

# Manitoba Women's Institute **News**

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1129 Queens Avenue, Brandon, Manitoba Canada R7A 1L9

www.mbwi.ca

## **FOR MWI, LIFE IS A JOURNEY !**

Members of Manitoba Women's Institute (MWI) gathered at the Viscount Gort Hotel in Winnipeg on May 8 and 9 for the 2015 annual general meeting and convention. One always wonders what keeps members away from this event — the opportunity to visit and network with women from across the province is unparalleled. Add to the mix guests and speakers who are intelligent and enthusiastic and a business session that is enlightening, and you have an event that is sure to please!

The theme for the convention was *Life is a Journey*. No one can argue with that, and that refrain is especially apt for MWI whose members know that we cannot stand still or remain static in some homage to the glory years of the past. We must "journey" on...

The annual meeting opened in the morning of Friday, May 8, with President Donna Young in the chair. She made reference to "waning membership" and urged everyone to look to the baby boomer retirees for potential members. A tool could be the Membership Kit made available online by Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC). She also encouraged the branches to get back to their roots and to seize the opportunity to become teachers to the younger generations in the areas of gardening, preserving, handicrafts, and cooking. WI members have much knowledge! Donna also urged members to keep having fun.

MWI was very pleased to welcome Sheila Needham from Quebec as a guest. Sheila is Canada Area President for Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), MWI's interna-

tional affiliation. Sheila has a vast knowledge about WI and other ACWW societies both in Canada and around the world. She opened her presentation with reference to Margaret Rose Robertson Watt, a Canadian who ultimately founded ACWW. Sheila also explained the importance of *Pennies for Friendship* as a fund raising tool for ACWW. The name was coined by

the Americans in 1939 to encourage donations of the "least" coin in every country to further the work of ACWW. Sheila noted that MWI has a Category I society membership in ACWW and therefore has five votes at triennial conferences. She suggested "individual memberships" for those who would also like to support the organization (and also receive the *Countrywoman*).

She described the

structure of ACWW and noted that six Canadians are now members of the six specified committees. Canada Area is now working on raising money for two international projects. Sheila thanked the very generous Canadian members for their time and money. She urged members to access the website at [www.acww.org.ok](http://www.acww.org.ok) for more information. To conclude, she stated that her presentation was in memory of Marion Fulton, Canada Area President 1974-77. (Marion was a member of Birtle WI.)

The AGM was attended by 61 voting members who carried 69 proxies for a total voting strength of 130. The reports were available to everyone in the Annual Report Booklet. The Executive Administrator reviewed her report (found on pages

(Continued on page 4)



(l-r) Sheila Needham, ACWW Canada Area President, and Donna Young, MWI President, enjoy the MWI banquet on May 8, 2015.

Inside this issue:	
Cash calendar	2
From your President	3
Convention sponsors	5
MWI board report	6
Woodmore's project	7
Eastern Region	8
Bulletin Board	9
Regional conventions	10
More photos	11



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## Manitoba Women's Institute March 2015 Cash Calendar Draw Winners Draw Date: April 22, 2015

1	\$25	Edith Parsons	17	\$25	Isabella WI
2	\$25	Peggy Bradshaw	18	\$25	Marion McNabb
3	\$25	Diane Holland	19	\$25	Carol Pasieczka
4	\$25	Marielle Jobb	20	\$75	Rick Wilkinson
5	\$25	Joyce Chitz	21	\$25	Silverton WI
6	\$25	Donna Easton	22	\$25	Robert McCallister
7	\$25	B & W Young	23	\$25	Helen-Ann Geddes
8	\$25	Betty Gross	24	\$25	Marjorie St. Jacques
9	\$25	Jean Ryall	25	\$75	Sandra Thomas
10	\$25	Muriel McCallum	26	\$25	Phylis McDougall
11	\$25	Corine Spulnick	27	\$25	Dianne Kowalchuk
12	\$25	Ruth Dondo	28	\$25	Jarret MacDonald
13	\$200	Marilyne Derrett	29	\$25	Clearwater WI
14	\$25	Jean Fedoriw	30	\$25	Diane Blue
15	\$25	Jodi Knapp	31	\$25	Cheryle McClure
16	\$25	Lyle Fisher			

The winning names were drawn by Leanne Sprung, MAFRD representative; Joni Swidnicki served as recorder. Out of 500 tickets, 482 were sold. The total value of the cash prizes was \$1,000. The profit to MWI for the Delegate Funds will be approximately \$1,250.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who supported this cash calendar fundraiser by purchasing or selling tickets.



Members of Fork River WI showcase their new MWI t-shirts. (l-r) Back: Sarah Pasternak, Audrey Semchyshyn, Marie Kousins, Lorna DeVos, Wilma Rowe, Marilyn Kippen, Chris DeVos, Jean Fedoriw, Lesley Cochrane. Front: Diane Hrychuk, Diana Heppner, Cheryl Sime, Marsha Chanin. Photo courtesy of D. Heppner.

## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Whenever I think that spring has come, we have a long weekend that reminds me of November. I am sure that the people who live in MacGregor with the 15cm. of snow can attest to that. We are forever hopeful in Manitoba at this time of the year.

I wanted to thank all of our members for having us to your regional conventions. The hospitality was wonderful, and the food was so good I think I gained at least five pounds. Everything always tastes so good if you don't have to make it yourself.

