13-15, 2006. The theme is "Winning the Way for Women"; the hosts are the Saskatchewan Women's Institutes. Participants will include Cercles de Fermieres, National Farm Union Women and all the provincial Women's Institutes.
- Discuss ACWW's aims to understand how they support the objectives of FWIO (Handbook, p. 12). ACWW's aims include: raising the standard of living of rural women and families through education, training and community development projects; providing practical support to members; eliminating gender-based discrimination; and, giving rural women a voice at the international level through United Nations agencies.

For more information or applications, please contact the International Officer or FWIO Provincial Office.