



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

Provincial Organization Standing Committee Annual Report 2013
Cathy Bouchard

Organization Standing Committee:
(Diocesan Presidents-Elect)

Calgary – Sharon Malec
 Edmonton – Mary Hunt
 Grouard-McLennan – Irene Brassard
 Mackenzie-Fort Smith – vacant
 St. Paul – Kathryn Bourque

2013 membership statistics based on information from the National Office are as follows:

Jan. 1, 2013	New	Reinstated	Did not Renew	Paid Members	Deceased	Dec. 31, 2013
9,794	542	210	878	9,668	101	9,567

Calgary Diocesan Council:	3857 members in 52 councils
Edmonton Diocesan Council:	4592 members in 67 councils
Grouard-McLennan Diocesan Council:	542 members in 19 councils
Mackenzie-Fort Smith Diocesan Council:	86 members in 3 councils
St. Paul Diocesan Council:	591 members in 19 councils

Most councils charge an average of \$25.00 for membership fees.

MEMBERSHIP

- Personal invitations were cited over and over again as the most effective way of reaching members and potential members
- Parish Priest encouraging membership both from the pulpit and personally was also cited as a most important method of recruitment
- Councils who have experienced the most success have organized membership drives starting in October & November
- Annual CWL Membership Teas
- Mothers of newly baptized baby a gift from the CWL with an invitation to join the League by some councils
- Gift membership to RCIA Candidates.
- Open invitations to women in the parish to attend speaker presentations
- CWL envelope with the donation envelopes used by parishioners
- Email reminders to their members
- Personal contact and telephone calls to renew their membership
- Stamped addressed envelopes used for membership renewal

While we are concerned about how to increase and maintain membership we must remember that we are doing God's work, that we must trust God to guide us in our efforts to approach and invite new members.

MENTORSHIP, TRAINING AND ENCOURAGEMENT are vital to meeting the challenges of membership recruitment and retention to ensure the life and growth of our councils in the Province. One of the best ways to provide members and potential members with good working knowledge of the League is to host a **Catch the Fire Development Workshop**. 15 workshops were held in the province in 2013 with over 500 women in attendance. With the number of members we have in our province, only a fraction of our members and potential members have been reached. To become effective ambassadors for the League we must increase our knowledge about the CWL. This committee challenges every member to invite at least one guest to join them at a Catch the Fire Workshop...it will remind you why you became a member and why other women should join. **S'mores**, a collection of workshops intended to empower and energize League leadership, was created in response to requests following Catch the Fire presentations across the country because members are hungry for more.

MEETING AND ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS to keep members attending included fostering a welcoming atmosphere, thoughtful spiritual presentations and prayer time, interesting guest speakers, making time for discussion, sharing of food including coffee & tea, breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, potlucks and taking the meeting to the members who are in lodges and extended care facilities. Councils make presentations at various times during the year including service pins, certificates of appreciation and thank you gifts.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

There are resources available to assist in League Development through the League. Workshops can be arranged for Council and Regional / Zone meetings. Provincial Officers & Life Members are eager to offer their support and are available. Please check out the different CWL Diocesan, Provincial and National websites for more information.

Some councils noted that they have difficulty getting members to fill positions on the Executive and Chair the Standing Committees. There is mentorship at all levels to assist our members so that they are capable of filling an executive position.

Most councils have an orientation of new executive members and discuss the focus or plans for their upcoming CWL year. Some include discussion on budget requirements. Councils report that they give in-coming executive members copies of their standing committee handbooks describing their responsibilities and a discussion revolves around the focus of each chairperson for the CWL year. In many councils the past and present executive meet to pass along necessary information and continue with evaluation and planning as needs arise.

LEAGUE RESOURCE MATERIAL

Constitution & Bylaws were updated in 2013 (be sure to purchase a copy for your council). Other useful references are the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, *Leading the League*, *Executive Handbook*, and the CWL National website.

The League magazine is a great resource for all members, used to educate members about issues important to the League as well as outlining resolutions passed at the National Convention. Directives from Standing Committee Chairs are beneficial to councils; the information is shared at meetings. The 'Be League' online newsletter and media publications are also of interest to many of our Councils. Annual Convention books are circulated among members with specific reports given to the standing committee referred to.

AWARDS

Councils recognise the important dedication, service and hard work of their members with year plans, certificates, and the Maple Leaf Service Pin. Diocesan Councils have their own special awards named after exemplary past members. Members who do not qualify for Life Membership but who display and demonstrate love of the League and an availability and willingness to continue to serve are eligible to receive the Bellelle Guerin Award. There were no recipients of this award reported in 2013.

GOALS and PRIORITIES

Our Councils continue to be active in their service for God and Canada. Cited were:

- To ensure that a Spiritual component is a significant portion of all meetings.
- To assist financially towards the building of a new Church building.
- To keep our Council going.
- To be mindful of the theme “We Have Seen the Lord” in all we do as a council
- To be more effective in fundraising.
- To increase our membership.
- To encourage members to attend a Fall or Midwinter Meeting or Convention
- To raise money for charitable giving.
- To encourage ladies in the Parish to participate by volunteering in leadership roles.
- To reach out to aging members by identifying those who need assistance in any way
- To build community in our parish.
- To continue providing a scholarship & to continue delivering Meals on Wheels.
- To be more visible in the schools.

The women of the Catholic Women’s League are never idle. We band together as community in good and hard times. We live as true sisters, sharing our lives.

Submitted by:

Cathy B.

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Alberta Mackenzie President-Elect