

Area Members Report: Harris Instills Confidence in Others

When Marg Harris was 21 and the mother of two young children, she attended a WI meeting and sat next to an 81-year old spinster. "We talked and chatted away; the fellowship was just tremendous," she said. After 21 years of going to such meetings, Marg Harris is now President Elect of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

As a member of the Women's Institute, Marg has had lots of leadership experience. She has held numerous convenerships, and has been Vice-President and Treasurer of the South Lobo Branch. Her experience at other levels within the organization include: President and Tweedsmuir Curator of the Middlesex North District; Assistant Tweedsmuir Curator of the London Area; Board Director for Subdivision 21; and, a member of the Conference '97 Steering Committee.

Because of Marg's earlier work experience as a Senior Administrator with Canada Trust, she was elected Chair of the FWIO Finance Committee during her term on Board. Because of her background in finance, the FWIO also asked Marg to Chair the Conference '97 Finance Committee and sit as their appointee on the "Women and Taxation" Sub-committee of the Fair Tax Commission in 1991-92.

When asked about her position as President Elect, Marg remarked: "It's a tremendous opportunity." But, she humbly added: "The Branch members are most important; it is to them that I must be accountable." She said that leadership is a two-way street and she has a great deal of confidence in her fellow WI members.

Marg hopes that with the help of all its members the organization will be successfully launched into the 21st century with confidence and courage to meet all chal-



Marg Harris, President Elect, FWIO

Photo courtesy of the Strathroy Age Dispatch.

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lenges. She will be the FWIO President during the 1997 Centennial Celebrations. "My vision," she stated, "is that the Women's Institute will continue as part of the value system on which a household is built and thrives."

Words from the London Area:

Marg Harris is known by us all as a hardworking, willing, dedicated Women's Institute member. Her strong leadership and organizational skills are an asset to the WI. Marg has a high energy level and strong administrative abilities.

Marg is a follow-through person who gives 105% of herself to her responsibilities, and she honours her commitments. She is professional ... and has a high degree of personal integrity.

Marg has the ability to put people at ease. She inspires, encourages and motivates people. She exudes confidence in herself and instills confidence in others. Marg combines a good sense of humour with wisdom as she efficiently and enthusiastically guides through a task. As one Branch member said: "Marg always makes us feel good about ourselves."

Of her fellow South Lobo Branch members, Marg commented: "They are a tremendous group of ladies." The money raised by the women of this Branch through catering has gone into a variety of projects - the purchasing of a mammography machine for the Strathroy Hospital, setting up a local parks fund, and purchasing office furniture for the new FWIO office. And Marg was quick to credit those "WI husbands" who assist with the catering, including her husband, Bud.

Today, Marg and Bud are partners in a home building and renovations business based in Kerwood. After the death of her first husband, and after her six children were almost grown, Marg met Bud. He was a customer at Canada Trust. "Bud asked me to marry him, and I did. My family and I are so happy that I did." And Marg added, "Bud says he is too!"

Marg concluded a recent interview with a local newspaper, by stating: "It's wonderful to have WI friendships... It's ... why I'm so involved. I appreciate the friendships, and it's a way of giving back." Indeed, the following words written by the London Area about Marg Harris are indicative of just how much she gives back.

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