

International Connections

~ By International Officer, Cindi Rabstein



As your new International Officer, I will endeavour to keep you up to date. My predecessor, Leila Pettigrew, did such a good job - it is going to be a hard act to follow.

I was in touch with Sylvia Hatfield, Coordinator for Canada Comforts, and she wants to pass on what fantastic help the Ontario WI ladies are. She hopes you are all aware of the comfort and hope you are bringing to so many in the developing world.

The 2011 year has been very busy thus far. From January through March, containers were sent to South Africa, Moldova, Uganda, Thailand, Uganda (different area), Tanzania, Philippines and Zimbabwe. There is a great need for receiving blankets, flannelette diapers (27"x27") and knitted washcloths. Please keep the teddies, toques and blankets coming. The address to send items to is: **Canada Comforts, 1185 Wychbury Avenue, Victoria, BC, V9A 5L1.**

Please include the FWIO address, your Branch name and your phone number inside the parcel. I have patterns for teddies and the bags they go in, and if you send me a stamped self-addressed envelope, I will see it gets to you (see address below).

Please send me your reports following your Annuals. I need to know: Are you using Fair Trade products? Do you have a pen pal in another country? Are you supporting ACWW projects? ACWW really needs Pennies for Friendship. Did you have an ACWW Day? Are you giving to the Canada Area Project for ACWW? It is \$10,000 to the Grenada Home Makers Association entitled, "Climate Change and its Effect on Women and Agriculture." We have always given generously to these projects.

Cindi Rabstein can be reached by phone (519-843-2222) or by mail (23 White Bark Way, RR#1, Belwood, ON N0B 1J0).

Advocacy Update

~ By Advocacy Coordinator, Glenna Smith

As your new Advocacy Coordinator, I look forward to working with you to address the many concerns being expressed by Members. Keep in mind that you can and should contact your MP or MPP if you have a concern. One word of caution: make sure you do your research. Not everything you read, see or hear is fact. If you are writing letters, make sure it is clear that it is coming from one Member or Branch and not from FWIO. Please keep me informed of any actions you take. Maybe another Branch is interested in the same thing. Remember: one can make a difference, but numbers count.



What has been happening with Advocacy?

On February 7, 2011, four of us met with the Honourable Carol Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. It was a very successful meeting and she provided the following statement to accompany our News Release.

"I was very pleased to meet with the FWIO today. We share an understanding of just how important local abattoirs and meat plants are for livestock and poultry producers, and for our rural communities. We've made progress in recent years, and I look forward to continuing to work with FWIO and industry, while maintaining our shared commitment to food safety."

There is a Provincial Election on October 6, 2011. Now is your opportunity to ask questions and express concerns.

Glenna Smith can be reached by email (dgsmith@sympatico.ca), phone (519-824-0217) or mail (570 Arkeil Road, Arkeil, ON N0B 1C0).



Malcolm WI Member Barb Klages, former Advocacy Coordinator Judith Moses, FWIO President Carol Innes and current Advocacy Coordinator Glenna Smith represented FWIO at an important meeting to discuss concerns over the closure of small abattoirs in Ontario.