



Mission Statement

Women of all ages who achieve change through personal growth, communication and education.

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Executive Director
Bernadette Logozar

Home & Country

Fall Issue

August 2024

President's Message

Linda Toews, AWI President



We had a great 2024 Convention. Thanks again to the Days Inn, formerly Norsemen Inn, for their hospitality. Thanks also to honorary Member MLA Jackie Lovely for bringing us greetings.

As always, our Convention was a time to communicate and share with other AWI Members. We learned from our educational speakers, shared our talents and appreciate the talents of others, and we had an opportunity to discuss ways in which we can improve our province and our country. We also enjoyed each other's

company with fun events and time outside of that spent together with camaraderie.

We had several great speakers who brought a wealth of information to our Convention attendees. There was great interest in the practical presentation on what to keep to preserve historical items, and how to keep them. Mae Deans and Carol Moir were kept very busy presenting and answering questions. Read more about this informative presentation in the pages of this issue.

Another topic of great interest was with regard to the needle exchange program instituted by the federal government in federal prisons. The issue was of great concern to attendees, so much so that emergency resolutions were passed.

I met with MP

Earl Dreessen in whose riding the Bowden Institute is located. He is fully on board with our concerns about this and will be meeting with representatives of the Bowden Institute guards. I encourage each Branch to write to their MPs and MLAs regarding these concerns.

On a sad note, we are sorry to say goodbye to our Executive Director, Bernadette Logozar, who has been a great asset to Alberta Women's Institutes. We are looking for a new Executive Director. If you feel you can fulfill the requirements of this position, or know someone who does, please send in your resume and get in contact with me. (Employment Ad is on page 2)

As always, feel free to contact me at any time at lindat4awi@gmail.com, 403-224-2881 or 403-507-1389.

Yours in WI,



Photo Credit Alex Toews

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The Alberta Women's Institutes (AWI) form an educational organization for rural and urban women. Our aims are to promote leadership among women, to encourage local community development, and to assist women both locally and globally. AWI is affiliated with the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) and Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW).

Home and Country is published three times a year. Deadline for submissions are February 1, July 1 and October 1.

Submitted articles should be no longer than 300 words in length and are subject to editing. Submissions may be screened by the Editorial Board.

Editorial Committee: Linda Toews, Marilyn Wattenbarger, Bernadette Logozar

Proof Readers: Linda Toews, Marilyn Wattenbarger, Diane Dammann, Elizabeth Rushton, Gerda Vester, Bernadette Logozar

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Editorial Policy: The opinions in articles printed in the Home and Country do not necessarily reflect the endorsement, official attitude or position of the Alberta Women's Institute unless so stated. Permission to reprint information from the Home and Country is gladly extended provided that the proper credit is given and one copy of the material be sent to the editor of the Home and Country.



Employment Opportunity

The Alberta Women's Institutes (AWI) is looking for an outgoing, hardworking, community-minded individual to join our team as Executive Director. This person should be a Member of AWI, or be familiar with AWI and in agreement with its aims and objectives.

We are looking for someone with excellent communication, interpersonal, office management, and computer skills who will take direction from the AWI Executive and Council. This person should have experience working with volunteers and boards, particularly non-profits, and be a team player. This individual must be willing to attend Conventions, workshops, committee and other meetings as required, and take minutes as needed.

The successful candidate will have a good working knowledge of Microsoft Office, particularly Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, and have basic understanding of finances/bookkeeping. Skills in website

development and management, as well as social media platforms, Google Meet, G-Suite and Zoom are an important part of the job. We will consider a strong candidate who has excellent abilities in some of these areas who would be willing to learn the other skills.

The successful Executive Director must be willing to supply an office space (some compensation may be available for this), as well as storage for AWI's equipment and materials.

