

"In the Public Eye"

By Mary Janes

In 1995, the suggested FWIO theme is **COMMUNICATE**. In particular, are we talking about the Women's Institute in our Branches, Districts and Areas? Are we taking advantage of the opportunities offered us by our organization?

Women's Institutes are envied by other organizations because of their flexibility, and their ability to network, initiate projects and get things done. These are the qualities that have resulted in more requests for support and involvement - on a variety of issues surrounding the home, the family and the community - from government and other agencies.

The Women's Institute is a unique organization. Members can decide what they wish to do at Branch level. But because they are automatically members of a larger group, they can have a much broader choice of interests and activities.

Why should members be interested in provincial, national or international activities?

Because letters and reports about what is happening at these levels provide the link needed to connect women across Ontario, Canada, and around the world. It is this bond with 7 million women that makes our organization special.

Our network is a communication circle. The Provincial Executive communicates requests, issues and ideas from various sources to Branch members through letters and reports to the Area Executive, who in turn pass them on to the District, who pass them on to the Branches. At Branch level these communications need to be read and discussed by members. It is this discussion of Women's Institute work that informs all our members about the value of being an Institute member and about the diversity of our organization.

To complete the circle, Branches are asked to complete surveys and reports for Districts to pass on to Areas, to pass on to the Provincial Board level. It is at the provincial level that resolutions are forwarded to the appro-

priate agencies, recommendations acted upon and criticisms discussed. Individuals and individual Branches influence all decisions at the provincial level. The Provincial Board listens to the members' wishes and acts upon them. By networking within a complete communication circle, each member has a voice and each member can make a difference - locally, provincially, nationally and internationally.

If, at any level, the circle of communication is broken, questions result: Why weren't we informed?, Who got this brainwave?, or Why are they doing this to us?

Our theme is **COMMUNICATE**. Let us resolve to communicate more about Women's Institute, its objectives and its opportunities for personal growth and community action.

Mary Janes is the Public Relations Officer for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

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In August, 1990, a friend, Jerry Mercer expressed interest in helping start a camp in the area. Teresa, Jerry and his mother, Charlotte Mercer, President of the Star of the North WI at the time, started planning. At this time Camp Quality was being incorporated in Canada and a Canadian Board of Directors was appointed.

The enthusiasm, persistence and work paid off in the realization of Teresa's dream. In July, 1992, the first Camp Quality in Northern Ontario was held. Presently, it is directed by Brian Kane of Sudbury. In 1994, the Camp was attended by twenty-four campers varying in age from five to fifteen, and over sixty-five volunteer staff gave a week of their holidays to make the camp a success. These volunteers are mostly unsung heroes, yet they are the heart of Camp Quality.

Major financial contributors are Imperial Oil and Inco Ltd., with donations from business firms, companies, individuals, service clubs and organizations. The Star of the North Women's Institute and the French River Lioness Club have sponsored a Walkathon over the last three years and have raised \$8,700 for Camp Quality.

We all look forward to the camp as an annual event to which our community can contribute and in which we can take pride. Thank you Teresa for pursuing your dream and for letting us all share in it.

If you would like to participate in some way to support Camp Quality, you may contact Teresa Fryer at (705)898-2018 for more information.

Anita Bracer is a member of the Star of the North Women's Institute in the Sudbury District.

Kingston Area PRO Promotes WI



Pat Barnes, Public Relations Officer for the Kingston Convention Area, travelled to various fairs and events in the past year setting up a number of displays promoting the Women's Institute and the International Year of the Family.