

Giday, Giday from the Valley

By Christine Reaburn

Giday, Giday from the Valley - in particular, from my home in Renfrew County in the Upper Ottawa Valley.

Renfrew County has a rich heritage. The first to settle here were the Algonquins, followed by Europeans who came in search of fur and to farm the productive soils. The rivers became a highway for transporting goods to and from market. The white pine brought wealth to the Lumber Barons who used the Ottawa River to float this highly prized commodity to Bytown (Ottawa), and from there to the world. Along with settlement came a mixing of cultures - English, Scottish, French, Irish and German - which exists today in the songs, writings, dances and language.

Renfrew County is still rich in timber and agriculture. Additions to this traditional economic base are Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and Whitewater Adventure and Tourism. The water highway is now home to hydro dams, whitewater adventures, bungee jumping, kayaking and pleasure boating. There is nothing quite as spectacular as the Valley dressed for autumn.

The Women's Institute is also a part of Renfrew County's heritage. Women's Institute played a vital and influencing role in the development of communities. Examples of this include installing footpaths and street lights, building and maintaining community halls and providing needed educational programs - a role they still fulfill today.

What a great time to be involved with Women's Institute! Opportunities await us as we, collectively, plan and work to increase our personal knowledge of women's health and other issues and share these opportunities with our communities. At the same time, we can actively recruit



new members, organize new Branches and strengthen our existing ones.

Rural communities in Ontario need our leadership. I am confident that Women's Institute members can continue to fill that gap. Women's Institute has a proud heritage. Let's share our pride and invite our neighbours to join us in working to ensure strong rural communities throughout the province.

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The Provincial Board of FWIO looks forward to hearing from you. We need to hear of your projects and your achievements, how you keep your meetings strong and vital, and how you recruit members and raise funds. We would like to share the wealth of experience, knowledge and entrepreneurship exhibited by Branches, Districts and Areas across this province.

As we start a new year, I encourage you to continue being the "spark" in your community.

Til next time, take care!

Christine Reaburn is the newly elected President of FWIO. She can be reached at RR1, Westmeath ON K0J 2L0, Phone/Fax: 613-582-3550.

FIRST LADY OF THE ROYAL

FWIO President Arthena Hecker presented Cathy Wilson Pinkney with the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario Excellence in Agriculture Award at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF) on November 5, 1999.

Cathy Wilson Pinkney has served 4-H as a Provincial 4-H Program Specialist under the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. In this position, Cathy has served as the ministry representative to the RAWF Youth Activities Committee. She is well-known to 4-H members and fair goers alike. She has shown great leadership and devotion to the education of 4-H youth and spectators at the Royal.

Profile



Meet Christine Reaburn, Newly Elected President

Christine Reaburn is the newly elected President of FWIO. A perusal of her resume reveals extensive involvement with the Women's Institute at all levels. The Women's Institute positions she has held, the courses and workshops she has led and the conferences she has attended attest to her commitment to this organization. Christine's involvement in and recognition by agricultural related organizations is equally impressive.

Christine has always enjoyed traveling. For part of 1971-72 she lived and worked in Great Britain. In London she worked in the typing pool at the Treasury Building. Later in Edinburgh, she worked as the Personal Assistant to the General Secretary of the Scottish Association of Young Farmer's Clubs. During these two years she visited Norway, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland and she attended the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich.

She married her husband Larry in Dufferin County in 1973, moving to Renfrew County in 1974. The lure was a larger farm. They started with 300 acres and have increased to 1000 acres, which includes cash crops and pedigree seed production.

Their three girls are striking out on their own. Janet (married to Scott) is a graduate of Kemptville College and works with her Dad. Catherine will graduate with an Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism Degree from Lakehead University next year. Charlotte is in her first year at Loyalist College studying Photo-Journalism.

"I have always tried to pace myself," said Christine, "not taking on more than I can reasonably handle in terms of volunteer commitments. One executive position at a time. I like to have the time and commitment to do one job well."

When she is not pursuing her volunteer commitments, Christine enjoys gardening, knitting and crocheting. She reads one book a week and particularly enjoys historical novels.