This is a permanent part-time position, currently averaging 10 hours/week, which could work into more hours by mutual agreement. Compensation: \$17.00/hour

Please send resume with cover letter to: Linda Toews
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Deadline for applications:
August 30, 2024

IMPORTANT

Dates & Deadlines:

- *Book of Remembrance:*
No deadline & no fee!
- *Provincial Dues:* January 15
- *Home & Country:*
Spring—February 1
Fall—July 1
Winter—October 1
- *Report Book*—April 1
- *Creative Writing:* March 31
- *Resolutions:* March 31
- *Awards Deadlines* —January 31
Award of Excellence
Golden Book Award
Erland Lee Award



District 2 held a meeting at the Camrose Convention and it was good to meet together. Several Members from District 2 Branches had entered the handicraft competition and did very well with really positive comments from the judges.

Darwell, Duffield and Stony Plain continue to meet once a month for Ladies Who Lunch. Darwell, Duffield, Echo Hill and Stony Plain had the Stony Plain/Lac St Anne Constituency Conference in April with good

District 4 Update

Submitted by Colleen Bianchi

For District Four, "summer mode" is on.

Westoe and Langdon met at the end of May which I was able to attend.

No District Four Members were able to attend the Provincial Convention and AGM in Camrose this year including myself.

Westoe had their summer barbecue in June; Langdon Ladies do meet often besides their monthly meetings, International Wild Rose has met, though mostly by phone.

I am planning for District Four to gather in August. The item to discuss is the Notice of Motion for 2025.

On behalf of District Four Members—Branches and Associate Members—THANK YOU to Bernadette for always being professional and working for AWI. Everyone Appreciates your time and work whenever they contacted the AWI Office.



District 2 Report

Submitted by Ina Webster

attendance and a fun time had by all.

Creighton held an Yellowhead East Constituency Conference in May and some Members from Stony Plain attended and had a wonderful time with an interesting speaker, silent auction and door prizes.

Stony Plain recently had an outing at a local Alpaca farm and enjoyed learning about the alpacas and having fun feeding them.

All the Branches continue with various activities in their area supporting local organizations throughout the summer.



Roundtable Discussions: AWI Priorities

Submitted by Elizabeth Rushton, Stony Plain WI

Saturday morning those present divided into four groups for a round table discussion on the various priorities listed in the Policy Book – Agriculture, Health, International Affairs, Canadian Industries, Cultural Activities, Legislation, Home Economics, Environment and Social Services. They were asked to decide which were important and which could be combined and then report back.

After much lively discussion, various suggestions were made as follows:

- under *Family and Domestic*



I enjoyed the A W I Convention at the Days Inn, so much information to absorb and great ladies to work and network with. The Silent Auction did well with lots of interesting items to bid on. The Correction Officers that spoke on the needle program for inmates and the issues that it causes were very informative and raised concern as to the wisdom of this program. The fashion shows were great!

The Round Hill ladies took part in the Twilight Auction for Farmer's Day with items donated be sold as a fund raiser for several community groups. New Member

Affairs: combine Health, Home Economics and Social Services,

- under *Environmental Conservation*: combine Agriculture, Canadian Industries, hydroponic gardening, drought, fire resistant gardening, fruit trees in city parks, recycling, stable water supply
- under *Cultural Expression and Diversity*: combine International Affairs, Handicrafts, ACWW, Indigenous Affairs, information on the different cultures coming to Canada and

refugee/migrants and the different categories of immigration e.g., temporary foreign worker, refugee, permanent resident.

Other suggestions were to make program suggestions in Home and Country and to study AWI history and famous women, possibly as a roll call. If Branches are not sure into what category a program they have had falls it was recommended to send it to the President Elect so she has a record of it.

District 3 Report .

Submitted by Dena Storms

Chantal Fennema (Round Hill) was lucky to win the Sophie Miles Award and got to enjoy her first AWI Convention. Our delegate was Cara Wocknitz another relatively new Member. So it was a great experience for them.

