

## Women's Institutes generate three-quarters of a million dollars

Almost 3/4 of a million dollars was generated by 1,152 Women's Institute Branches across Ontario to carry out their diversified projects and activities during the past year.

This statistic comes from the Public Relations Report presented to the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario at their annual Board Meeting at the Bond Place Hotel, Toronto.

Non-members see the Women's institute as a social organization. They are quite unaware of its educational role, the high level of community involvement it fosters and its traditional concern with improving the quality of life.

Since the Women's Institute is an educational organization, the branches initiated and supported many projects in this field. They presented awards, scholarships and bursaries to students; bought recreation equipment for a nursery school; supported public speaking competitions and music festivals; purchased a projector and microfilm reader; provided a "scanner" for CNIB. Branches also promote resource material within their communities when volunteer leaders attended workshops to learn techniques of quilting and rug braiding. Then these leaders returned to instruct groups in their communities. Most branches also provided volunteer leaders and support for the 4-H clubs. Many members attended Loyalist Costume Workshops, then created their own bicentennial dresses — replicas of 200 years ago.

Women's Institute Branches discover needs in the community and then ways of filling those needs. Over the past year, they made and painted street signs; maintained and equipped community halls; organized hobby and craft

shows; supported Fall Fairs; purchased band uniforms; installed street lights; made finger puppets for a Children's Hospital; compiled cook book; coordinated fashion shows and even a Township reunion; organized the complete women's program at the International Ploughing Match; provided replacement beds for a hospital; donated privacy curtains; installed a park bench at a hamlet Post Office — a rest stop for those walking to pick up mail. The Women's Institute groups were actively involved in numerous bicentennial activities.

Women's Institutes are continuously attempting to improve the quality of life: The elderly, sick and shut-ins are visited and remembered with gifts and cards. Meals on Wheels and parties add to the life of seniors living alone. Members volunteer help at blood donor clinics and hospitals and also provide hospital and medical transportation. Branches supported crises centres and Block Parent programs and canvassed for non-profit organizations. One branch adopted a resident of a home who had no family and brightened that life considerably.

All Women's Institute groups support the world wide UNESCO co-action project of "Clean Water for All."

This is just a cross section of Women's Institutes' activities across Ontario, the complete list would be endless.

Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario were concerned about current issues during their annual Board Meeting at the Bond Place Hotel, Toronto, in November.

Numerous concerns had been studied during the past year by over 25,000 Women's Institute members in 1,125 Branches. Some of the topics that were explored included: pornography; profiteering by crime; Women's Rights; farm safety; Canada pensions; advertising that exploits women; day care centre for pre-school children; bulk food shopping; child

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pornography; profiteering by crime; Women's Rights; farm safety; Canada pensions; advertising that exploits women; day care centres for pre-school children; bulk food shopping; child abuse; battered women; uses and effects of pesticides; small printing on bottles and in telephone books; litter in public

places; causes and effects of acid rain; drugs and alcohol; abortion; return of standard spare tires and better tires on new vehicles; how to protect our environment by separating our garbage and recycling paper, glass, cans, etc.; transportation of animals and their safety.

One day of the Annual Meeting was spent considering some of these concerns in the form of 16 resolutions which has been sustained at Branch, District and Area levels. After much study and discussion, nine of these resolutions were deemed worthy of support and were sustained.

Alcohol seemed to be the major concern affecting our lives today, because three of the sustained resolutions pertained to this topic, said Rena Cunningham, public relation officer. Therefore action was requested to (1) raise the drinking age to 21 years (2) step up a campaign for tighter controls and public awareness of the harmful effect of alcohol and (3) enact legislation so that a substantial portion of pro-

fits realized from liquor licences and taxes on alcoholic beverages be used explicitly for the care and rehabilitation of alcoholic victims in treatment and de-tox centres throughout Ontario.

Concerns addressed through the other resolutions were — to set a standard for seat belt fasteners in cars and trucks — to enforce laws to prevent the degradation of women and children through pornography — to change the legal system to deal more severely with repeat of-

fenders — to enact legislation which will exclude psychiatric patients from nursing homes for seniors — to implement compulsory centre line markings on all black top road surfaces — to urge the Canadian government to strive to be a leader in the global nuclear disarmament movement.

But all is not work. Women's Institute members do take time to enjoy the friendship of fellow members, make new friends and enjoy the warmth of serving others.

September 7 1983

• General Meeting: South Macauley Women's Institute is meeting at the home of Mrs. Murray Stewart, on the Baysville Road, Bracebridge. New members or visitors welcome. For information call Mrs. Art Dick, 645-2172.

September 21, 22 1983

• Area Convention: The Women's Institutes of the Muskoka area will be gathering together at the Huntsville Presbyterian Church, from 9:30 a.m. on, each day.

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*jerusalem*  
 And did those feet in ancient  
 time  
 Walk upon England's  
 mountains green?  
 And was the Holy Lamb  
 of God  
 On England's pleasant  
 pastures seen?  
 And did the Countenance  
 Divine  
 Shine forth upon our  
 clouded hills?  
 And was Jerusalem  
 builded here  
 Among those dark  
 primitive mills?

Bring me my bow of  
 burning gold!  
 Bring me my arrows of  
 desire!  
 Bring me my spear!  
 O clouds, unfold!  
 Bring me my chariot of  
 fire!  
 I will not cease from  
 mental fight  
 Nor shall my sword  
 sleep in my hand,  
 Till we have built  
 Jerusalem  
 In England's green and  
 pleasant land

William Blake

*This is what the  
 English  
 say at their  
 meetings  
 instead of  
 Code &  
 Muzzell  
 Collect*

South Macauley Women's Institute gathered at the home of Mrs. John Doley for their March meeting on the first Wednesday. The roll call was current events, local or otherwise. Citizenship was the topic, and several interesting papers were given. There was a good attendance. At the close of the meeting a dainty lunch was served by the hostess.