

Browns Euchre

The first euchre of 2008 was hosted by Browns Women's Institute Thursday evening at the Browns School House. Winners were as follows: Lady's High -- Jean Sims; Lady's Lone Hands -- Carol Herbert; Lady's Low -- Alice Pounds. Men's High -- Terry Barber; Men's Lone Hands -- Allan Sims; Men's Low -- Ken Judge. Door prize -- Ernie Oliver.

Browns WI

The January meeting of Browns Women's Institute was held at Browns School with a good attendance. President Evelyn Douglas welcomed everyone and read a poem called Happy New Year. The treasurer's report was given. A thank-you from the Women's Emergency Centre was read. An invitation from Lakeside Women's Institute to attend their Soup, Sandwich and Dessert luncheon on February 9 was read. The upcoming conference, to be held in Kingston on June 6 to 8 was announced.

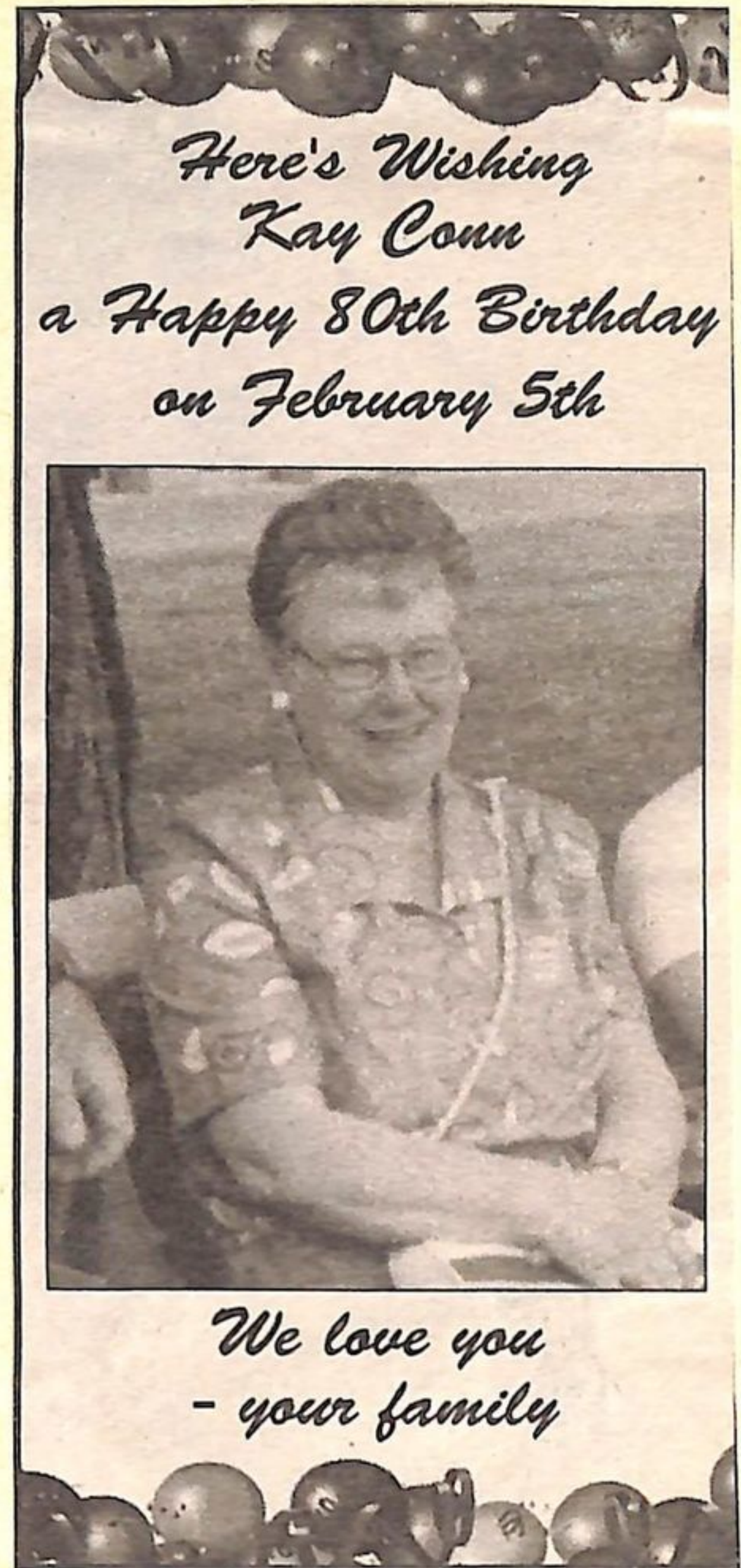
The meeting was conducted by the Citizenship, Culture and Community Affairs Group. An auction of gently used magazines and books with the proceeds for Pennies for Friendship was conducted by Dianne Greason, a very capable auctioneer.