The Argyle ladies “Walked the World” on April 29 and collected \$270 for ACWW projects. In April, they exchanged seeds and May & June plants. They are planning on a float for July 1 parade. They will partner with Alliance Ag Society for a Bench Fair in August. They have also been tending to the Centennial Garden in Alliance.

The Ridgewood ladies went to Centennial Park in Innisfail for

Women Walk the World and met some Member of the Union of Correction Officers and got some information on a drug needle exchange program for inmates. The information was brought to the attention of the Convention. For their October meeting they will be having a Paint Night. They also had a speaker and demonstrator on chair yoga and meditation.

Wildrose Go-Getters had 4 Members attend the Convention; 2 first time attendees. For their last meeting they had a guided tour of the Olds College Gardens and Wetlands.

Hope Everyone has a great summer.



Prison Needle Exchange Program

Submitted by Marilyn Wattenbarger

Jeremy Douchette, President Bowden UCCO; Kevin Machan, Bowden UCCO VP; Chase Mayer, UCCO regional 2nd VP and Truman Petz, UCCO Member presented a format on the danger of the “Prison Needle Exchange Program” implemented at the Bowden Institution. Everyone that is near will be affected by it at some point. Union of Canadian Correctional Officers (UCCO) represents 302 Correctional officers and 704 inmates at the Bowden Institution.

For the past four years, the union has been vehemently against the initiative, countering there are real dangers for correctional officers, nurses, other inmates, and even for citizens in the surrounding communities. Inmates are not allowed to use drugs at the institution but are still given needles, which can be turned into weapons. Staff Members have no defensive equipment as their gloves are not rated for the gauge of needles used.

The officers are not technically supposed to know who has these needles so the inmates can trade them away. The inmates will use them as currency at the prison to make money and sell them to cons or rent them out to other inmates.

The other problem is that inmates do not have to reveal who has these needles. Nine out of ten inmates will hide from the guards when injecting the drugs, and if they overdose it could be too late. Some jails have a safe injection site

where they can actually go in front of a nurse and do drugs. That is what the officers would prefer at the jail.

Drugs entering the institution are an ongoing problem. These drugs are brought in by family and friends. Drugs are dropped at the fence so an inmate can go pick up. Drones are used to drop drugs into the compound. Inmates again use these drugs as currency. When needles and drugs are combined in a prison, there is a possibility they can be used as a weapon – against other inmates or guards. When guards are hit with a needle, they are required to take a cocktail of

preventative drugs. As the inmate cannot be tested due to privacy laws, the guard does not know what he was hit with and thus is given a cocktail of drugs that will prevent all possibilities. This cocktail has devastating effects on the guard in regards to himself, family and community. It would be much safer to have a safe injection site monitored by a nurse. This would be safer for inmate and guard where the user can be monitored. This is what we would prefer. Drumheller has a safe injection site and it is working well.



Bowden Correctional Officers (Jeremy Douchette, President Bowden UCCO; Kevin Machan, Bowden UCCO VP; Chase Mayer, UCCO regional 2nd VP and Truman Petz, UCCO Member) presenting on the Federal Prison Needle Program at 2024 Provincial Convention, held in June.

Photo Credit Alex Toews



Handicraft Report

Submitted by Merla Richards

The Handicraft competition was held at the AWI Provincial Convention in Camrose June 5 -8, 2024.

Entries were down from 166—155. All entries were exceptional and the judges had difficult decisions to make, especially when choosing the Outstanding entries.

Following are the standings:

- A. Knitting: 1st Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters; 2nd Dorothy Fisher, Argyle; 3rd Diane Dammann, Argyle
- B. Crochet: 1st Dorothy Fisher, Argyle; 2nd Ruth Twerdun, Round Hill; 3rd Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters
- C. Sewing: 1st Grace Scheffelmair, Ridgewood
- D. Quilting: 1st Marilyn Wattenbarger, Ridgewood; 2nd Odette Dionne, Argyle; 3rd Grace Scheffelmair, Ridgewood
- E. Stitchery: 1st Denise Campbell, Round Hill; 2nd Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters
- F. Felting: 1st Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters; 2nd Merla Richards, Stony Plain
- G. General Handicrafts 1st Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters; 2nd Randy Wickstrom, Argyle; 3rd Elizabeth Rushton, Stony Plain
- H. Over 70 1st Ruth Twerdun, Round Hill; 2nd Merla Richards, Stony Plain; 3rd Dianne Campbell, Round Hill
- J. Over 80: 1st Karin McCracken, Argyle; 2nd Faye Mayberry,