This year the first regional convention was the Northwest Region at Fork River. They had a speaker from Manitoba Family Services who told us about what their jobs entail and what difficulties they have to contend with. I do not know how they go to work every day and have the compassion to deal with all these problems. They have to be special people. After lunch we heard from an amazing woman. She spoke about how she had lived in an abusive relationship. She had a really good job and knew that this abuse was not right, but it took her years to get away from the abuser. She was amazing. We also heard from a young singer/songwriter/guitar player called Emma. Besides having the talent, she has the personality. She will go places.

The next Wednesday we went to Basswood in Southwest A Region. This is the second year that this region had only an AGM in the afternoon. They did have one very interesting speaker, Albert Parsons. He spoke to us about fairy gardens and, while speaking, assembled a fairy garden for a lucky member to take home.

The Eastern Regional Meeting was held at Dugald on Friday. Brent Reid spoke to us about SAFARI. It is an organization that helps to grow wheat to sell so that money can be sent over to help in third world countries. We then had some enter-

tainment. Karen helped us learn about "Drums Alive". This form of exercise is done with three large exercise balls and some drumming sticks. She holds classes where the members dance and drum the balls to music. Believe me, it is not easy. I tried it and made a complete fool out of myself. I could not co-ordinate my feet with my hands, but it was fun!!

Winnipeg-Interlake Convention was on Saturday at the Red Barn in Stonewall. After lunch we heard from Jennifer Davis about "body perfect". She was a wonderful speaker to have because she is trying to tell every woman that they should accept themselves as they are. Find the perfect weight that your body feels (not looks) comfortable at and stay there. That is a very good message to send to young women. After that, Shelagh Polischuk took us to Africa through slides she had taken on a wonderful trip they were given.

Monday was the last regional convention, the Southwest B Convention in Brandon. There we were able to hear what CAA had to offer, we were told what to take if you were going into hospital to wait for placement, and we were informed about health care directives. All in all it was a very informative day. A person learns so much about different topics when you go to all the conventions. However, the best part about these conventions is meeting the women who work continuously in their communities. You are a marvel.

Our Provincial Convention was held May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at the Viscount Gort in Winnipeg. I would like to thank the members from the Winnipeg/Interlake Region for all their hard work in organizing this convention. We were pleased to have Sheila Needham, our ACWW Canada Area President, tell us more about our international organization. After an excellent banquet, we were able to kick our heels up while listening to a live band called "Thistle". Besides making excellent music they were funny. It was such a good time.

The next day we had another session with the Institute of Patient Safety in the morning. In the afternoon the members who went to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights were impressed. The next time you are in Winnipeg, try to go. It is worth it!! We were able to get good information from the Blue Cross about what type of insurance to get and what to inquire about.

The convention facilities were excellent

### "New" faces

**Liz Chongva** joined Springfield WI in 2001 and the next year was installed as Eastern Region rep to the MWI board. Liz has served on the provincial executive committee and convened, co-convened, or otherwise helped with a number of provincial conventions. She was also on the planning committee for the 2008 ACWW Area Conference held in Winnipeg.

Liz has attended FWIC conferences in Lennoxville (2003), Red Deer (2006), Charlottetown (2009), and Sydney (2012). She also travelled to Halifax in 2011 and Camrose in 2014 for ACWW Canada Area conferences. She enjoys travelling and has met people from different parts of the world, especially when she travels by train.

Liz is a strong supporter of 4-H and feels the program greatly benefits the youth "as they prepare to become tomorrow's leaders in whatever endeavours they pursue." She has been a 4-H Program Assistant, Head Leader, and District President. She is also involved at the local community club and curling rink.

Liz and her husband have three children, four grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Liz now begins a three-year term as Manitoba's FWIC Executive Officer. She is no stranger to MWI, and she is welcome back on the board!

and the meals were very good. All in all it was a great convention!

I have completed the first year of my two-year term and look forward to the second. The Board has some new board members we would like to welcome, and we would like to say "thank you" to those leaving for all their hard work and for the enthusiasm they brought to the table.

Have a good, productive, and healthy summer everyone.

*Donna Young*



(Continued from page 1)

31-34). Ten pages of the booklet were devoted to the financial report for the year ending October 31, 2014. Page 41 included MWI's Statistical Report for the same time period. This report is often ignored but does contain some interesting information. For example, there were 26 branches with a membership of 391 plus 48 individual members. Only 18 of the 26 locals used the planned program, and only 18 celebrated WI Day. Sixteen support 4-H clubs; twenty-one entertained neighbouring WIs. Ten locals have special funds with a total amount in these funds of \$68,065. The locals donated \$8,816 to WI projects and \$16,064 to other organizations/projects. The most important statistic is the volunteer hours: 31,393 reported by the locals plus another 7,180 by individual members.

Brief comments about the regions were presented by the regional presidents: Liz Chongva, Eastern; Joan Clement on behalf of Ethel Lungal, Northwest; Irene Draper, Southwest A; Fran Dickinson, Southwest B; and Brenda Neabel-Turbett, Winnipeg/Interlake.

The nominations report was given by Past President Joan Clement. Nominations were requested for three positions and these positions were subsequently filled by acclamation: President-elect-Ann Mandziuk, individual member from Minnedosa; Director-at-Large - Maren Mueller individual member from Arnaud; and FWIC Executive Officer - Liz Chongva, Springfield WI. Each woman spoke to the assembly, and their nominations were warmly welcomed.

