



By Lorna McGrath

On February 19 thousands of Women's Institute members participated in a common program. We learned bits and pieces of Women's Institute history that many of us did not know. Our thoughts went back to how people lived one hundred years ago. How things have changed!

Yet, some things are still the same. I hope that the common bond we shared on that date, as many members have shared before us, continues on forever. I hope that each member became inspired, encouraged and recommitted to the organization by taking part in the February 19 program. This is our heritage. Remember and cherish our past and draw strength from it.

Take inspiration from those who went before us and made a lasting difference. They were ordinary women, just like you and I. They were women who latched onto the vision of a better world for families. But, we cannot live in days gone by.

We are entering a new century of Women's Institute work. We need plans for a future that equals or exceeds our admirable history. We need new members to assist our current dedicated followers. Make plans for the future that include strengthening the bonds that tie

us together. Gather in people who believe in our vision of trying to make our communities "Safe and Healthy." Envision the future and strive towards the goal.

Remember, however, to make the most of today. It is the only time we are able to control. Take achievable steps that will lead you in the direction of the tomorrow that you anticipate.

Take on a centennial project that is both worthwhile and visible. Place a Women's Institute sign at the entrance to your community. Plant a tree (or one hundred trees, shrubs or bulbs) to mark the occasion. A tree is a lasting tribute, a protector of our environment and fits into our "safe and healthy communities" focus. Work on your Tweedsmuir History Books; preserve the past for future generations. Work on your public relations; it is important to promote the organization to get new members.

Branch members need to work together in the decision making process. Involve as many members as possible and don't forget to reward all who help. My mentor from my own Branch advises that we need to treat our members right. She has a good point.

Support each other when it is needed. Try to live "The Golden Rule" as described in our "Opening Ode" and "Mary Stewart Collect." Pass these ideals on to family and friends. Believe in the goodness of the Women's Institute and have an exciting learning experience this year. The present is now, so live, learn, love and laugh, and make the most of each day.

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We Don't Need Anybody Different



"Different" joined the group last fall. This person is keen, organized and capable. "Different" wants to contribute to our organization and also develop skills and abilities.

This doesn't sound too strange. Most of us join organizations to work for their betterment, as well as achieve personal goals. What was odd is the group's reaction to the new member.

The "We Can Do It Ourselves Organization" (WCDIO) has fun meetings with lots of socializing and chit-chat. The members serve the community well. The members who are still around that is.

So what's the problem? Well, "Different" felt that the organization was not performing well, their meetings were unorganized, and new people were not made to feel welcome. Members of WCDIO responded to the situation by saying, "This is how it has always been. If you don't like it you don't have to stay." No doubt WCDIO members said that to other recruits because most new members left soon after they joined. At this rate, WCDIO was heading for extinction!

"Different" could have quit, but didn't. Despite the cold response, "Different" stayed with the group because their goals and objectives were worthwhile. Slowly, WCDIO began to change and became WCDI-WY - "We Can Do It With You."

As a member of an organization, why not ask yourself the following questions:

- How many new members or leaders have we recruited in the last year?
- How do we welcome and involve new members?
- How can we improve our organization?

Every organization needs at least one "Different." New ideas and perspectives help our organization survive and grow.

Be sure your group is on the right track and heading to a strong future. Welcome and involve new members so your organization can serve the community for years to come.

Source: Written by Sandra Apedaile, Rural Community Advisor, Carleton County. Reprinted from the Junior Women's Institute newsletter.



Imagine a small, small earth

You've heard of the global village. What would the world look like if it really was a village, reduced to 100 people, with the population ratios that exist in the world today? The following has been making the rounds recently on Internet discussion groups; there would be:

- 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (North and South) and 8 Africans

- 51 would be female, 49 male
- 70 would be non-white, 30 would be white
- 30 would be Christian, 70 non-Christian
- 50 percent of the village's wealth would be in the hands of 6 people; all 6 would be Americans
- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 1 would be near death, 1 would be near birth
- 1 would have a college education
- no one would own a computer

Source: Reprinted from the October 1996 edition of the Chronicles.