

**RURAL WOMEN CONFERENCE DEEMED A SUCCESS**

"Older Rural Women Speak Out", the first conference of its kind for the counties of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville was a resounding success. The 130 women attending the day long conference on October 31, at the Mariners Inn, Smiths Falls came away with a feeling of accomplishment and hope. They had voiced and shared their problems and concerns and had, together formulated some definite plans to continue these benefits into the future. Two of their number, Mona Dier of Westport and Margaret Millar of Snow Road were panelist speakers and they focused on many of the daily needs of older rural women. Among these were the isolation with limited means of transportation and communication; lack of local nursing home care and assistance with home repairs. Mrs. Millar expressed the wish that government officials could come out, spend some time in a rural area to learn first hand of the difficulties facing rural seniors. Mrs. Dier related that for decades the plight of rural seniors have been overlooked by other segments of society. The infra-structure of support has disappeared from the rural home with the demise of the family farm. Empty barnyards and untilled fields tell their own story.

Linda Tarrant, facilitator of the conference was a vibrant speaker, holding her audience captive with her timely remarks, quotations and sense of humour. She challenged all present to learn to adapt; challenge mediocrity; support innovation; develop ambitions and visionary goals; encourage positive attitudes and nourishing environments. During the afternoon session, Ms. Tarrant again addressed the gathering and spoke of the strong sense of renewal she was conscious of in the conference. She advised her listeners to commit themselves to each other. "Set goals, rekindle your enthusiasm", she said. "You must have a new vision and act with initiative. Don't kill a dream, execute it!" As the participants filled out evaluation sheets and proposed solutions to the problems described at the conference, one could sense the enthusiasm that had been generated. Proposals were made for continuing this into the future, possibly by forming a steering committee from representatives of the 3 counties. Another similar conference in the coming months may also be feasible. Greetings were given by Rev. Dennis Drainville, Parliamentary Assistant to the Hon. Elaine Ziemba, Minister of Citizenship with responsibility for Human Rights, Disabled Persons, Senior Citizens and Race Relations. Chairing the Conference was Dorene McManus of Portland and special guests were Professor Rhea Schulman, Officer for Senior Citizens

Affairs; Juanita Bay, Senior Policy Analyst, Ontario Women's Directorate and Clair Miville, Program Consultant, Seniors Secretariat, Health and Welfare, Canada. Lucille Bresee



**NURSERY SCHOOL**

For the month of November the boys and girls at the Elgin and District Co-operative Nursery School did activities based on the themes "All About Me" and "When I Get Bigger". They learned how big they were, how much they weighed, where they lived and about their senses. One day the children came dressed in clothes showing what they would like to be when they get bigger. They had some very interesting ideas. The special guest on November 16th was Constable Paul Arnold from the Westport, O.P.P. He did each child's fingerprints and the children brought their fingerprint cards home. This is a valuable piece of information for parents to have with the frightening number of child abductions that occur. Thank you to Constable Arnold for his visit. Also during November, the photographer came and took individual and group pictures of the children. The colours blue and green and the numbers 5, 6 & 7 were talked about this month.

The fundraising committee would like to thank everyone who supported the nursery school by buying Christmas colouring books, baking at the Christmas Craft Market or raffle tickets. Your financial help is greatly appreciated. Nancy Sheffield





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**R K E**  
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for  
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