

On Your Behalf



By Dianne Orr

The Branch annual meetings and District Annuals are over. Now it is time for many of us to attend the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Convention in Lennoxville, Quebec. Because Ontario is such a large province it has been twinned with three provinces – Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and New Brunswick. The Convention will allow us the opportunity to learn more about these provinces.

Our new ROSE Program Manager Julie Annett is a wonderful addition to our provincial organization. Her position is completely funded for two years by an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. With Julie's enthusiasm one cannot help but feel inspired to get involved with the "ROSES are Blooming" Expansion Project. Julie is anxious to meet members during her two years and I know that you will support her and the ROSE Program.

Have you been participating in "Women Walking for WI?" This is the best time of year to get out and about. Don't forget to record the total number of kilometers you have walked and send it on to your Area Convention in the fall. Let's put that total figure well over the 50,000 kilometers that was suggested by Peggy Knapp.

Many members are planning to attend the 4th Line Theatre this summer to see the play *For Home and Country*. On August 17 the FWIO Board of Directors plan to attend the final performance. We hope for

good weather since the theatre is completely outdoors. Don't forget, if you identify yourself as WI and purchase group tickets you can take advantage of a special discount price.

Are you planning to travel around Ontario this summer? Do you sometimes find that motels are rather expensive? Why not stay at a WI Hospitality Home? You will have the pleasure of meeting fellow members and experiencing good accommodation and food for the price of \$10 per person per night. Or perhaps you would like to open your home to a weary WI traveler. If you are interested, get in touch with Hospitality Homes Coordinator Gillian Catto at Box 16, Site 14, RR 1, Whitefish ON P0M 3E0, or email gilcat@sympatico.ca

Since February is International Month and the next Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Conference will be held in Tasmania in March 2004, our ROSE Coordinator has suggested that Branches plan an Australian night. We hope that many members from across Canada can attend the world conference and experience the real thing. A reminder that the third phase of our Focus High for WI project will be starting soon and that the Provincial President will present the proceeds to ACWW in Tasmania for their special projects.

Some members have expressed concern about the rise in membership fees. As many of you are aware, until a few years ago FWIO was fully funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF). FWIO did not have to pay for office space, supplies, postage, the *Home & Country* newsletter, staff, or any other

expenses required to keep the Women's Institute functioning. When the government discontinued their support, FWIO assumed all of these responsibilities and had to find the financial resources to maintain the organization.

In a recent letter a former Board Director made the following comment about the loss of government support: "We went from having every paper clip, typewriter, telephone, salaries, meeting rooms, overnight accommodation and meals (etc.) paid entirely by OMAFRA to being responsible ourselves for all of the above in a very short time."

Today, the main support comes from membership fees. Donations from Branches, Districts, Areas and from some outside sources such as bequests also help FWIO meet the rising costs of maintaining the Provincial Office in Guelph, the Erland Lee (Museum) Home in Stoney Creek and the many other operating costs. The membership has risen to the occasion by taking on the responsibility of the operation of FWIO. You are truly a credit to the organization, and an example of what can be done when we all work together!

I am anxious to meet many of you again in the fall at Area Conventions. In the mean time, work to meet the membership recruitment challenge for the next two years – that each member recruit one new member per year. Remember, what lies behind us and before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

A safe and healthy summer to all!

On your behalf, *Dianne Orr*

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Cold Springs Celebrates!

Cold Springs Women's Institute members were ecstatic to receive a \$25,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The grant will enable the group to complete installation of an air conditioning unit and an upgrade to the upstairs washrooms in their Memorial Hall. Cheering from left to right are members Laura Bowman, Shiela Frost, Orma Budreau, Margaret [unclear], Jean Buttars, Helen Polley, Dorothy Beedham, Aretha Dickinson, Yvonne Barker, Vi Dickinson and the hand of Lillian McIntosh (sorry Lillian!).



Submitted by Dorothy Harnden, Cold Springs WI, Northumberland West, Trent Valley Area.