Leanne Sprung, MWI board member representing Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Development (MAFRD), gave a short but very informative report. MWI is in the third year of a five-year agreement with MAFRD — almost time to start negotiations again! Leanne made mention of the many farm management resources available at MAFRD. She also noted Open Farm Day (September 20)



(l-r) Sylvia Mitchell and Marg Senkbeil at the 2015 MWI annual banquet.

and the Farm Women's Conference (November 15-17 in Winkler). Leanne works a great deal with 4-H and was pleased to announce that there are 143 clubs in the province.

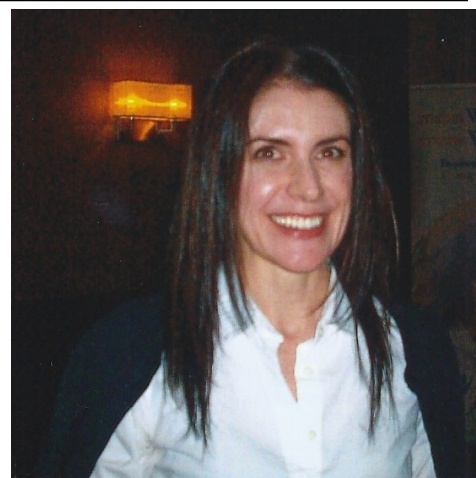
In keeping with the "journey" theme, the assembly was treated to a travelogue by Donna Chitz, daughter of Florence Chitz from Inwood WI. Donna gave a commentary to accompany some wonderful pictures of her recent trip to Australia.

Ann Mandziuk has served for the last three years as FWIC Executive Officer. She gave her final report in that capacity, summing up her work in various areas: compiling the *Take Ten* features on the FWIC website, helping to plan the Scholarship Week at the International Peace Garden, and hosting the October 2014 FWIC board meeting at the Peace Garden. She expressed her gratitude for the past three years. And now she's moving on... as President-elect of MWI!

The resolution session was led by Di-  
anne Kowalchuk, chair of the resolutions committee. Six resolutions were debated: four were passed "as is", one was amended and passed, and one was defeated. (See box page 6)

The afternoon session concluded with the installation of the 2015-16 provincial board. There are some changes — some familiar faces are gone and some new faces have arrived. Linda Wilson, Shelagh Polischuk, and Lynne Hopley have retired. Their work has been much appreciated. New members include Liz Chongva, Arenda van der Deen, Denise Joss, and Anne Marques.

The banquet was a fun affair that started off with lively conversation at tables and ended on the dance floor. The Honourable Deanne Crothers, Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors, brought



Honourable Deanne Crothers

greetings on behalf of Minister Kostyshyn (MAFRD). She was excited to attend the banquet and told of her own WI connection as a past member of a small town local in Ontario. She, said, "So many great things have come out of the WI!" Sheila Needham brought greetings from ACWW societies across Canada.

The entertainment for the evening was a real treat. Valerie Watt introduced the band *Thistle*, comprised of five men playing various instruments. They immediately got everyone's toes tapping, and after the break, two ladies could no longer contain themselves and got up to dance. Soon they were joined by many more. What a fun way to end the day!

Saturday, May 8, was a day of learning. The morning was devoted to the topic of "patient safety" and the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety (MIPS). MIPS has been in existence for 10 years with the core principle of "health advocacy". Jan

(Continued on page 5)

### *In Memoriam...*

**Joyce Greer**, Woodmore WI  
1926-2015

**Loraine Seward**, Woodmore WI  
1918-2015

**Rlee Gilson**, Narcisse WI  
1933-2014



**Manitoba Women's Institute  
sincerely thanks these sponsors  
for their support of the 2015  
Provincial Convention in  
Winnipeg:**

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(Continued from page 4)

Currie, chair of MIPS acted as facilitator as those in attendance worked through a



(l-r) Jan Currie from MIPS and Enid Clark, MWI Past President



The 2014-15 MWI board. (l-r) Front: Leanne Sprung, Debbie Melosky, Donna Young, Ann Mandziuk, Liz Chongva. Back: Joni Swidnicki, Denise Joss, Arenda van der Deen, Audrey Clark, Anne Marques, Maren Mueller, Gisela Nolting. Missing: Dr. Joyce Slater, Diane Hrychuk

session called *Patient Safety: Let's Talk About It*. The discussion was valuable especially to those who had not been part of a MIPS workshop before. MIPS also made available a number of hand outs such as *Patient Rights and Responsibilities*, *It's Safe to Ask about Your Medications*, and *Patient Advocate Form*. These forms and much, much more can be found at the MIPS website. Know your rights as a patient!

After lunch, the attendees split in two. Some elected to take a quick tour of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights. After, Brenda Neabel-Turbett said, "I was concerned the museum would be depressing, but it was thought-provoking and inspirational." The group was taken on a one-hour tour that was tailored to MWI. The guide took them to each floor and gave an overview of the subject matter of

each gallery, highlighting one or two specific items. It was clear that technology has a huge part in the museum, allowing it to speak more profoundly to the younger generation.