Ridgewood; 3rd Grace Scheffelmair, Ridgewood

L. Photography: 1st Alex Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters; 2nd Marilyn Wattenbarger, Ridgewood; 3rd Beverly Hollen, Creighton

M. Artwork: 1st Alex Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters; 2nd Colleen Sparks, Stony Plain; 3rd Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters

Myrtle (Olsen Roberts) Heyer Award: Ruth Twerdun, Round Hill

Branch Standings are as follows:

- 1st—Ridgewood 41
- 2nd—Wildrose Go-Getters 30.22
- 3rd—Argyle 14.67
- 4th—Round Hill 7.71
- 5th—Stony Plain 4.33
- 6th—Creighton 3.36

Outstanding

Knitting: Dorothy Fisher, Argyle

Crochet: Dorothy Fisher, Argyle

Quilting: Marilyn Wattenbarger, Ridgewood

Felting: Linda Toews, Wildrose Go-Getters

Stitchery: Denise Campbell, Round Hill

General Handicrafts: Elizabeth Rushton, Stony Plain

Over 70: Ruth Twerdun, Round Hill

Over 80: Karin McCracken, Argyle

Photography: Denise Campbell, Round Hill

Artwork: Colleen Sparks, Stony Plain

Best of Show

Karin McCracken, Argyle

Congratulations to everyone who entered and the winners in each category.

Handicraft entries have been declining over the last three Conventions. They are as follows:

- 2019—228 entries
- 2023—166 entries
- 2024—155 entries.

**no handicraft competitions were held during COVID Pandemic.

We had 155 entries from 20 Members from six Branches out of 19 Branches. AWI has 187 Members (this includes 18 associate Members).

Handicrafts are a vital component of our Conventions, without them it would drastically affect an important part of our program. Please encourage your Members to enter their handicrafts. With the help of my handicraft volunteers, I will be revising the handicraft list for next year I'm asking for suggestions of new ideas, or articles that can be discontinued, or any other suggestions.

Please send me the name and email address of your handicraft coordinator.

Thank you so much to Marilyn Wattenbarger for all her help and mentoring. Also, thank you to my volunteers: Ruth Twerdun, Dianne Campbell, Jean Teeple, Louise Undin, Donna Henderson, Faye Mayberry, Glennis Tober, Ina Webster, and Alex Toews. Everyone's help was greatly appreciated.



President Elect Report

Submitted by Marilyn Wattenbarger

Linda and I visited with Bernadette last week. One of the discussions was on how all of our Members feel that the Convention cost is too much and therefore they cannot come. Did you know that the cash raffle tickets we are asked to sell are meant to subsidize the Convention costs for everyone?

You know, I don't like selling tickets at the best of times but I also realize that it is a necessity in today's world in order for societies and non-profit organizations to exist. When we as Members and especially the executive decide that we are not going to sell our tickets we are jeopardizing our

organization. When we see value in an organization and become a part of it, we all have an obligation to support it.

Yes, it is important to attend our Branch meetings, but it is also important to support the levels above our Branches. It is great to be able to get together once a year to see in person those whom you have been corresponding with throughout the year via telephone or Zoom.

Do we want to continue with our Convention in whatever form or do we not? We all have a responsibility to assist where we can – and if that means selling a book of tickets – just do it! Most of us have made friends from the south to north and east to west of

this great province. I, for one, would hate to lose this privilege. It is great to get to know all of our Members all over this province.

