

FWIC Strategic Plan Finalized

By Arlene Strugnell

Montreal was the setting for four days of Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) meetings and workshops this past May. First on the agenda was a Strategic Planning Workshop attended by FWIC Board members and provincial membership co-ordinators.

The workshop - facilitated by Joan Riggs and Lynne Tyler of Catalyst Research & Communications - addressed all three levels of strategic planning:

- mission - why the organization exists;
- priorities - what the organization does and what areas it should focus on; and,
- action plan - how to accomplish the priorities.

The group discussed several key issues, and developed the following action plans:

Mission

A mission statement was developed which says, "The Women's Institute is an organization that focuses on personal development, the family and community action."

Attitudes

There is a need to generate new attitudes of openness, inclusion, and change within WI, and it is FWIC's goal to get every WI member enthusiastic about the value of the Women's Institutes. A national discussion paper will be developed. A pilot project will then be undertaken whereby provincial membership co-ordinators will meet with a few selected Branches to develop and disseminate new attitudes and outlooks. The discussion paper will ensure the same core values and attitudes are addressed in every province and every Branch, with additions and adaptations to meet regional and local needs. Within two years, all Branches will be involved in this discussion process.

Communication

The basic structure of the organization is sound: Branches, provincial offices, and the national office. The weak link is communication. Action must be taken to deal with this problem and to ensure Branches are kept better informed. WI meets the needs of women and their community, but specific needs vary between communities. A communication process is needed that keeps everyone working on a common purpose and cohesive strategies, but adapts to local needs.

Publicity and Image of WI

Publicity and media strategies are needed at all levels of the organization. A major publicity campaign will be prepared to build up to the 1997 centennial conference, and will focus on FWIC's new image. Within this campaign, there will be shorter-term campaigns on specific issues, such as the family, which will lead up to Convention '94 with its theme "Today's Families, Tomorrow's Future."

National Issues

The focus for 1993 will be the development of a National Food Policy for Canada. The topic of 'children' will be FWIC's priority for the next five years. Other issues include pornography, homemaker's pension and child care.

Finances

The objective is for FWIC to be financially independent of government funding for its operating costs. (Funding for specific projects, however, will still be requested.) A "Bail Out Bucket" (BOB) campaign is being launched, with a goal of \$100,000 by 1997. Other potential sources of financing are also being investigated.

Funding for this workshop was provided by the Farm Women's Advancement Program, Agriculture Canada; their support is greatly appreciated.

Arlene Strugnell is the Executive Director of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada.

About ACWW

By Peggy Knapp

As the Board meeting of ACWW draws near, and I prepare to represent our 15 Canadian Societies in London, I am proud to report on our women's support of Pennies for Friendship and the Women Feed the World Projects.



One Branch Convenor for International Affairs organized a "Hunger Dinner" of bread, soup, jello and tea. Table centres were glass pitchers of water, each accompanied by a card describing projects completed under the "Water For All" project. At the close of the meeting, candles of hope were lighted as each member told of an ACWW project taking place in the developing world.

As her own individual effort, a Canadian member invited 14 friends for lunch on her lawn, charged each \$5. It was a wonderful afternoon of reports, conversation, fun and relaxation. The \$70 was sent to ACWW to purchase 3 wheel barrows and 2 spades.

Well done! Do let me know of your fund-raising achievements.

Peggy Knapp is the the ACWW Area President for Canada.