



Entering the New Millennium

Program Ideas for 2000/2001



A new millennium is a great time to look back at the past, take stock of the present and look forward to the future. Soon you will be thinking about your Branch program for the year 2000/2001. FWIO has chosen "The New Millennium" as a theme. Here are some ideas to help you plan regular meetings that will be both educational and fun!

Now is a good time to review the job of the Branch Education Coordinator in the new *Handbook* (pages 28 and 35). This is the new title for the old Program Coordinator. This is one of the most important jobs at the Branch level. The Education Coordinator and her committee are responsible for sitting down in March or April to plan the year's program. That program must be copied and distributed to all members, and lots of potential members!

Your Branch's annual program is your most important piece of advertising. It must show the date, time, place and program for every meeting, as well as all the relevant contact names and phone numbers. Everyone - your members and your community - needs to know all the interesting things your Branch is going to do each year. Make lots of extra copies and pass them around.

The new *Handbook* has a slightly different list of suggested topics (page 35) to consider as themes for your regular meetings. There are new FWIO sub-committees on each of these topics looking for interesting ideas for you to use at your

Branch meetings. Here are some of their suggestions. You may have lots of ideas already. If you do, that's great! If not, consider a few of these.

Agricultural Issues

- Water testing and water resources will be important issues in the next millennium. Can you tour your local water treatment facility? Visit a local water bottling plant? Or visit your local conservation authority?
- Farm Safety - The St. John's Ambulance offers a course on First Aid on the Farm. To book a trainer for your Branch and your community call your local St. John's Ambulance branch, or call their provincial office at 416-923-8411. Or visit their web site at www.sja.ca
- Offices of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), 4-H Council, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) and Agriculture Groups Concerned About Resources and the Environment (AgCare) are just a few of the organizations that can supply speakers.
- Bring your local agriculture into the schools. For information on participating in school programs call Rhea Brillinger, Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. at 905-878-1510.

Business and Industry

- Learn about local women in business. Women and Rural Economic Development (WRED) is an Ontario women's organization that promotes rural economic opportunity through local control and ownership of businesses. It provides programs for women's business development, life skills, networking, access to capital, information and markets and business diversification.

WRED has set up 21 Rural Women's Business Networks across Ontario that hold regular meetings with over 2,500 businesswomen. There should be a network in your area. Contact your local network. Organize a joint meeting? Get a speaker to talk about women in business in your area? Get a suggestion for a rural women's business you could visit? To find a WRED contact in your area, look for their notices in your local paper, call their provincial office at 1-800-790-9949, visit their web site at www.wred.org or email admin@wred.org

- Confused by all the email and web addresses in this article? Plan a meeting to tour the Internet. Get a local high school student to show you how it works, or call FWIO's Webmaster Joe Ann Lane at 705-282-2137. Or send her an email: granny@onlink.net

Citizenship/Culture/Community

- Attend an all-candidates meeting in your local municipality during an election, or better yet, host one.
- Re-enact an historical event, like the first council meeting in your area. Or compare the agenda from an earlier council meeting with one from this year. Ask your local historical society for the minutes and agendas.
- The TransCanada Trail is a walking/skiing/skidooring trail, which will span Canada from coast to coast. Plan a summer meeting to visit the part of the trail closest to you. Help build part of the trail for the future by sponsoring it at \$40 a metre and get your WI's name on a plaque! Contact the TransCanada Trail Foundation at 43 Westminister Ave. N., Montreal QC H4X 1V8, Phone: 1-800-465-3636 or Email: info@tctrail.ca

Don't forget -

Inviting guests to your meetings is the number one way to attract new members. Make sure you have at least one guest enjoying your program at every single meeting!