Remember ladies – which we ALL need to support each other to make AWI a wonderful experience for all Members. Please, next year, plan on doing your bit and help council to make this a great organization and do your bit and sell those tickets. Maybe if everyone did, we could actually lower the cost to our Members. Wouldn't that be great! But the way the prices of everything are going we may be lucky to maintain the cost the same as last year. But we all need to do our part – and especially the directors and other council Members.

Environment: Water is Precious Commodity

Submitted by Marilyn Wattenbarger

Water is a precious commodity. We only have to look back at the disastrous main pipe breaking in Calgary in June to see how we, in all areas of Alberta and the World are affected by lack of water.

Water is vital to our health and clean water is very important. During this hot spell all plants, grasses and trees are showing the effect of having no moisture for an extended time. Water is important to fight and control the forest fires that are raging in our boreal forests.

At all times we must be vigilant not to be a cause of a fire. No outside fires where an ember can

fly out and catch grasses or trees on fire. Watch our equipment we are using that a spark doesn't catch on tinder dry materials.

Educate everyone we know who smokes not to throw out a butt from a vehicle window. And any of us who live where we know wildlife live to leave a pan of water out where they can safely reach it to drink from.

My friend found a spider web in a shed. As she is a photographer she thought that she would gently mist it with some water to get a cool picture. Out popped a spider. Through her lens she could see the

spider was all dried up and crusty looking. The spider was stretched out – aching for moisture. My friend gently misted the spider and watched as the spider recovered. The spider grabbed onto a water droplet that had formed on her web. And the spider drank. So tiny, but it tells of a story that all creatures big and small need our precious commodity which is water.

Be safe in this heat wave we're having, and if possible, remember our wildlife which makes a difference in our lives and leave a bit of water for them to quench their thirst.



We had emergency resolutions put forward at Convention after hearing from the speakers from the Bowden Institute representing prison guards regarding the needle exchange program that has been implemented in federal prisons.

Great concern was expressed as the practice puts into harm's way all persons affected by the program, that is, inmates, correctional officers, the families of both correctional officers and inmates, as well as all communities where the affected inmates are released.

Emergency Resolution 1: BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Women's Institutes request the Government of Canada to immediately cancel the needle exchange program in federal prisons.

Emergency Resolution 2: BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Women's Institutes request the Federal Government of Canada to initiate beneficial programs in all correctional facilities in the form of in house rehabilitation for substance abuse in place of the needle exchange program.

To facilitate this process a motion was made that that each AWI Branch be responsible to contact their local MP and MLA concerning the inmate needle exchange program and, after contact is made, to report to the

Resolutions Submitted by Linda Toews

AWI President.

Refer to the article by Marilyn Wattenbarger on the talk at Convention for more information.

As well, we had great discussions at Convention regarding the resolutions to be put forward at the FWIC September Convention in Truro, Nova Scotia.

For the FIWC resolutions, our Convention attendees asked the delegates to the FWIC Convention to vote in favour of all the resolutions that will be put forward. Those resolutions are:

Special Resolution 2024: BE IT RESOLVED the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada increase the fees on a per capita basis from the Provincial and Territorial Units to \$4.75 for FWIC and \$1.50 for the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead as of February 1st, 2025.

Resolution 2024-01: BE IT RESOLVED that the Federated Women's Institute of Canada request that Government of Canada establish a federal accreditation program which will certify and make Canadian trained Family Doctors eligible to work in any province across Canada to practice medicine under one national license to practice.

Resolution 2024-02: BE IT RESOLVED the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada request that Government of Canada establish a streamlined and time-efficient federal accreditation program that will allow for

immigrating Family Doctors trained in other countries to be eligible to work in any province across Canada to practice medicine under one national license.

Resolution 2024-03: BE IT RESOLVED the Federated Women's Institute of Canada request that Canada establish a federal accreditation program and Canadian students studying abroad be granted greater access to residency training programs in Canada to encourage them to return to Canada to practice medicine.

