



## HOME & COUNTRY

HOME & COUNTRY is published quarterly by the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO). It has two objectives:

1. To provide educational material which cultivates more knowledgeable and responsible citizens and promotes good family life skills, leadership development and community action.
2. To provide a "communications link" among all members of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and other related organizations.

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## Letter to the Editor:

# What does the Women's Institute mean to me?

By Regina Wagter

The first time I went to a Women's Institute meeting it was held in a log cabin. The only light was from lanterns and the fire in the fireplace, and members came dressed in 19th century style dresses. No, this was not 100 years ago. It was only 14 years ago and I was so impressed that I began attending the meetings faithfully and soon became a member.

Women's Institute is where I met the wives of the farmers that my husband knew. I discovered these women had the same interests. Through the different programs that were presented at the monthly meetings, I learned many interesting things about Canada, and also other countries and their peoples; things that are not in the history or geography books.

I developed creative talents I did not know I had, such as crewel embroidery and

quilting. I learned shortcuts in preparing meals and how to cook a variety of foods and make decorative items for the home. I learned how to "Reduce, Re-use, and Recycle" to help preserve our environment. And it was through the Women's Institute that I got involved in leading 4-H Clubs, another privilege I enjoyed for a few years.

Even though I can't visit a third world country, I can still help the women there better their lives, through Pennies for Friendship and our annual Harvest Luncheon which raise money for such projects as Water for All. I am glad I joined the Canboro Women's Institute. It has become an important part of my life, and I look forward to the 100th anniversary in 1997!

*Regina Wagter is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Canboro Women's Institute.*

## 30 Pounds of "Institute Potatoes"

By Jean Kulmala

At our June meeting, each member was given a seed potato, and our "Institute Potato" Competition was underway. Each member was to produce as many potatoes as possible.

The tubers were Red Norlands, so only red potatoes would be weighed at the contest close in September. Members could cut out the individual 'eyes' and plant them, cut the seed potato into several large pieces, or plant it whole. They could water it, fertilize it, or ignore it!

At our September meeting the harvest was brought forth to be

judged. What funny stories were told. One member lost some of her pieces of potato to a racoon; another's was pilfered by a crow. One member - having a bedrock yard - planted hers in some soil contained in a couple of used tires. Another member's husband had cut hers off with the lawn mower!

Betsy Little won the contest 'hands down,' with not only the largest volume, but the largest individual "Institute Potato." Even taking into account the poor yields (one member described hers as "five golf balls"), the Branch had 30 pounds of potatoes which were gratefully received at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen in Sudbury.

*Jean Kulmala is a member of the Penage Road WI.*

