

## Business, social issues subject of WI seminar

Business and social issues affecting women were the focus of rural women from Northern Ontario, when the Nipissing District Women's Institute sponsored a one-day seminar at Pinewood Park Motor Inn on the weekend.

"The Women's Institute is an educational organization dedicated to personal growth and community action," said Mary Willemsen of Verner, chairman of the program, which was designed to include topics of interest to everyone.

The agenda included a presentation by Heather Busch, program co-ordinator of family and personal skills at the North Bay YMCA. In her topic "Streetproofing your kids", she focused on how to protect children from sexual abuse and what to do if they have been abused.

She said children need to know that they will be believed if they speak up. It was also pointed out that these children should be taught to trust their instincts. If they do not feel good about a situation, chances are that it is not the right thing to do.

The speaker offered a number of personal safety rules, which appear to contradict the values most parents wish to instill in their children. The rules included the child's right to privacy and the freedom to say "No" to unwanted touch and attention. Children should be allowed to question adult authority and demands and have a right to be rude and unhelpful. If necessary, they should not hesitate to tell lies to protect themselves and should be told that they can run, kick, bite, scream or make a public scene if they feel they are being coerced by certain adults. Above all, children should have the right to ask for help when they need it.

Sondra Nesterenko, a former instructor of Small Business Management at Canadore College and currently a teacher at Northern Secondary School in Sturgeon Falls, discussed the criteria for successfully starting a small business.

She presented statistics which prove women can succeed in business. In fact, it turns out that women have a better track record than men when it comes to establishing a new business and remaining successful. She said that if you have to pick a partner to join you in business, ask a woman.

The speaker said there are several aspects which all potential businesses must consider, such as location, location and location. She said she herself had learned the hard way with her former retail business in Sturgeon Falls.

In similar fashion, she stressed the need to know the market and tailor your business to supply that market and not your own personal tastes.

Becky Hughes, horticulturalist at New Liskeard College of Ariculture and Technology, spoke on gardening in Northern Ontario. She pointed out that there are only about 120 frost-free days in the north and gave a number of tips on extending the gardening season.

An ideal garden site would slope toward the south since frost first hits the low areas. The top of the slope at the north end should have a solid barrier such as a fence or hedge while there should be a non-solid windbreak about 50 feet west of the plot. These precautions alone could extend the season by up to six weeks, she said.

Gord Edwards, a farmer-philosopher from Thornloe and a participant in the advanced agricultural leadership program, discussed the Winner's Creed. He posed the question of what makes a person successful and concluded that setting specific goals to strive for was the key. Everyone is a success, if only they would think that way, according to Mr. Edwards.

Merle Parkin and Velda Thompson of Bonfield spoke on reflexology. This is hand and foot massage based on the theory that the nerve endings in your feet and hands are linked to other parts of your body. Instructions were given to the audience.

## Nipissing District Women's Institute

The Nipissing District Women's Institute decided to have a one day seminar to allow women in the district to get together to share experiences and knowledge; to renew old friendships and also to make new friends.

The planning committee met the challenge by devising a seminar called "Women — Growing with the 80's" with topics such as; Money Matters by Ted Thomson, Don't

Just Stand There....Do Something by Janet Horner, Travellers Beware by Daphne Mayne and Colours and Styles by Terryl Ledoux

that deal with the interests of all women. This event will take place on March 19th, at the Pinewood Park Motor Inn in North Bay. For more information, call Janet Parsons at 753-0730 or Mary Ellen Levac at 753-3504.