Resolution 2024-04: BE IT RESOLVED that Federated Women's Institutes of Canada initiate a Women's Advocacy & Awareness campaign to increase the knowledge of this Public Health Crisis [Sexual Violence Against Women] across Canada and foster the development of a National Forensic Nursing Bursary.

Resolution 2024-05: BE IT RESOLVED that Federated Women's Institutes of Canada call on the Provincial Governments to standardize the Forensic Nurse Examiner/Sexual Assault Forensic Nurse Examiner training across Canada and call on the Federal Government to provide a funding mechanism to support Forensic nurses throughout Canada for the safety of all victims of sexual violence, their children and families.



Notes from the AWI Volunteer Archivist submitted by Mae Deans

At the June AWI Conference, Mae Deans, AWI Volunteer Archivist and Carol Moir, volunteer at the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA) presented a PowerPoint presentation showing the various areas of the PAA where documents, maps, photographs, and posters are stored. These areas include the reading room, microfiche storage & microfiche reader, and temperature and humidity-controlled vaults. Included was a slide of their work area with numerous boxes of AWI files being processed. Documents are readily accessible for reading and can be photocopied, scanned, or photographed.

The PAA provided the handouts that included: acid-free file folders, acid-free plastic sleeves for documents and photograph protection, notepads, pencils, post-it notes, and plastic paper clips. Enclosed in the package was a list of where these products can be purchased.

At the Convention, we received several documents including photographs, minute and cash books, as well as many newspaper clippings. Many thanks to everyone for collecting these precious items.

Carol Brown has graciously lent us the District 5 Book of Remembrance binder that she has maintained over many years. This

book has more than 250 biographies of Alberta Women's Institute members. We will scan this book and return it to Carol before the end of summer.

Carol and I were invited to the Echo Hill Branch on June 19 to share some information about how to preserve documents. We took acid-free file folders, and acid-free plastic sleeves for photographs and paper. We also reminded the Branch of the importance of identifying the documents with dates, place and for photographs identifying the people is very important including a date and the event.

Echo Hill Branch in conjunction with the Canadian Tractor Museum at Westlock, is hosting the AWI Panel exhibits. Twenty-two (22) panels represent the significant contribution AWI has made within the Province of Alberta.

When not on display, these panels are housed at the Provincial Archives. They can be loaned to any Branch or interested organization. The contact is Jaclyn Landry, Program and Volunteer Coordinator, Access and Conservation Services, T: 780.427.0356, Provincial Archives of Alberta, 8555 Roper Road, Edmonton, Alberta.

A description of the panels is available upon request.

Alberta is the only province where the majority of Women's Institutes records can be found in one place. Having the documents in one place makes it easier for students, storytellers, historians, researchers, and interested groups to access this rich collection of Women's history in Alberta.

Once again, it is a delight for Carol and I to work on the collection and with the AWI members to preserve the important history of the Alberta Women's Institute.



Mae Deans & Carol Moir presenting on Preserving Your Treasures at the 2024 AWI Provincial Convention in Camrose.

Photo Credit Alex Toews



There are always a number of fundraising opportunities at the AWI Provincial Convention as well as pre-Convention workshops and tour. We held the cash raffle, as well as 50/50 raffle with drawings on Friday at the banquet.

The results are in and the financial reporting all submitted to AGLC, so things are nicely buttoned up. Cash raffle results are as follows: Gross revenue was \$3,350 (670 tickets sold). This is significantly down from last year, but thank you to everyone who sold their tickets and asked for more! And of course thank you to those who also returned their tickets to the Provincial Office.

Provincial Office Report

Submitted by Bernadette Logozar

After prizes (\$1,000) and other expenses (\$300) taken out, our profit or net revenue is \$2,050. The 'other expenses' include printing and mailing costs.

50/50 Raffle – We held one 50/50 cash raffle at Convention with drawing on Friday. Total amount brought in was \$183; prize of \$91.50 was won by Lila Bird, Ella Jane WI. Congratulations Lila!

