

Sugar-Bowl Economies

Where would our small church budgets be without the work of the women?

Years ago many women of the church financed overseas missions and congregational budgets from savings collected in their “sugar bowls”. They sold eggs and butter, they held bazaars and bake sales, and contributed whatever they could. Their efforts kept the local pastor paid, and they gave toward a million dollar budget to support women’s work around the world.

Others gathered their pennies and gave to the Fellowship of the Least Coin. Not only was great work done in this manner, but it was affirming for those contributors whose purses held precious little.

Since that time numerous projects have been undertaken for the ladies to maintain their financial commitments. Family-centred programs have added laughter and entertainment to the process. Thrift shops fostered the theme of re-use long before the Green Movement gained credibility. Sponsoring church suppers and funeral luncheons is made possible because of the volunteer commitment of large numbers of women.

Where would our church budgets be without them?

Several years ago, when I did a couple of speaking tours in Ontario, two new projects caught my attention.

One congregation offered their services by preparing supper-meals for the harvesters. Place your order the day-before and a busy farm family could pick up hot, packaged meals that could be taken directly to the field.

In the Ottawa Valley, the end of October, car loads of men came to their tiny cabins-in-the-woods with their buddies to hunt deer. If anyone offered them a hot meal in the evening they were more than appreciative. So the local women drew up a schedule that stretched out between their tiny communities as to who would serve the meal each night of the week. The men knew which community to visit, and their cash outlay was a major part of each church’s annual budget.

Women give generously through giving their time and talents!

(written by Joyce Sasse, 2010)