



Caring & Sharing

By Arthena Hecker

Happy 1998! May the year bring peace and contentment to you and your family.

What a year of celebration! We celebrated the centennial of the Women's Institutes at our Branches, Districts and Areas, and at Convention '97 in Hamilton in June. It's good to celebrate the past, to know where you came from and to recognize past achievements.

But where do we go from here? The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) Board of Directors voted on our new structure at the annual meeting in November. Our new Board will include eight Board Directors and an Advisory Body. More work needs to be done to implement the changes. We need to finish this and proceed with our objectives: personal growth and community action - working together shaping tomorrow's world.

Some of the areas I would like our organization to work on are:

Communications - With this new structure I envision every Board member having a computer in their home and being connected by E-mail. It is faster and less expensive than using the telephone. We must use current technologies if we are to survive and flourish in this highly technical age.

Also, we need constant input from you, the member. We need to know and recognize what you value. Communication is vital. If you have concerns or feel there is an issue the Women's Institutes should be working on, contact your Board Director or the Provincial Office.

You are the most important person in this organization. What concerns you, concerns the organization. Remember, communication is a two-way street. Communication needs to travel in both directions.

Education - Member feedback has indicated an interest in provincially organized educational courses, similar to Officers Conferences and short courses. How are we going to offer these? What about a "travelling road show," so to speak, that would move about the province offering courses to members and the general public? To achieve this, we need to fund raise provincially. Do you have any ideas for courses or for fund raising? If you do, call or write to the FWIO Provincial Office.

Projects - I truly believe that people become enthused and involved if there is a project with which they can identify. Have you called your Area Program Coordinator to make arrangements to view the video and manual "Knowledge is the Best Medicine"? This is something we can do for ourselves, our family and our community. If you have already jumped in and done this, what about organizing an osteoporosis-menopause awareness and education program called Changes: Choices and Challenges? Or work with the Community Abuse Program of Rural Ontario (CAPRO) to help make your rural community a safe and healthy place. Or you can help the Ontario Breast Screening Program in the recruitment of women for breast screening. Refer to pages 8 and 9 of the *Fall Home & Country* for details and contacts.

We need to talk positively about the Women's Institute. We are needed as much today, as we were one hundred years ago. We must stride forward with optimism, pride and confidence. We must be optimistic about our future, take pride in our organization and be confident that we can make a difference.

Arthena Hecker is the newly installed President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at RR 1, Richards Landing ON P0R 1J0, Phone: (705)246-2377, Fax: (705)246-1236.

Conference '98 -

"Perfect Summer Get-Away"

Cold, blustery days offer an opportunity to slow down the pace and try a new recipe or two. Here's one that is guaranteed to warm the heart and soul.

Recipe for "Perfect Summer Get-Away"

Ingredients:

- casual atmosphere
- picturesque setting
- laughter and entertainment
- opportunity to learn something new
- meet new people
- interesting tours and super speakers
- companion programs and interesting local activities
- Add a generous amount of warm welcome and season liberally with enthusiasm!!
- Blend together and simmer with anticipation.

The end result - Conference '98.



When: July 3 - 5, 1998

Where: Loyalist College, Belleville

Theme: "Today's Family Shaping Tomorrow's World"

Host: Trent Valley Area WI

Trent Valley Area Women's Institute members and your Conference '98 Committee welcomes registrations from WI members from across Ontario. Loyalist College is situated approximately two hours

east of Toronto in the city of Belleville. Its wooded 200 acre campus lies close to housing, shopping, entertainment and Lake Ontario waterfront. It is easily accessible by Highway 401, commuter trains and buses.

The confirmed Saturday keynote speaker is Maude Barlow, author, policy critic, outspoken crusader for Canada and Chair of the Council of Canadians. Roy Bonisteel, broadcaster, journalist and former host of popular CBC television program "Man Alive," is also booked to speak.

Watch for further details in a Branch mailing coming your way in January. Or contact Conference '98 Committee Chair Donna Russett at RR 3, Stirling ON K0K 3E0, phone/fax: (613)395-4305, or Secretary Cathy McCann at 70 McCann Rd., Codrington ON K0K 1R0, phone: (613)475-1488.

Like all great recipes you will want to pass it along to a friend, so plan to invite a companion and mark your calendar for July 3 to 5, 1998.

Mary Macfarlane is the Public Relations Officer for the Trent Valley Area and Conference '98.