The silent auction brought in less this year than last year, but it was still a healthy contribution, with over 60 items to bid on, there was a lot of activity! The silent auction brought in \$663 (last year we brought in \$792) that will go towards the AWI Travel Funds. Thank you to all who donated items to the auction and those who made bids. And there were no left over items this year!!

Rural Women in Action Fund, formerly Pennies for Friendship, collection was set up at banquet, \$159.30 was collected at this meal; additional money turned in at Convention by Yellowhead East Constituency \$51.55. As well additional funds were contributed by Branches, Districts or Constituencies since Provincial Dues were received. These include: Ridgewood WI \$95; Marilee Kosik \$15. Total funds brought in since January \$320.85. This will be sent onto ACWW. Thank you ladies!

A number of activities that

went on during Convention go to support the AWI Travel Fund. These were the Fashion Shows & Jewelry/Scarf Swap. The High Falutin' Fashion - \$24; Future Fashion - \$15; Jewelry Swap - \$80.50. Total collected = \$119.50. Thank you all who took part in the fashion shows or contributed to the wares to the Jewelry/Scarf Swap made available at this location.

The Sales Table had nice activity this year as well. We sold \$299 worth of items. This is our gross revenue that was brought in not the net profit.

Finally, as you well know a Handicraft fee was implemented in 2022, this year Handicraft Submission fees collected at Convention was \$155, which go to offset the cost of the Handicraft program.

Thank you to all those who manned the different stations throughout Convention, I sincerely appreciate all your efforts and your attention to detail and excellent record keeping made tabulating all the results very seamless!

This is my final report from the Provincial Office as your Executive Director. I have learned a lot, been able to share information, interests, knowledge and passions with members within the province as well as around the world. I have met some amazing people along the way. But the time has come for our ways to part, I wish you all well and hope the best for the organization in the future.





Creative Writing

Submitted by Linda Toews

Congratulations to those of you who entered the creative writing contest this year. Once again, there was a high calibre of writing. We have some very talented writers among our members.

In total, there were 5 entries this year: 3 memoirs, 1 travel story, and 1 essay. Each entry is judged on its own merits to place within its category, and the entry with the highest score is judged the Overall Winner. Congratulations to Anne Teeuwsen for being the overall winner again. The complete list of winning entries is below.

If you have been thinking of entering this contest, it's never too early to begin. Start working on it now so you can have it ready for next year. Jot down a few notes about a vacation or other travel adventure you had, put down a few thoughts about something that happened in your life, perhaps an exciting event, that you could write about in a memoir. Or perhaps there is something that is important to you on which you would like to pen an essay. Start now, and before you know it you will have a finished product ready to send in to the Contest.

Happy writing!



CREATIVE WRITING WINNERS 2024

Non-Fiction Article 1000-3000 words

Memoir

1st Elizabeth Rushton, Stony Plain WI

2nd Anne Teeuwsen, Half Way Grove WI

Non-Fiction Article 1000-3000 words

Travel Story

1st Anne Teeuwsen, Half Way Grove WI

Non-Fiction Article 1000-3000 words

Essay

1st Frances Bogner Associate Member

2nd Anne Teeuwsen, Half Way Grove WI

Overall Winner

Anne Teeuwsen, Half Way Grove WI

Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion was brought forward at the 2024 Convention. This Notice of Motion gives our members and Branches time to think about the Motion and the effects it will have. It gives members and Branches the ability to discuss the motion and decide how they feel about it and to determine how they would like to vote on it at the 2025 Convention when it will be discussed and voted on.

Please discuss this in your Branches and decide what points you would like to bring up in the discussion and how you would like to vote.

Notice of Motion – moved by Stony Plain Branch, seconded by Darwell Branch, that the current division of Alberta Women's Institutes into five Districts be discontinued and that, beginning with the next election of 2026 Council consist of a President, President-Elect and three members to be elected from the general membership, with no more than one member from any Branch.

