

# Caring & Sharing

by Arthena Hecker



What a wonderful day! The sun was shining and over 250 members and guests were in attendance to participate in the official launch of the Health Program. Minister of Health Elizabeth Witmer presented a \$229,000 cheque to the Women's Institute and praised them for their past accomplishments and for taking on this important project.

There was good media coverage - we made the CTV news! The TV program Town & Country was also there and will be airing their program on volunteers next year. We will inform you of the date of the airing at a later time. Altogether, it was a good day for WI.

Kelly Marshall, the Coordinator of the Health Program, is gathering information from the various organizations that would like to work with the Women's Institute. She is putting together a program that will be brought around the province to show how to use their available resources.

It is going to take time for Kelly to get the program up and running. It will be implemented first in the Guelph Area. The "bugs" will get worked out during this trial run before the workshops are offered to the rest of the province.

Working with the Ministry of Health and our health partners on this project is a great opportunity for Women's Institute. Not only will we be bringing important information to our communities, our reputation as progressive women will be enhanced.

During the planning stages of this program, it was viewed as a means to increase our membership. Will this happen? Yes! There are a lot of early retirees out there looking for an opportunity to contribute their talent and time. People want to belong to an organization that is doing something worthwhile.

The Women's Institute has always done something worthwhile, but has refrained from bragging about it. Generally, people are unaware of what the WI has accomplished. But as the Health Program develops the WI should get lots of media coverage and, ultimately, new members.

When the Health Program or *PHONE-BUSTERS* workshops come to your

Region, don't miss the opportunity to participate. You, your family and your neighbours and community will be glad that you did!

And what about "A Grandmother's Legacy?" I hope every Branch participates and honours their oldest member. This would be a great opportunity to get together with another Branch. Or get the Branches in your District together and organize a Tea or an Open House. Invite the media! Local newspapers like personal stories.

Things are happening in Women's Institute! Exciting things!



This is my last Caring & Sharing column. Where have the two years gone? It has been a busy time, but a very rewarding time. I have truly enjoyed it! It has been an honour and a privilege being the President of FWIO.

Thank you for your encouragement, your goodwill and your kindness. I have such good memories!

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## In the Name of Defense

As part of its mandate toward revitalizing community spirit and working toward a healthy physical and mental environment, the Chisholm Women's Institute recently sponsored a Self Defense for Women Workshop. Chantal Nadon (left photo), the National Kickboxing Champion, takes Kim Chayer and her mother Valerie Chayer through basic self defense techniques. Nadon is the current Canadian, North American and World Kickboxing Champion.

Victoria Town gave it her best shot during the afternoon session of the self defense workshop. Gary Peever, who holds a second degree black belt in karate, was the "punching bag" for some 40 women who signed up. The all-day workshop was well attended by young women and teens in the community. The Chisholm Branch was pleased with the response and interest generated for the Women's Institute.

Excerpts and photos courtesy of Astric Taim, *Maguin News*.

Submitted by Linda Ellery, PRO, Chisholm WI, Parry Sound North.

