

Giday, Giday from the Valley

By Christine Reaburn



History shows the Women's Institute as an organization that cares for people, or issues that happen down the road, across Canada and around the world. Women's Institute has helped to build strong communities because they have a social conscience. Members have the drive and the initiative to affect change through legislation that strives for the betterment of our society.

There are momentous decisions on the horizon affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and globalization. How will this affect how business is done in Canada? How will it affect our natural resources, such as water, oil, gas and lumber? Any of these topics would make for an absorbing Branch program or community information evening. As well, the Women's Institute is a powerful lobby. So do share your opinions with the appropriate levels of government.

The condition and treatment of women in various countries around the world is of prime concern. Women in Afghanistan and Iraq and the girl child in China come to mind. At the Associated Country Women

of the World (ACWW) Conference in Hamilton in June resolutions were passed urging all ACWW societies to work towards the elimination of the "Trafficking of Women" and the implementation of the "Convention on the Rights of the Child." These subjects would make an excellent program in conjunction with recognition of World Rural Women's Day on October 15. I would enjoy hearing about your programs to honour this special day.

The FWIO Provincial Board and the Ontario Coordinating Committee (OCC) send you their thanks and appreciation for your support of the 23rd Triennial Conference of the ACWW. Your donations of funds, post cards, stamps, programs and favours were appreciated. We have received many cards and letters at the Provincial Office thanking you for your hospitality and enthusiasm. Many members from across Ontario attended the Conference. Please ask them to share their experiences; I'm sure they will have some great stories to relate.

Has your community dedicated a plaque or monument in recognition of the work of the Women's Institute in your area? I

discovered several while visiting with members this past summer and I would like to compile a record of them. If your WI group has been honoured in such a way, please send a brief history or report, along with a photograph if possible, to the FWIO Provincial Office. Please mark the envelope – "Attention - Christine."

Also, how many Women's Institute groups have a sign at the entrance to your village, town or city? Have you adopted a section of highway under the Adopt-A-Road program in Ontario? Do you wear special t-shirts or aprons promoting the WI when you volunteer in your community? Please send a brief report and photograph to the Provincial Office if these apply to your WI. Again, mark the envelope – "Attention - Christine."

We are six months into the membership challenge as outlined on page 7 of the Summer *Home & Country*. I do hope you are meeting with success in this venture.

As always, I look forward to visiting with you at Area Conventions and learning of your projects and activities.

The Women's Institute is an organization that has always provided education, fellowship and community leadership. We have a vibrant history, so let us share our 104 years of experience with others.

Til next time.

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ROSE Health Program Update

Dear Members,

It's 10:30 pm on a Sunday night, little Avery, who is 2 months old, is finally asleep. I can write in peace (for now)! Yes, I'm now on maternity leave and loving it! We welcomed our son, Avery Philip on July 5, who weighed a mere 10 lbs, 11 oz! We are both doing fine and I'm thoroughly enjoying my time with him!

During my absence, WI Member Gail Murdock will be volunteering her time as the interim Health Program Coordinator. Gail was on the Health Committee while the ROSE Health Program was being developed and implemented and she brings an abundance of skill and knowledge to the position. For information about the program and/or participating partners, please leave a



From left to right are Kelly, Yvonne and Kathy, Leadership Training Session Facilitators.

message for Gail at 519-836-3056 or email her at g.r.murdock@sympatico.ca

If your Branch would like to order ROSE Health Program brochures, contact the Provincial Office. Health Session reports and profiles can be sent by mail to the Provincial Office, by email to rosehealthprogram@fwio.on.ca or by fax to 519-836-3094.

Although I'm on maternity leave, I'm still assisting with correspondence and enjoying the reports I've received about your health initiatives! Please keep sending them in – we have a growing database and presentation binder in which to recognize your accomplishments!

Once again, I would like to extend my appreciation to all the members (almost 800!) who attended the Leadership Training Sessions over the past year. You were full of energy and ideas! I look forward to hearing about how you and your Branches used the information you received! Kathy (who assisted from March – November 2000), Yvonne (who assisted from November 2000 – May 2001) and I, thank you for welcoming us into your communities! Keep in touch!

Kelly