

Advocacy Report

By Ruth Kennedy

A number of responses have been received in regard to previous resolutions submitted to various government bodies and agencies.

Response to Releasing the 1906 Census – The 1906 Census has been made public. We have begun work toward the release of the 1911 Census.

Response to Increased Funding to Community Colleges – The Ontario Government has announced that 17.6 million dollars has been designated to improve Apprenticeship Programs. While this is not exactly what we asked for, it is a step in the right direction.

Response to Eliminating Plastic Grocery Bags – The Hon. Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of the Environment, states that the Government has an approved plan “that will provide industry funding to municipalities to cover 50 % of municipal Blue Box costs. The plan ... will help municipalities divert 60 percent of waste from landfill by 2008. The program includes plastic shopping bags.” (The Minister’s reply does not say what happens to the Blue Box contents. Shipping plastic to China, which has already been done by Ottawa, is not the answer!)

Response to Spreading Biosolids on Agricultural Lands – The Premier of Ontario replied that they “are committed to working with the agricultural industry to develop clear and comprehensive nutrient management rules to protect our drinking water and agricultural lands from contamination. We will consult closely with those involved in the agri-food industry, such as farmers, ... to develop rules that will ensure the health and safety of agricultural ecosystems.”

Two resolutions were returned to the Branches because they were not passed at the District level. Please refer to page 83 of the FWIO *Handbook*. Two resolutions are in the hands of the FWIO Board. They deal with halting the construction of radio communication towers and the regulations in regard to the size and colour of printing on consumer products, including phone books. Both require more backup information.

The FWIO Board has passed three emergency resolutions as follows:

- That FWIO urge the Federal Government to immediately look into the huge discrepancy between what the farmer presently realizes for the price of beef and what the consumer pays in the retail store.
- That FWIO urge the Federal and Provincial Governments to open the borders to Canadian beef, dairy and all agricultural commodities and return to pre-BSE trade practices.
- That FWIO urge the Federal and Provincial Governments to realize

the dire situation of farmers and to look for ways to expand processing capacity so as to deal with escalating numbers of cattle.

Since these resolutions were passed, the US government has opened the border to some meat products, which is at least a step in the right direction. The reopening of the border to the one million head of live cattle per year is yet to come!

We are currently working on the resolutions and recommendations coming out of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Conference in Hobart, Tasmania, in March 2004.

Correction re: Information on Family Studies Resolution – A Family Studies course is one of the options in the Social Sciences and Humanities credits available to high school students, but it is not a compulsory credit. The Minister of Education reported that 13 different Family Studies courses are available and five of them focus on parenting. The Provincial Government is not considering Home Economics as a course and believes the content is covered in other credits.

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Generations of Volunteers

Over the years, the FWIO Booth at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF) would not have happened without Women’s Institute volunteers. Silverwood WI member Rosamund Edwards (left) first started volunteering years ago at the booth with her mother, Waldemar WI member Dorothy Clark (not shown). Rosamund’s daughter and Bethesda-Reach WI member Anna Edwards (right) is shown with Mansfield WI’s relatively new member Jo Tani (standing center) and Cathcart WI’s long-time member Joy Potter (seated). Congratulations to these generations of volunteers!

Submitted by Blaushe Ciach, Mansfield WI, Dufferin North, Central Area.