

**LISTEN UP! IT'S RESOLUTION TIME!**

Gracia Janes, NDCW President

*"If you want to dance, you've got to shake a leg!"* my mentor, Edna Krikorian said when she lured me into the St. Catharines Local Council of Women in 1978, with promises of action on the issue closest to my heart- fruit land preservation. What Edna meant, was that Councils of Women across the country didn't just talk about issues, they developed policies and used them to act at all levels of government.

Another Edna piece of wisdom was, *"Resolutions are the heart and soul of the National, Provincial and Local Councils of Women!"*, and, over many years I've seen this to be true, as we do use our policies to very good effect. The first time came just after I joined, when Muriel Beattie, President of PCWO, used existing NCWC policy on farmland preservation to make an eloquent and effective presentation at an Ontario Municipal Board hearing against the proposed urban expansions onto thousands of acres of Niagara tender fruit and grape lands! I was hooked for life!

These days, Councils of Women have the additional task and opportunity of using policy to work with other like-minded groups asking for progressive change. For instance, on the issue of pay equity, where in 1910 NCWC policy asked for equal pay for equal work, today Councils of Women use our more recent policies to move this issue along e.g. PCWO VP Economics Linda Davis was part of a recent Provincial Task Force on pay equity. Regarding the environment, in the 1940's to 50's we cited NCWC policy to spearhead the creation of National Parks and even earlier protested the leakage of oil from ocean tankers. Jump forward from the latter to 2015/2016 when we used these policies and later ones to protest tourism destruction of Jasper National Park and added our voice to that of many groups across the country in protesting the Northern Gateway pipeline.

This just a time-capsule way of showing what Edna wanted me to understand, but trust you get my not so subtle message. That is, resolutions and subsequent policies are what gives us a legitimate voice in following our mission as we *"work for the good of women, families and society"* in the years *"to come."*

So, take this long standing and amazing opportunity to be involved in the 2018 Resolutions process, and then think of what important issue you, or your group care about and put it forward for Council of Women members across the country to study and vote on at Annual General Meetings next year!

P.S. If it's an issue that has arisen since our NCWC cut-off date of November 15<sup>th</sup>, please consider contacting Mary Potter on the appropriate way to bring it to our 125<sup>th</sup> AGM in Niagara. If passed, a letter will go immediately to the Prime Minister and the Minister carrying the relevant portfolio, and you will have done your bit.