While the museum deals with uncomfortable topics (such as the Holocaust), each gallery includes posi-

tive stories of people making a difference by standing up for themselves or others. One such positive exhibit is that featuring the *Famous Five*, the Canadian women who worked to have women named as persons. It was interesting to hear the thoughts behind the building design, building materials, and lighting. These all focus on the twin themes of darkness and hope. After the tour, the MWI group went up to the Hope Tower, the glassed in area found at the top of the museum. There they had a 360 degree view of the city.

Meanwhile, back at the Viscount Gort, the other women heard an informative presentation about travel health plans. Nikki Makar, who works for Manitoba Blue Cross, explained the intricacies of travel health plans. There are many things to take notice of. You have to know your policy, especially the exclusions, and "a pre-existing condition" is one of these exclusions **unless** there has been no treatment within a certain period of time. (The next question is, "What is the definition of "treatment"?). There were many queries, and Nikki was very helpful.

The MWI members spent some time discussing the newsletter, its content, and various ways of getting the editions to the membership. There doesn't appear to be an answer to the mailing/e-mailing issue that will please everyone!

Shelagh Polischuk led an impromptu discussion about the attractions in the Interlake. As the afternoon came to a close, Gail McDonald spoke briefly about the Travelling Trunk Museum exhibit which is shared with ten Interlake museums. Gail is the manager of the Interlake Tourism Association and was involved in the development of this project.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

The tour participants struggled in, the *Home and Country Auction* items gradually disappeared. As everyone packed up to leave, they enjoyed coffee and cake. The cake was in celebration of Manitoba's birthday — 145 years on May 12!

#### Also of interest:

- ◆ Brenda Neabel Turbett did a great job as convention convenor. Diane Hall served as recording secretary; Lois Neabel acted as parliamentarian.
- ◆ The financial review of the MWI books for the 2013-14 year was conducted by Sensus Partnership of Chartered Accountants.
- ◆ Minister Crothers was accompanied at the banquet by Lisa Winter, her Executive Administrator.
- ◆ An interesting display was provided by Interlake Tourism.
- ◆ The *Celebration of Life* was conducted by members from Teulon WI.
- ◆ Door prizes were provided by Grosse Isle WI; the centrepieces were provided by Fisher Branch WI.
- ◆ The early bird registration prize was won by Dorothy Braun, Grosse Isle.
- ◆ Minute checkers were Liz Chonva, Springfield, and June Kopy, Fisher Branch.

- ◆ Scrutineers for the resolution session were Joni Swidnicki, Leanne Sprung, and Sheila Needham.
- ◆ Joyce Chitz led the singing of the MWI Grace and *O Canada*.
- ◆ The *Home and Country Auction* was managed by Narcisse WI. A profit of \$860 was realized.
- ◆ Irene Draper announced that Southwest A Region will host the 2016 convention.

DCK

#### Some of the many attractions in the Interlake:

- ⇒ Prairie Dog Central Railway
- ⇒ Canada Goose Statue, Lunder
- ⇒ Eriksdale Murals
- ⇒ Sharptail Grouse Statue, Ashern
- ⇒ Steep Rock Cliffs
- ⇒ Oak Hammock Marsh
- ⇒ Garter Snakes Statue, Inwood
- ⇒ Narcisse Snake Dens
- ⇒ Viking Statue, Gimli
- ⇒ St. Andrew's Lock and Dam
- ⇒ Selkirk Water Front
- ⇒ Icelandic River Walking Bridge

#### Resolutions (as accepted at the 2015 AGM)

1. **Be it resolved that** Manitoba Women's Institute urge the Canadian Government to convene a symposium of experts in both human health and veterinary medicine to discuss the very serious issues related to the spread of "antibiotic-resistant" organisms.
2. **Be it resolved that** the Manitoba Women's Institute call upon the Minister of Consumer Affairs either to limit the production of unnecessary non-recyclables used for packaging goods or to establish options for the "re-creation" of these non-recyclables.
3. **Be it resolved that** Manitoba Women's Institute strongly urge the Manitoba Minister of Health to fast track the change-over to digital mammography equipment from the present outdated analog technology.
4. **Be it resolved that** Manitoba Women's Institute encourage the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to adopt the policy of attaching a "Long Load" sign on the rear of the last trailer if a semi is pulling more than one trailer at a time along all highways in Manitoba. This policy would apply to all "long combination vehicles" that require a permit to operate on our highways.
5. **Be it resolved that** Manitoba Women's Institute urge the Federal Government, after years of "research", to take action **now** with whatever steps are necessary to wipe out race-based violence against aboriginal women. (Originally passed in 2010)

#### News from the MWI Board

The MWI board met on May 4, 2015, via conference call.

**Planned Program:** Debbie Melosky reported that 300 packages of seeds were received from McKenzie Seeds. The vegetable seeds were disbursed to the two requesting locals. The flower seeds were made available at the MWI convention.

**International Peace Garden (IPG):** Donna Young will be meeting Garry Enns, the new CEO in May. The WI Picnic Nook is one of the busiest sites at the IPG and perhaps improvements should be made there. Unfortunately, the Peace Towers will have to be demolished because of their deteriorating condition.

**Provincial Council of Women (PCWM):** Shelagh Polischuk attended the PCWM AGM in Gimli on May 2 as MWI's representative. Shelagh suggests that as a federate member, MWI could increase its involvement. Luella Noble, Boissevain WI, will be honoured at PCWM's *Celebrating Women Gala*. MWI will donate a basket for the Rainbow Auction at that event.