The Roll Call was answered by naming your favourite reading material and reading a joke. A poem Our Best Friends are Books was read by Kay Conn. Susan Towle read *Little Red Riding Hood* from a book given to her as a child. Dianne Greason had a contest on nursery rhymes and a word search which was won by Sue Day with Joyce West a close second. Courtesy remarks were given by Joyce West. A hearty lunch was served by the committee and enjoyed by all. Table favours were supplied by Susan Towle.

The results of the January 17 euchre are as follows: Ladies' High, Joyce West; Ladies' Lone Hands, Carol Herbert; Ladies' Low, Alice Pounds; Lucky Lady, Audrey Somers; Men's High, Ken Judge; Men's Lone Hands, Terry Barber; Men's Low, Sharon Rounds (playing as a man); Lucky Man, George McLellan.

January 31 at Brown's School was Euchre night for the community. Winners were as follows: Ladies' High, Donna Ferreira; Ladies' Lone Hands, Doris Champion; Ladies' Low, Carol Herbert; Lucky Lady, Irene Felkar; Men's High, Terry Barber; Men's Lone Hands, Allan Sims; Men's Low, Belle Oliver (playing as a man); Lucky Man, David Arthur. The next Euchre night will be on Valentine's Day.

Don't forget the Lakeside Women's Institute Soup and Desserts/Euchre, coming Saturday, Feb. 9 at noon at the Parish Hall.



Women's Institutes must change says FWIO president-elect

Rural organization has more than 500 branches

BRIAN SHYPULA
Sun Media

The Women's Institute has 110 years of history in Ontario, but its 500-plus branches must become more flexible to stay relevant and survive, says the organization's future president.

"We have members in their 80s still who come to the meetings, but let's face it, these women have given long years of service to Women's Institute and they're no longer able to carry on. And in order to carry on, we have to get some members who have the time," said Carol Innes, president-elect of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

The Embro-area resident was elected president-elect at the FWIO's annual meeting in Barrie on Jan. 8. She will serve a two-year term before taking over as president for two years beginning in 2010.

Her outlook on the future of WI reflects her own experience with the rural women's organization.

The Toronto native got to know WI af-

ter landing a job as Oxford County's home economist fresh out of University of Guelph in the early 1960s. Her duties included teaching domestic sciences to girls in 4-H and speaking to WI chapters.

After marrying her husband Allan and moving onto their dairy farm, she joined the local Brooksdale WI chapter in 1973.

"It was just one way to facilitate that whole process of making friends," she said.

She was an active member for a decade but dropped out to raise the couple's son and four daughters. Extra time went to becoming a Girl Guide leader when her daughters were in guiding.

Returned to WI

But once her children were grown, Innes returned to the WI fold in the early 1990s.

She said she appreciates that young mothers are too busy working and raising their families, just like she did, to be going to WI meetings today.

"I think our emphasis has to be on attracting women who are approaching retirement whose families have grown," said the 65-year-old former school teacher.

That may mean dropping some traditions such as afternoon-only meetings, she said.

"You have to adapt to your membership."

WI does have something to offer women. It's both a social opportunity and a chance to expand their horizons, she said.

"I do think that women need the support of other women, and this is something that they will get through Women's Institute," she said.

Over the years the FWIO has played important roles in influencing changes in provincial laws and practices, including putting flashing lights on school buses, mandatory railway crossing signs, painted white lines on provincial highways, easy-to-understand labels on food products, use of slow-moving-vehicle signs and clear markings on poison containers.

Today, its outreach programs include sending craft materials to Caribbean countries and supplies and books to Canada's north.

Innes said she believes the group will wade into the debate on sales of raw milk in Ontario.

Founded after child died

WI was co-founded by Adelaide Hunter Hoodless after her 18-month-old child died after drinking unpasteurized milk.

The WI has spoken out about recent sales of raw milk by an Owen Sound-area man.

"The Women's Institute is really concerned about this issue because it is the children that will be the ones that suffer," Innes said, citing studies that find a greater incidence of child death in areas where raw milk is sold.

"It's a quiet issue at the moment, but I'm not sure it's going to stay quiet. I don't see how it can."