

Board Briefings

August, 1998

At the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) Board Meeting in Guelph in early August, President Arthena Hecker facilitated discussions for the revised framework of the organization. Over the past few years, several proposals for restructuring have been considered and discussed at length by Board Directors.

Throughout the 1980s, FWIO has been planning strategically for the future by setting long and short-term goals and by opening their own provincial office independent of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Since then, the Board has worked towards developing a more effective organization. In 1997, a revised vision statement was developed: "Working Together Shaping Tomorrow's World," and strategic goals were set to define this vision.

At the August Board, Hecker stated that "the decisions being made now are in the best interests of the whole organization." It is expected these changes will result in more effective communications and more financial prudence.

For detailed information on the revised framework of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario see centre insert.

Resolutions Sustained

The following resolutions were sustained at the August Board Meeting:

From Greenwood WI, North Renfrew

- requesting the Canadian Medical Association and the Federal Minister of Health to adopt the position of eradicating pediatric lead toxicity, its sources and its effects on behaviour and learning, with the eventual goal of nationwide screening of children at school entry level (ages 3, 4 or 5) using hair elemental analysis as first choice to screen for lead and other heavy metals, such as cadmium, nickel, tin, aluminum, arsenic and mercury

- requesting the Canadian Medical Association and the Federal Minister of Health to recognize hair elemental analysis as an acceptable marker for concern in lead and heavy metal toxicity and to render chelation therapy accessible for those children showing developmental delays and/or intellectual impairment and/or behavioural impairment (most notably Attention Deficit Disorder) in conjunction with elevated hair elemental analysis levels and/or elevated urine elemental analysis following chelation challenge

From West Fort WI, Thunder Bay

- requesting the Canadian Government to live up to commitments made in 1992 at the Rio Summit and again in 1997 at the Japan Summit to reduce to the 1990 level at least by the year 2000 our country's emissions of greenhouse gases and to encourage provincial governments, industry, commerce and private citizens by means of incentives to help us reach that goal

From North Mornington WI, Perth North

- urging the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Services to expand funding and services for the teaching of parenting skills in elementary schools

From Union Street WI, York North

- urging the Ministry of the Attorney General to amend the law of evidence so as to prohibit the Crown from adducing the testimony of jailhouse informants as to the self-incriminatory statements or conduct of accused persons in criminal trials

Information Items

Financial Matters

The expenses and revenues are tracking within the 1998 budget ranges which will end the fiscal year in a balanced net position (net profit of 0). A Recommendation Form has been designed to present all recommendations to Board. The recommendation is stated on the Form, outlining its benefits, disadvantages and the cost. This form was designed as a tool to assist Board Directors in the decision making process. All Recommendation Forms should be sent to the Provincial Office 30 days prior to Board meetings for inclusion on the agenda.

Annual Meeting

Beginning in 1999, FWIO will combine the annual meeting with a provincial conference and workshops.

Public Relations Officer

Mary Janes presented a detailed chart of all the current FWIO public relations/promotional initiatives. Some were initiated by the PRO; some were developed and carried out by others. The chart listed all printed materials, networking initiatives with other provincial organizations and multi-media and outreach efforts. After commenting on the chart, Janes stated, "you will recognize that Public Relations at the provincial level is a large responsibility, that one volunteer cannot do it all and that everyone at the provincial level needs to work together closely for the endeavour to be successful." Once again, Janes recommended that the PRO become a paid position at the provincial level.

Board Directors approved the PRO's proposal that all members of FWIO celebrate WI Week annually in February, during the week in which the anniversary of the formation of the first WI in Stoney Creek falls (February 14-20, in 1999). See page 11 for more details on how to implement this new proposal.

Annual Report

Branches will be receiving a copy of FWIO's Annual Report for 1997-1998. The motion to distribute it to Branches is for a one-year trial basis, after which it will be reviewed. Board felt that Branches could review in detail the financial information of the organization, as well as provincial committee activity reports. A professionally formatted annual report is necessary to present to potential sources of outside funding.

Program Themes Approved

Next year is the International Year of the Senior. This is one of the chosen themes for Women's Institutes programming in 1998-1999. The other chosen theme is "The New Millennium." Watch for more program ideas in the Winter issue of *Home & Country*.

FWIC

FWIC has contracted Dr. Linda Ambrose, author of *For Home and Country*, to write a history of the Women's Institutes in Canada from 1897 to 1997, to be ready for FWIC Convention 2000. The proposed book will be approximately 75 pages with 40 illustrations and 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" in size.

CD-Rom Textbook

Canada: Confederation to Present (working title) is a collaborative CD-Rom textbook. The textbook is aimed at students taking introductory level Canadian history courses in post-secondary institutions, but it is hoped that it will be distributed to mem-

bers of the general public. The inclusion of thousands of images and sound and film clips from the nation's archives and museums will provide unparalleled exposure to the primary data of history instructors. The editors of this text have invited two hundred leading scholars to provide written original materials in their areas of expertise. The FWIO Board of Directors authorized the University of Alberta Textbook Committee to use maps and graphs that are printed in the Ambrose book *For Home and Country*.

Pitch-In Canada Week 2000

Many thanks were extended to the 37 Women's Institute Branches who reported their participation during Pitch-In Canada Week in 1998. Pitch-In Canada would like individual WI members to write to both the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Canada requesting that the Government of Canada designate Pitch-In Canada Week 2000 as a Canada Millennium Partnership Program. Since Pitch-In Canada was founded in 1967, it has been their dream to have a national clean-up from coast to coast.

Write your letter today. Here are the addresses to write to:

The Right Hon. Jean Chretien, MP Prime Minister of Canada, Langevin Block, 80 Wellington St., Ottawa ON K1A 0A2, or The Hon. Herb Gray, MP, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and Minister responsible for Canada Millennium Program, Marshall Four Corners Bldg., 3rd Floor, 14 Metcalfe St., Ottawa ON K1A 0A3.

Also send a copy to your local Member of Parliament.



Jeanette Sweet (left) and Violet Dunk (right), members of the Rylstone WI, are picking up roadside garbage as part of the Pitch-In Canada Program held last spring.

Submitted by Dorothy Thomson, Rylstone WI, Hastings North