

# On Your Behalf

By Dianne Orr



**A**utumn is a truly beautiful season in Ontario. Many of you have had the opportunity to enjoy summer vacations, weed gardens and harvest fruits and vegetables. Or just take time to enjoy the warmth and sunshine. Now we can sit back to enjoy the results of our labours! But knowing how Women's Institute members function, we all know that our work is never done.

The FWIO Provincial Board of Directors met in August for four busy days. What, you ask, do they do for four days? The first item on the agenda was a review and discussion of our newly drafted Strategic Plan. The Plan, based on a member survey, focus group sessions with the Board and staff, key community contact interviews and a documentation review, provides the framework to introduce change, while meeting head-on the needs of the organization and its members. This three-year Strategic Plan was created in order that all members will benefit from a unified goal. The Implementation Plan gives us target dates by which to implement or complete our strategic objectives and the accompanying strategies. It also outlines who is responsible for each task.

The Strategic Plan is available for every member to read via the FWIO website at [www.fwio.on.ca](http://www.fwio.on.ca) and the *Home & Country* Summer Supplement. Or ask your Provincial Advisory Councillor or Board Director to view their copies. Please take time to review this document so that you will understand what members have asked us to do.

Following the Strategic Plan review, the FWIO Board discussed committee reports, addressed correspondence, received guests and delegations who gave presentations and thoroughly reviewed the FWIO Proposed Budget for 2002-2003. We have evolved from an organization that was dependent on the Ontario Government, and particularly on the Ontario Ministry of

Agriculture and Food, for most of our administrative and financial needs to one that is independent of the government and run by the membership fees. This year the members were advised of an increase in the provincial fees, which in conjunction with the work of the Marketing & Resource Development Director will help maintain FWIO as a viable organization.

Attesting to the viability of the Women's Institutes, I have attended numerous Branch and District 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. What an honour it is for me to present special certificates to Districts and Branches and 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pins to each Branch member. How many of you were able to attend the production *For Home and Country* at the 4<sup>th</sup> Line Theatre near Peterborough this summer? Playwright Leanna Brodie and Artistic Director Robert Winslow brought the Women's Institute story to life with great success. I wish that all WI members in the province could have seen this play; it was a renewal of our vision of the Institute.

This fall, our Membership Coordinator Cindy Lockhart was asked by several Areas to provide a Membership Workshop. She will be traveling with me to several Area Conventions to accommodate these requests. Indeed, September and October will prove to be an exciting time as I travel the province to meet you at Area Conventions.

The Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Conference was held in Ste. Hyacinthe, Quebec, in September. This was an opportunity for delegates and members from every constituent society in Canada to attend and meet World President Hilda Stewart and Canada Area President Elizabeth Rushton. Quebec receives our thanks for hosting such a great Conference. Quebec will also be hosting the next Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) Convention in Lennoxville in June 2003. I encourage Ontario members to register. Ask the FWIO Provincial Office for registration forms. Looking further ahead, the next ACWW Conference will be held in Tasmania in March 2004.

As I visit the various Branches, Districts and Areas a recurring theme is evident. We all join together for fellowship, fun and learning and to share these ideals with everyone we meet. What a wonderful country we live in when we can travel safely, share ideas without fear and have the resources, such as the FWIO website, to improve ourselves. If you continue to share the dream of Adelaide Hoodless, I know that the Women's Institute shall remain a strong force in today's world.

On your behalf,

*Dianne Orr, President, FWIO*

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## Beamsville WI Member Grace Jarvis Honoured



*Long-time Beamsville Women's Institute member Grace Jarvis (right) was honoured by her Branch, including her daughter Patricia Watterworth (left), for her 66 years of service in the organization. Grace joined the WI in Bethersden, Kent, England, in 1936 and has been a member ever since. Patricia joined in 1972 and says she "grew up" in the WI. Grace and Patricia are proud to be a part of this great organization and to have the opportunity to get to know and work with so many fine women.*

*Submitted by Angela Valli, PRO, Beamsville WI, Lincoln.*