

Board Briefings

November, 1997

Comwall was the setting of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario first open annual meeting last November. After the presentation of flags and welcome by President Marg Harris, all officers and committees presented their annual reports. These were followed by the elections and the installation of officers.

Following dinner, the Board Directors, Executive and thirty guests at the Annual meeting enjoyed the McPhee Fashion Show presented by Board Director and Regional Vice-President Rosemary Moran.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Election Results:

Arthena Hecker of Richards Landing was elected President.

Christine Reaburn of Westmeath was elected President-Elect.

Winnifred Mann of Listowel was elected Western Regional Vice-President

Donna Willows of St. Pauls was elected Southern Regional Vice-President.

Bev Coutts of Stayner was elected member-at-large as Chair of the Finance Committee.

Public Relations: Forty stations reported playing the jingle approximately 2,300 times in an eight-month period. Members have commented that hearing the jingle has given them a sense of recognition.

The FWIO Web site is updated regularly, providing Women's Institute information on the Internet. Current news releases and *Home & Country* newsletters are included in the updates.

Volunteer Opportunity: There is an immediate need for a person with web page authoring experience, who pays attention to detail, to do the work required for the FWIO web site. This volunteer needs to have his/her own computer and scanner and Internet access. A knowledge of HTML is required.

Home & Country: As FWIO's primary communications tool, the *Home & Country* newsletter is the most important vehicle in which to relay information to the membership. At the 1997, March Board meeting the Editorial Committee was asked to consider a number of items:

- the inclusion of what was referred to as an "FWIO Fact Sheet" so that all members are receiving the same information about provincial matters and issues;
- the inclusion of advertising so as to offset the cost of producing the newsletter; and,
- the distribution of the newsletter to individual members as opposed to Branch Secretaries.

The first suggestion was incorporated in the Summer 1997 issue of the *Home & Country* as Board Briefings. Information and recommendations regarding the other two items is forthcoming at the March 1998 Board meeting.

Program Challenge: FWIO would like to remind you of the partnership agreements made with the following four groups:

- Community Abuse Program of Rural Ontario (CAPRO)
- Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Canada (PMAC)
- Osteoporosis Society of Canada (OSC)
- Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP)

These groups agreed to partner and work together with the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario presenting educational programs throughout Ontario. Now, FWIO challenges you - the members, Branches, Districts and Areas - to initiate at least 100 programs in 1998 with each of these partners.

Membership Challenge: Lorna McGrath, Membership Coordinator for FWIO, challenges each member to bring one new member into the Women's Institute organization this coming year. For those members whose Branch has disbanded, consider joining another Branch near you or becoming a Contributing Member. Call the Provincial Office or your Area Membership Organizer for further details.

Constitution Committee: This Committee is in the process of updating and rewriting the Women's Institute Handbook. Input from all members is welcome. Please send any suggestions to the Provincial Office, attention Constitution Committee.

FWIO Tartan: The FWIO Tartan is selling well! Please order the FWIO Tartan based on the information as outlined on page 4 of the Fall 1997 *Home & Country*. The Tartan is also available from Rosemary Moran at (613)398-8462 or Arthena Hecker at (705)246-2377.

Manitoba Flood Relief: Donna Russett reported that \$10,000 had been sent by Ontario members to the Manitoba Flood Relief Fund. The money has been distributed by the Keystone Agricultural Producers to those in need.

Centennial Committee: The Centennial Committee closed their books at the end of the 1996-97 fiscal year. This Committee has presented a total of \$13,186.79 to FWIO.

Women's Day at the Royal: The 1997 winner of the Excellence Agriculture Award was presented to Evelyn McCutcheon. She exhibited dairy goats for 28 years at the Royal and has worked tirelessly at promotion displays telling the story of the goat industry. Mr. David Garrick, Chief Executive Officer of the Royal, has promised wall space in the foyer where portraits of winners will be hung each year... a "wall of women." FWIO has two representatives who sit on the RAWF Board.

Convention '97: Almost 800 people attended the full Convention in June; 1,449 gobbled up the food at the Gage Park Outdoor Celebration, and 1,960 sat down to the International Dinner at the Armouries. The Financial Statement shows a profit, which will be divided between FWIC and FWIO in a 60 - 40 per cent split.

Peggy Knapp, Chair of the Convention '97 Planning Committee noted three distinct memories from the addresses given by the various speakers:

- Find a way around "road blocks" until you reach your goals.
- WI should be seeking alliance with others to attain their goals.
- We really have to understand something about modern technology or we are not going to be able to talk to our grandchildren.

Critical Change in Rural Ontario Conference: President-Elect Arthena Hecker participated in discussions on rural issues concerning municipal finance, health care, volunteerism, infrastructure, rural economic development and the rural voice at this fall conference in Geneva Park. Speakers stressed that volunteerism is critical in society today and that it is important to celebrate volunteers. Volunteers also need to be trained. It was noted that people today do not know how to volunteer.

It was also stressed that organizations need vision, innovation, leadership and courage to be in control of changes which are inevitable. Members need to value what we do and where we are going as an organization.

Life Membership Awarded: Donna Russett received a Provincial Life Membership Certificate and badge.