The background given was that with our declining membership throughout the Province and with no active Branch in District 1, it seems unnecessary to have such a large Council. Other provinces elect their Council members from the general membership. Conferences could still be held in any given area hosted by a Branch in that area similar to the way District and Constituency Conferences are currently held.



Using Social Media to Promote Your Branch

Submitted by Bernadette Logozar

One of the pre-Convention workshops this year was on Using Social Media to Promote Your Branch. There is

so much information and activity on the internet that in today's marketplace not having a presence on the internet in some format can be sending a negative message you might not even realize you are sending. Today's customer is very savvy and uses the internet not only to find information but to have products find them. Social media is the mechanism for this. So what is social media? And how do you as a WI Branch use this tool to your advantage?

At its core, social media is about sharing. This could be sharing experiences, information, knowledge, stories and more. Social media is a tool to help you build relationships with people--who will hopefully become members. It gives you the opportunity to tell a compelling story.

But remember that technology and tools are secondary, and even the best tools are meaningless without a good, authentic story (and product or service) behind it.

The primary investment you will have with social media is time. Most social media tools are free and fairly easy to use. An understanding what is the best use for each can be valuable.

Social media is an umbrella networking on sites that enable discussion, sharing, and voting. Today, there are numerous options out there. Understanding what these options do or offer and how you as a farmer can utilize these social media platforms to promote your farm business is useful. Below is a listing of various social media sites and their best use.

- Sharing (Facebook, Twitter)
- Networking (LinkedIn)
- Bookmarking (Delicious)
- Video (YouTube, Vimeo, Tube

Mogul)

- Reviews (Yelp!)
- Forums (Yahoo! Answers)
- Blogging (Tumblr, WordPress)
- News (StumbleUpon, Digg)

So why should you pay attention to social media? First it is growing in popularity. YouTube is the second largest search engine. Social media is like farming, meaning that in order to grow a good crop of followers you have to plant the seeds in the right location and use the appropriate tools and fertilizer. Just as it is valuable to take some time before digging your first hole to know what you are going to plant, how much and how often you will be planting.

Likewise using social media involves some thought and planning to build your story and voice, where you will share this, how often, and to what extent. Knowing the landscape and the environment is a good thing in social media.

The Landscape: Social networks are not new, but how we use them today is new. People have multiple groups of friends. Social media is the mechanism to connect or link these groups to products, topics and such that they like and allows them to refer a friend to these products or topics.

Referrals from social networks are on the rise and are surpassing search engines as a means of finding products and topics.

How to Use Social Media to Build Your Story & Voice: Interested in Blogging, microblogging, forums & discussion boards? All of these are options of social media and are part of the landscape. This doesn't mean you have to use all of them, but you should have a basic understanding of when to use which one. Basically, Blogs such as WordPress and Tumblr are great to share personal interests, market your Branch and increase visibility of your Branch. Microblogging (Twitter) which

limits the number of characters you can post are great for sharing, commenting and forwarding, promotion and getting answers. Forums and Discussion boards can be used to answer questions, meet friends with similar interests, or be where you brand your Branch.

Things to Consider: Who's online? Pretty much everyone, so why aren't you? You too have something interesting to share about your organization. Furthermore, your story is your marketing strategy. The question you must answer is what is the best way to broadcast and share your story with the world?

There are a range of social media tools at your disposal. Some Keys to Marketing Success:

Be interesting and remember what your grandmother taught you. When telling your story:

- If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.
- Say please and thank you. Positive sharing and comments will serve you much better than negative.
- Birds of a feather flock together. Social media will attract connections with similar interests to spread the word about you and your Branch.
- Be who you are.

It is up to you to determine which of the range of social media tools is best suited for your Branch, personality, and the image you want to convey of both to your members and potential members. You can use one or all successfully with the right plan and strategy in place. Good luck and have fun!