**Shelter Voices 2015:** A newsletter was received from the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses (CNWSTH). This network is a coalition representing 350 shelters across Canada. "On one day, 231 shelters welcomed 122 new women and 81 new children. On the same day, 302 women and 221 children had to be turned away due to lack of resources." The MWI board discussed the staggering numbers of abuse. It was noted that men must be involved in speaking up against violence against women. The board voted to send a letter of support and encouragement to Lisa Martin, Executive Director of CNWSTH.

The next meeting will be held on June 1 at Portage la Prairie. This will be the first meeting for four new members.



## Food literacy: Woodmore Women's Institute



In 2014 Woodmore WI decided that they wanted to do a project that supported MWI's planned program of *Food Security*. With that in mind, it was decided to do two things: firstly to start a "Plant an Extra Row" initiative amongst our members and secondly, to plan a gardening workshop for our community. The vegetables donated from "plant an extra row" went to the local food bank, the school breakfast program, and seniors in need of fresh produce. Twenty members of the community (including a number of WI members) of varying ages and experience levels attended the gardening workshop.

The 2014 project was small but successful, and the group felt we wanted to continue with the program into 2015 and if possible expand on it to include food literacy. But in order to expand, we needed funds. We were able to find two different grants available through the Regional Health Authority (in our case Southern Health), one with *Healthy Child Coalition* and one with *Healthy Together Now*. The local's Food Security Committee completed detailed applications and was successful in receiving money from both applications submitted. We met with the Healthy Living Facilitator for our area, and she was very helpful in assisting us with what information should be included in our application.

We found these grants through a local paper ad and through contact with the Regional Health Authority. See the January Newsletter for information on how to contact the Health Authority in your region. Another useful contact is the Municipal Recreation Director, who is aware of grants that are available. If any locals are considering applying for a grant, Woodmore WI would gladly supply them with a sample of the information that we provided in our successful applications. With the two grants, a total of \$4,610 was received.

As part of our pitch to the granting body, we included information as to why Women's Institute is a good fit for their

programs. We included the MWI elevator pitch and we also wrote that "since its beginning in 1909, the Women's Institute has been interested in building capacity of rural women and their families. The WI was instrumental in starting the Home Economics and 4-H movements, which have been important vehicles for building leaders and serving the community."

In the past two years, our focus has sharpened around food security and food literacy issues and recognition that the Women's Institute, along with other community partners, can have a role to play in helping rural families. Our membership includes knowledgeable women open to sharing their expertise in gardening and food skills that promote more self-reliant and healthy families.

Woodmore WI has a committee of five members who are responsible for all aspects of our grant programs. For 2015, we have plans for three gardening workshops throughout the municipality, three garden tours for the participants of the workshops, a gardening windup, a preserving workshop, and a cooking workshop.

We have hired a part-time project coordinator who has an Organic Master Gardener Certificate. She will be in contact with our gardening participants to answer any questions and provide advice. She will work closely with the committee on the planning of all our 2015 programs. She has created a Facebook account for our gardening project: [southern-gardenersmb](https://www.facebook.com/southern-gardenersmb).

To date, we have held our three gardening workshops in Roseau River, Dominion City, and Emerson. The attendance at these workshops far exceeded our expectations. Between the three workshops we have had a total attendance of 116. Our goal was to get back out into our community and provide information to a wide range of people. We had people just starting their first garden, families, people new to the country or new to the area, and people who are experienced garden-

ers. But, regardless of the experience level, there is always something to be learned. Our gardening workshops were lead by two local women who both have a Masters in Gardening Certificate. The first two workshops covered the topics of soil types and health, seed selection, and microclimates. The third workshop included a tour of a local greenhouse, raised gardening, companion gardening, and composting. At all workshops, questions and group discussion was encouraged. Throughout the spring and summer, we will stay in contact with our gardeners and then get them back together in July and August for garden tours.

For the gardening workshops, we did various types of advertising that included an article in the local newspaper, flyers in each mailbox, posters, and Facebook. All these forms of advertising plus word of mouth brought people out.

At each session we asked participants to fill out an evaluation form. This feedback will assist us as we plan out our preserving and cooking workshops for later this year (August & October).

It has been very rewarding to get out into the community to make a difference and see the response and enthusiasm to our program. I encourage all locals to try something, no matter how small, as there is definitely a need for the experience and knowledge that WI members have.

The picture above is courtesy of the *Manitoba Co-operator*. Lorraine Stevenson, a reporter with the *Manitoba Co-operator*, attended the first gardening workshop and wrote a full-page article which is available at <http://www.manitobacooperator.ca/country-crossroads/womens-institute-focuses-on-food-literacy/> or in the May 6 edition of the *Manitoba Co-operator*.

*Submitted by Debbie Melosky and Janet Kroeker  
(MWI Planned Program Committee and the  
Woodmore Food Security Committee)*

## Focus on EASTERN REGION

Membership in the Eastern Region declined from 102 in 2014 to 68 in 2015 due to re-locations, deaths, and the closure of two locals — Morris WI and Crow Wing Trail WI. We are happy to report that some of the members from those disbanding locals took out Individual Memberships to maintain their connection with Manitoba Women's Institute and the Eastern Region.

