



From the Provincial Program Co-ordinator

By Glenna Smith

The Area Program Co-ordinator's Reports are coming in now and there certainly have been some interesting meetings held across the province. An observation I have made, however, is that speakers, slides and videos seem to be our most commonly used tool for program. One report stated, "We seem to gain new members when we keep our programs interesting and active." How can we keep our programs active? How can we involve our members?

The following are a few suggestions. If you have guests, encourage them to participate.

What does your community know about the Women's Institute?

Roll Call: The answer you received from a member of the community when you ask them, "What does the Women's Institute mean to you?" Record all the answers on a flip chart.

Discussion: If necessary, break into small groups and have a good discussion on the responses. Then determine the image you want the community to have of the Women's Institute. Now compare - are the responses to your question to members of your community the same as the image you want the community to have of the organization? If not, start a list of actions to be taken to improve that image, and then get to work!

Background: A group within the Township where I live produced a Directory. A very useful booklet, but all five Women's Institutes were listed under Recreation. I was very upset. I thought, if the WI Branches in our Township have not made a bigger

impact on others than to have them think of the WI as a recreational group, we had better get to work and tell the WI story.

Restructuring the WI

Have you had a meeting on the restructuring of the Women's Institute? Members at the Branch level have lots of good ideas, and here is your opportunity to express them. Please, if you have any ideas on the restructuring of this organization, write them down and pass them on to the Restructuring Committee. The Committee consists of Marg Eberle, the Provincial Co-ordinator, and a representative from each of the four regions: Mae Craig - Eastern, Pat Oszvari - Southern, Sandra Kell - Western and Marg Atkins - Northern. Their addresses are listed on page 16.

Women's History Month

This year marks the fourth year of celebrating Women's History Month in Canada in October. Women's History Month provides Canadians with an opportunity to recognize and highlight the achievements of women from all backgrounds and in all areas of endeavour. The goal of Women's History Month is to write women back into Canadian history. The theme for this year is "Leaders, Scholars, Mentors: the History of Women and Education." This theme not only highlights the many accomplishments women have achieved in and through education, but also emphasizes women's achievements in non-traditional careers.

While October is officially Women's History Month, please take the opportunity to do some research on women in your community at any time. Be sure to put your findings in your Tweedsmuir History.

If you would like additional information or want to know how to approach the history of women, contact Karen Robertson, Status of Women Canada, 360 Albert St., 7th Floor, Ottawa ON K1A 1C3, Phone: (613)995-3817.

Glenna Smith is the Program Co-ordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

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Besides my busy farm life, I manage to keep involved in other areas of interest. At present, a large part of my life and my family's is my involvement with the Junior Women's Institutes of Ontario. I have been a member of the Norfolk South Junior WI Branch for four years and was a regular guest for almost a year prior to joining. Currently, I am in my second term as Branch Secretary. I also decided to jump in with both feet and volunteered to be the first year Junior Board Director. My position on Board led me to being persuaded to accept a position on the *Home & Country* Editorial Committee. It has all been immensely enjoyable and an incredible learning experience. I now know the answer to the often heard question, "What is Women's Institute?" and am very proud to be a part of it all.

I also find time to volunteer as a Guide Leader in my eldest daughter's Girl Guide Unit

and help when I can with the Parent Teacher Group at our local public school. Many of my best friends, including those involved in the Institute, I have met through activities with my children, be it swimming, helping at school, or our summer holidays camping together. I have joined the local Norfolk Quilters Guild and take courses at the local college that interest me, such as landscaping, tole painting and puppet making. I love to sew, knit, crochet and cross stitch but can never find enough time to do as much as I like. And one of these days I plan on taking a tatting course through the Women's Institutes; tatting is something I have wanted to do since I was 13 but my grandmother would not teach me until I became a good crocheter! There is always more to learn; Institute has helped me in many ways, and I hope I have helped others along the way as well.

Sue Harris is a Junior Board Director with the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and Branch Secretary with the Norfolk South Junior Women's Institute.

Federated Women's Institutes of Canada International Project, 1994-1997 Knitted Squares for Zambia

To support the Association for the Disabled in Mazabuka and also the Centre for Rehabilitation in Monze.

The Mazabuka Association for the Disabled is a non-governmental organization whose aim is to help the disabled in the Mazabuka district in Southern Zambia. In the past, a successful knitted square project was sponsored by the Women's Institutes of Mazabuka; however, they are no longer able to support it to the same extent. They suggested that the Mazabuka Association for the Disabled ask other societies to participate.

The project has a two-fold objective. Firstly, to ease the burden on the Association's funds so that they can purchase other needed items, such as teaching aids, wheelchairs and callipers (etc.). Secondly, an important part of the project is to provide desperately needed employment for some of the disabled women, who are paid to assemble articles made from the squares.

The nights are very cold in Zambia, especially for the young, old and disabled, and blankets and yarn are very expensive.

Leftover yarn will also be appreciated, so canvas your community for wool. Invite everyone to participate - young and old. Membership in the Women's Institute is not a requirement, participation is.

Stipulations:

- Squares should be 3 to 4 inches in size
- Do not sew the squares together
- Branches and individuals are to send all squares directly to:
Mrs. J.M. Spittleler, Hon. Sec.
Mazabuka Association for the Disabled
P.O. Box 670428
Mazabuka, Zambia
- In order for the Mazabuka Association to avoid customs duty:
 - parcels should weigh no more than 500 grams
 - customs labels should be marked
- Gift to Charity - No Commercial Value
- Knitted Squares from Remnants
- Please, report to the FWIO Provincial Office the number of squares you or your Branch send to Zambia.

For clarification of any of the above details, please contact the FWIO Provincial Office.

Submitted by Margaret Munro, International Convener, International Committee, FWIC.