



By Hilde Morden

The Education Committee in our Sub-division (22) dispersed our February 'blahs' by holding T-Shirt Magic Workshops for over 100 women in three locations. Picture 30 women choosing and cutting their patterns, taking a turn at the iron, and then patiently drawing paint lines around intricately cut patterns as they create garments for themselves or their children and grandchildren. As I participated, I couldn't help but draw parallels between this event and the make-up of the Women's Institute organization.

The fashion parade ending the event, for example, displayed as many different decorated garments as there were women in the room. Some creations were very floral; some glittered brightly. Other garments were more conservative with smaller, well-organized patterns; and still other patterns were happily scattered in rakish abandon. Each garment expressed the owner's personality, and all were acceptable; just as all sorts of personalities and individuals are encouraged and accepted in our organization.

Each woman scanning the other's creation gave generous, positive and complimentary remarks about the garment's design and originality. Again, I could find parallels in our organization as members support, encourage, help, and willingly share their knowledge with one another. How could we be any other way?

Deep down people want to identify with a group, to make a contribution, to express themselves and to exercise their creativity. They want to strive with others to participate, to belong and to be involved. Isn't that what we're all about in the Women's Institute?

Amid all the activity and sharing of ideas, news and laughter, these workshops will long be remembered as community events. The bonding agent used to adhere the ma-

terial to the T-Shirt reminded me of the bonding we enjoy as members of the Women's Institute organization. As members, we are well aware that 'a better world can be built only on co-operation, not isolation.'

Recently, I received a call from a New Branch Organizer who had organized a new Branch the night before with the Provincial Board Director. Both women attended, having their husbands drive them through a snow storm to get to the meeting (sounds like Erland Lee's meeting in February of 1897!). The second call came from a New Branch Organizer preparing for a talk to an existing Branch on encouraging present members and recruiting new ones.

The key word in both conversations was loyalty. 'To be loyal is to be involved, to be a participant and to belong.' Interestingly, the new Branch members set their membership fee at \$20 (so they would have some money in their Branch after paying fees to their District and Area, as well as to the FWIO, FWIC and ACWW). Here, loyalty was the cement that held their group together. While the existing Branch expressed concern that the WI fees were too high and kept women from joining, none of the newly organized Branches have made this comment, and they were willing to pay even more!

At present, the fee per meeting of the Women's Institute organization is comparable to today's cost of a loaf of bread, a litre of milk, a 454 gram block of butter, or a muffin and coffee - that's reality! Surely, members of the Women's Institute would like to be known as people of reality - keeping up with today's world and progressive vision of tomorrow.

*Remember, loyalty has
given the Women's Institute
its sense of permanence in
our communities.*

Hilde Morden is the New Branch Co-ordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

FWIC Competitions: Winning Entries from Ontario

The following Women's Institute members won the FWIC competitions, outlined below, at the provincial level in Ontario. These entries were sent on to be judged at the national level.

Senator Cairine Wilson Competition:

Essay on "A Little Known Historical Event"

1. Eleanor McLean
- Ballinafad WI, Halton
2. Loreen Ambler
- Vandorf WI, York Centre

Cultural Project:

Children's Book - "There's a Hollyhock Looking in My Window"

1. Ann Felday-Russell
- Elora WI, Wellington Centre
2. Nancy Franklin
- Pittsburgh WI, Frontenac
3. Shirley Davidson and Carol Turner
- Manotick WI, Carleton West

Tweedsmuir Competitions:

Community History - "An Album Tour of My Community"

1. Grace Scott
- Woolwich Everfaithful WI, Waterloo N
2. Rosella Clancy
- Stirling WI, Hastings West
3. Jean Ratcliffe
- Kirkton WI, Perth South

Handicraft Competition - "Stuffed Toy"

1. Mary Jane Wingfield
- Ashgrove WI, Halton
2. Phyllis Reynolds
- Adolphustown WI, Lennox-Addington

Cultural Competition - "A Humorous Incident that Happened in My Family"

1. Margaret Amott
- Hudson WI, Temiskaming South
2. Eleanor McKeown
- Greenock WI, Wellington Centre

FWIC Past President's Essay:

Essay on "Family Life in the Year 2000"

- Tanya Gregson
- Grade 8 Student from Hillsburgh

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