**The highlight for Dufresne WI** was a pin-broidery craft whereby greeting cards were made using cardstock, needles, and embroidery thread.

**Domain WI** highlighted their visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The group found it interesting to see the progression of civilization over the years. They reported it was a wonderful building to see with lots of information to take in. There was a guided tour and many declared they would like to return to view certain areas again.

A **Springfield WI** member made a presentation to the Springfield local on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and the effects of alcohol on the different stages of fetal development through the pregnancy. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is preventable and not hereditary. Springfield WI also had two members from the Springfield Food Bank explain the history and the present operation of that organization. A public health nurse approached the municipal council approximately seven years ago regarding the needs of some residents of the community. The Anola United Church was approached to set up a food bank. At first it was run out of a small room in the church basement and served about 10 families. It currently has grown to serve 20 to 25 families. The food bank is open from 10:00 to noon every Saturday. Access can be made every two weeks by families. Donations are made to the RM of Springfield which in turn forwards the money to the food bank for purchasing required items. Shelving for the food items was donated by Home Depot.

Springfield WI hosted the 2015 Re-

gional Convention in Dugald. (See page 11)

In 2014, **Woodmore WI** used MWI's Planned Program idea to focus on how they could make the communities more food secure. They encouraged members to donate seeds and those who were up to it, to grow an extra row of vegetables to donate to various causes



*Carol Pasieczka participates in an interactive display at the Museum for Human Rights.*



*Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg*



*Domain WI members and some of their partners toured the Museum for Human Rights. (l-r) Back: Fred Simeondis, Sandy Skwara, Dee Harper, Lesley Shepherd, Carol Pasieczka, Linda Manson, Daphne Johnson, Veronica Black, Janice Harrison, Cliff Harrison. Front: Dan Harber, Don Johnson, Georges Cormier, Judy Cormier. These three photos were provided by L. Manson.*

such as the local food bank, school breakfast programs, and seniors.

They then started to think about how they could encourage the most vulnerable folks in the community to help themselves to become more food secure by offering a Beginner Gardening Workshop in Roseau River. Twenty folks, younger and older, from the RM of Franklin gathered at Cobren farm on the chilly evening of May 21. This event was a partnership with the Cobren Greenhouse (owned by one of the WI members).

As a follow up to the Gardening Workshop, some of the participants met on August 18, 2014, for a long afternoon and

evening of touring the gardens of the experienced and beginners. They toured eight gardens and yards. They saw various techniques such as the use of row covers to protect vegetables from too much sun and harmful insect damage, the

use of hedges to create a wind break and the beautiful peppers that can be grown in a greenhouse. They ended the tour in a gardener's paradise on the edge of the Roseau River where they all enjoyed a delicious pot luck supper made from something prepared out of the tour participants' gardens.

Encouraged by the 2014 experience, the local moved forward with more programs in 2015. Members are again encourage to donate seeds or produce. Plans are in place to offer gardening workshops in three communities, garden tours, and two food workshops. The WI was able to secure two one-time grants from Southern Health to meet the expenses of offering these workshops. The grants also covered the cost of hiring a part time coordinator who will help plan and execute

the workshops and offer follow-up to participants (especially new gardeners) who may need some advice and moral support along the way.

Janet Kroeker reports, "We are excited to go back to our WI roots and take these food growing and food making skills that many of us have and offer them to our community." For more details, see page 7.

Woodmore WI will be hosting a fall seminar to help celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a WI local.

Eastern Region has four WI members

*(Continued on page 9)*



(Continued from page 8)

on the Manitoba Women's Institute Provincial Board. Debbie Melosky from Woodmore WI is Government-appointed Member; Maren Mueller, an individual member from Arnaud, now serves as a Director at Large; Denise Joss, a member of Springfield WI, is Eastern Region Representative; and E (Liz) Chongva, also from Springfield, was elected as FWIC Executive Officer.

Submitted by E (Liz) Chongva and Janet Kroeker



Woodmore WI's gardening experts: Blythe Boese (l), Program Facilitator, and Angela Appleby, Program Co-ordinator. Photo by L. Griffin.

## New features!

At the MWI convention, an informal discussion took place about the MWI newsletter and its content. As a result of that two suggestions have come forward and they will become regular features if space allows.

**#1 The News** will feature recipes! Specifically, a recipe submitted by a WI member. If no recipes are received by the editor, a recipe will be chosen from a WI cookbook (of which she has many!) Any favourites? Send them along. Any requests? Send those along also. Thanks to Yvonne Gustafson for this idea.

**#2** Another "column" will be called *What's New?* Members are encouraged to send in information about what's new or what is coming up. This idea was brought forward by Shelagh Polischuk who suggests that a head's up about upcoming events could promote a "road trip" mentality. Members could attend different events in different areas. You could bring a friend on a WI adventure! The key to success is that branches must spread the word about their events well in advance.



Telephone and on-line counselling

## Celebrating Women Gala and Fundraiser

Hosted by the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba (PCWM)

**7 pm Tuesday, July 7, 2015**  
Viscount Gort Hotel,  
1670 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg

Honouring individuals and federate members for their service to the community.

**Manitoba Women's Institute is pleased to announce that Luella Noble, a member of Boissevain WI, is one of the individuals who will be honoured.**

The evening will include entertainment, refreshments, door prizes, and a Rainbow Auction.

