

# Notes from the Program Coordinator

By Mary Lou Norton



This is our new "Safe and Healthy Communities" logo. A copy may be obtained from the FWIO Provincial Office. Please use the logo often.

As your new Program Coordinator, I ask each member to read about my duties on page 57 and 58 of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) *Handbook*. The following program themes were chosen for 1996-97 - "Safe and Healthy Communities" and "Women's Institute - 100 Years of Active Involvement." From May 1996 to January 1997, plan at least six programs on our Theme - "Safe and Healthy Communities." From February 1997 to May 1997, plan your program to tell the 100th anniversary of Institute work in Ontario. More ideas will be sent home with your Board Director.

## How did these themes come about?

The former FWIO Program Coordinator, Glenna Smith, and her Planning Committee selected these themes. Joan Playle and Arthena Hecker, by virtue of their positions as Regional Vice-Presidents at that time, worked with Glenna to help develop these themes. They were presented in the form of a recommendation to the annual meeting in November, 1995, at which time the FWIO Board of Directors discussed and unanimously approved them.

## Why should each Branch, District and Area support the chosen theme of "Safe and Healthy Communities?"

Here are several reasons:

- By supporting this theme, you are supporting the FWIO Program Coordinator and her Planning Committee of Ann McDougall, Eastern Regional Vice-President, and Wilma Carter, Western Regional Vice-President.
- Also, you are supporting the FWIO Executive officers, Board of Directors, the various committees and the President, Marg Harris, as they carry out their work.
- With the support of every member, Branch, District and Area, we have a stronger, more united voice to help bring about change in our communities and our governments.
- Together we can present a stronger message - to our members, our families and communities, our governments and our national (Federated Women's Institutes of Canada) and international (Associated Country Women of the World) affiliates - about what FWIO is doing.
- The theme is current with today's issues and concerns which affect all members.
- Current issues will interest women of all ages in both rural and urban communities in joining an existing Branch or forming a new one.
- In their work towards safe and healthy communities, our members will be asked to network with other community groups and agencies and to represent the Women's Institute on boards and committees for which the FWIO will be recognized.

- Through support at all levels, the Women's Institutes will appear as a more coherent organization to the press, who may then be more willing to recognize us in print.
- By supporting this theme we are fulfilling our aims and objectives and our mission statement - an organization for personal growth and community action.

## Program Planning Ideas

From May 1996 through to January 1997, let us plan at least six programs based on our Program Theme - "Safe and Healthy Communities." Please consider the following ideas when planning your upcoming programs:

- "Safe and Healthy Communities" in Relation to Canadian Industries**
  - tour a blood lab
  - view an ambulance
  - ask a speaker from and/or tour an Ontario Breast Screening Centre
  - tour the X-ray Department of local hospitals
  - invite a speaker to talk about the latest diabetic or blood pressure equipment
  - discuss the use of plastics in hospitals
- "Safe and Healthy Communities" in Relation to Citizenship and Legislation**
  - read and discuss Bill 26 with the approved amendments
  - invite a speaker from the Ontario Medical Association
  - You - Your Doctor - and Bill 26
  - learn about the Ontario Hospital Association and how it affects you
  - You - The Pharmacist - and Bill 26
- "Safe and Healthy Communities" in Relation to Education and Cultural Activities**
  - busy hands help create a healthy mind
  - provide a demonstration on silk ribbon embroidery
  - quilting - Celtic, paper piecing, log cabin quilt in a day, machine quilting
  - write a play or drama and present it to your community or seniors' homes
  - investigate the theme - "Computers and You"
- "Safe and Healthy Communities" in Relation to Agriculture**
  - learn about and then encourage individuals in your rural community to undertake an Environmental Farm Plan
  - organize food demonstrations on how to prepare healthy soups and casseroles from Ontario produce
  - organize food demonstrations on how to prepare low-budget meat dishes

## "Safe and Healthy Communities" in Relation to Family and Consumer Affairs

- learn how to cook for one or two using a food processor, crock pot and microwave
- invite speakers and learn about a variety of health conditions: fibromyalgia, Chonres, diabetes, muscular dystrophy, lupus, Lyme disease, liver dialysis, leukemia, life threatening allergies (ie. nuts, fish, etc.)
- ask a representative from one of the following groups to talk about the work of their organization: the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Osteoporosis Society of Canada, Alateen

## Please Note:

A package of information with more suggestions and ideas has been sent to your District Secretary and Board Director. Please obtain a copy for your Branch to use when planning your programs. I am endeavouring to find resource material for all my suggested topics, so let me know if you need specific resources. If you have any questions or suggestions please forward them to the Provincial Office or mail them directly to me at the address below. In later mailings, watch for more ideas on the issue of safety in your communities.

Mary Lou Norton is the Program Coordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at RR 2, Bloomfield ON K0K 1G0, Phone: (613)393-2052, Fax: (613)393-3378.

## Women's Institute Month

Remember, June is Women's Institute Month; plan your program to tell the WI story.

- ask your local Council to declare June WI Month in your community
- set up a public display in a mall, library or municipal building
- organize an invitational breakfast, lunch or dinner, or a strawberry social for members of your community, especially women