Tickets (\$40) may be purchased at McNally Robinson Booksellers or by contacting Shirley Walker at 1-204-775-0743 or at [sleepyhollow52@gmail.com](mailto:sleepyhollow52@gmail.com).

## Bulletin Board

- The **deadline** for the next issue of *The News* is **August 31**.
- **Celebration of Life** write-ups will be included in the **next edition of The News** (September 2015). Submissions are welcome.
- **The fall MWI board meeting will be held on September 8** at Portage la Prairie.
- It is hoped that each local will make sure that **every member has access** to this newsletter. **It is being distributed by e-mail only.** Please make copies for those without internet access.
- Please forward preliminary details of the plans for the **fall seminars** to the editor by August 31. **This is very important!**
- **The Institute News** will focus on **Northwest Region** in the September edition. Please send your material to the editor by August 31.
- The **2016 MWI Convention** will be hosted by Southwest A Region. The location and dates have not yet been confirmed.
- An article on **Woodmore WI's gardening project** can be found on page 7. The September newsletter will include further information about **Woodmore's experiences with the food literacy program**.
- Three women have retired from the provincial board: **Lynne Hopley, Shelagh Polischuk, and Linda Wilson**. Past President **Joan Clement** has completed five years on the board. We thank these ladies for their commitment to MWI.
- **The MWI office** will be **open over the summer** with flexible hours.
- Going to **ACWW 2016**? Would you like to be in the **conference choir**? Contact Suzanne Garrett at [suzanneblodwen@gmail.com](mailto:suzanneblodwen@gmail.com) for words/music and more info.

## REGIONAL CONVENTIONS

### *A Healthy You*

*A Healthy You* was the theme of Southwest B Region's convention held at Seniors for Seniors in Brandon, and hosted by Wheat City Women's Institute.

After words of welcome from Marg Senkbeil, Wheat City's President, the morning session was conducted by Fran Dickinson, Regional President. Board members were introduced. With the Roll Call, \$222.95 came in for *Coins for Change*. Leanne Sprung, MAFRD representative enlightened everyone with an up-date on 4-H. There have been changes and it was so good to hear of them.

MWI President Donna Young, Executive Administrator Joni Swidnicki, and Regional Rep Audrey Clark, each spoke of the on-going work with the MWI Board and their part in it. Vests and T-shirts can still be ordered through the MWI office.

President Fran praised the work of the region's members. With just 45 members in total, the programs are still varied and informative, with some fun added.

The Education Reports, presented by the Broomhill local, were done humorously in "skit" form. The "setting" was in the local café, where the waitress in her apron with coffee pot in hand inquired what the girls were up to. Over their coffee, each highlighted, sometimes humorously, what was going on in the report they represented. Then they were off to get on with their day!

Clearwater conducted an inspiring *Celebration of Life* service which saw six names entered into the Regional *Book of Remembrance*.

Following lunch, Chris Heide with CAA, brought much information on travel and health insurance. He stressed how important it is to know what your coverage includes before you travel. Gail Cork, volunteer at the Assiniboine Centre, then provided info on what to bring if being placed in the Assiniboine Centre or a care facility. Melissa Peters, with Palliative Care, spoke about the importance of Ad-

vanced Care Planning. It's about conversations, decisions, talking with family or a proxy, having a Living Will, and making your wishes known. SPEAK UP. These speakers all pointed to a "Healthy You" but its all up to YOU.

Audrey Clark, President-Elect, conducted the New Business portion. Attendance was 25; Marilyn Hokanson won the raffled quilt. The Boissevain local will host the 2016 convention. Murial McCallum of Boissevain gave the courtesies at day's end. Donna Young, MWI President, installed the 2015 - 2016 Southwest B Board.

A time to mingle and visit over refreshments brought a great day to an end.

*Submitted by Fran Dickinson*



*The 2015-16 Winnipeg/Interlake Regional Board. (l-r) Front: Brenda Neabel-Turbett, Linda Scott, Karen Kaplen, Donna Young (MWI President). Back: Eileen Campbell, Linda Dziadek, Crystal Holtman, Lorna Priestly, Dorothy Braun, Diane Magnusson, Anne Marques, Lynn Moore, Marilyne Derrett. Photo V. Watt*

### **At the Little Red Barn...**

On April 18, the Winnipeg/Interlake Regional Convention was hosted by Winnipeg Women's Institute at the Little Red Barn just outside of Stonewall.

The officers presented their reports. The elections for new officers went without much difficulty, and we managed to elect a president, president elect, and a new regional representative. The secretary and treasurer are remaining.

The *Ceremony of Life* was presented by Anne Marques. Anne created the paper carnations with mindfulness about the lives of these members and what they may have accomplished in their lives — their hopes and dreams and aspirations. Following the ceremony, the flowers were given to the local WI units to do with as they wish, in memory of their

members who had passed and were recognized on this day.

The afternoon presentation by Jennifer from the Women's Health Clinic was quite entertaining. She presented 'Body Perfect', which is a presentation discussing results of studies about weight loss/dieting, and rebound weight gain. She also talked about the female "sense of self" regarding body image. Mindful eating was discussed and practiced. It was an entertaining and thoughtful presentation that spurred much discussion in homes and coffee shops for the following week!

Shelagh Polischuk presented a slide presentation of her trip to South Africa, Botswana, and Zambia. Her husband had taken exemplary pictures, and the animals were beautiful. Shelagh appreciated the opportunity to share her trip with others, as it was a lovely trip down memory lane!

There were 46 members in attendance, and three volunteers to assist. Winnipeg WI would like to thank all attendees for making the day such a pleasure!!

*Submitted by Shelagh Polischuk*

### **Southwest A gathers at Basswood**

Southwest A Regional Convention was hosted

by Basswood Women's Institute on April 15 as an afternoon business session. There was good attendance by the six locals plus visitors. President Irene Draper called the meeting to order, and the business portion followed. Southwest A has a new regional representative: Arenda Van Der Deen of Rivers WI. Linda Wilson will retire after six years in that position. Reports showed that all locals are busy and following planned programs. (Did you know that Lenore WI members have learned to play poker??) Food literacy was stressed as a concern, and WI groups were encouraged to expand the program. Get children cooking and make more meals from scratch. The name of Jean Watson, Newdale Raven's Glen WI, was placed in the *Book of Remembrance* during a *Celebra-*

*(Continued on page 11)*



(Continued from page 10)

tion of Life service conducted by Lenore WI. Joni Swidnicki spoke about the running of the WI office in Brandon; Donna Young, Provincial President, spoke on the work of the board. After the coffee break, Albert Parsons demonstrated the making of a fairy garden in a large planter. This was then given away as a door prize. We had a discussion on some of the resolutions put forward this year. Lois Neabel reminded everyone that the Minnedosa Regional Archives will accept material from branches in this region. Esther Knapp from Erickson WI issued an invitation for the 2015 fall seminar and the 2016 spring convention. Marion McNabb gave the courtesies. Donna installed the new board and closed the day.

Submitted by Irene Draper

### Exercise for Mind and Body

The Eastern Region convention was held in Dugald with Springfield WI hosting. The theme was *Exercise for the Mind & Body*. We had 40 registered members and guests attending this interesting day.

Diane Holland, Springfield President, welcomed everyone and Liz Chongva, Eastern Region President, and Denise Joss, President-Elect, chaired the proceedings. Liz reported on visiting all the locals, revising the regional handbooks, and sharing concerns about sustainability after the closing of two Eastern Region locals.

Nomination calls for a President-Elect and Eastern Regional Representative were handled by Doris Koss. Denise Joss was nominated for the position of Regional Representative, removing her name from the President-elect position. Liz Chongva let her name stand for a second term as Regional President. The position of President-elect is still vacant and needs to be filled, as the president

can only hold office for two 2-year terms.

Reports were presented by our Treasurer, Kathy Wilkinson; MWI President Donna Young; Eastern Region Rep, Maureen Muller; Rural Leadership Specialist, Tracey Drabyk -Zirk; and our new MWI Executive Director, Joni Swidnicki.

Donna Young mentioned checking out the MWI website. The password for the members' section is "homeandcountry". There are 23 locals and 362 members. It was excellent news to hear from Tracy Drabyk-Zirk's report that 4-H is now 813 members strong with 282 leaders supporting their programs. Joni Swidnicki reminded us that *The past is not*

anniversary celebration. Bravo!

Afternoon presentations were by Karen Insley for *Drums Alive* and Brent Reid from SAFARI.

Karen spoke about the importance of exercise and called on members from the audience along with two Springfield WI course participants to help her demonstrate gentle rhythmic movements while drumming on large exercise balls.

Brent, our former Ag Rep, presented information on SAFARI (Springfield Area Farmers Aiding Relief Internationally). Did you know it takes \$12 to feed one person for one month in Africa? SAFARI has raised over \$52,000 in the

last 2 years of the project. Land that is not currently under cultivation is donated for planting and harvesting by SAFARI volunteers. The proceeds of the grain sales go toward this project. At the convention, over \$90 was collected for SAFARI. A variety of free heritage seed packages were available next to the donation basket.

Our day ended after the installation of the Eastern Region Board by MWI President, Donna Young. Thank you to Springfield WI for an energizing day!

Submitted by Denise Joss



2015-16 Southwest A Board. (l-r) Front: Elaine Thomson, Shirley Pederson, Irene Draper, Linda Wilson. Back: Verna Cuddington, Arenda Van Der Deen, Mona Butler, Marion McNabb. Missing: Yvonne Gustafson, Esther Knapp, Judy Russell.



The Eastern Region Board. (l-r) Seated: Kathy Wilkinson, Diane Holland. Standing: Donna Young (MWI President), Carol Pasieczka, Denise Joss, Liz Chongva, Janice Harrison, Carol Mravinec, Lucille Dankewich. Missing: Liz Griffin. Photo courtesy of L. Griffin.



## Calendar of Events

### June 2015

- 1 MWI board meeting, Portage
- 9-13 FWIC Conference, Fredericton
- 21-27 IPG Scholarship Week

### July 2015

- 7 *Celebrating Women* Gala  
Viscount Gort, Winnipeg
- 16 Manitoba Ag Hall of Fame  
Induction, Portage la Prairie

### August 2015

- 31 Deadline for *The News*

### September 2015

- 8 MWI board meeting, Portage
- 20 Open Farm Day

### November 2015

- 15-17 Manitoba Farm Women's  
Conference, Winkler

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## More photos from the provincial convention...

