

International Connections

~ By International Officer, Leila Pettigrew



My term is coming to an end, and it has certainly been an interesting one. Working with Canada Comforts has been very rewarding. They are a great group of volunteers doing worth while work. It is good to give to third world countries and Canada Comforts makes sure that the people in need are receiving help.

Teddy bears and teddy bear bags are very important to the children. They can put their belongings in the bags so no one takes them while they sleep. Washcloths for newborns are always needed - midwives give new mothers one to take home. Sweaters, mitts, toques, little dresses, shorts, t-shirts and blankets are very much needed.

We have sent many boxes from Thunder Bay and other Branches and Districts have as well. The ladies at Canada Comforts are very thankful for all that has been done for them by WI's in Ontario.

In September, 40 foot containers were sent to Pakistan and Nigeria, and two to Eastern Europe. More funding has come in for Haiti, and their goal is to send one container a week. Each container has a Canadian Flag on it and a few stuffed toys are included for the Customs Officers to give to their children because they are often underpaid. I hope Ontario keeps this project going as I believe it is so worthwhile, and I hope my successor finds this work as fulfilling and interesting as I have.

A Kind Request: Sylvia Hatfield of Canada Comforts asks that you include your name and address on the inside of any parcels sent to Canada Comforts. Thank you!

Advocacy Update

~ By Advocacy Coordinator, Judith Moses

Enthusiasm is building across the organization for new advocacy efforts. The updated Advocacy Manual should be available shortly, its main changes taking into account how electronic communication and social media are transforming advocacy methods and making advocacy more easily accessible to Members than ever before.

Small Abattoirs in Ontario

We have written to the Premier and OMAFRA on the closure of small abattoirs in light of the growing local food movement, and we are awaiting confirmation of a meeting with Carol Mitchell. The Advocacy Coordinator and Malcolm WI (Grey-Bruce Area) are collaborating on a major advocacy campaign. The local food market continues to grow and both federal and provincial governments must ensure the viability of small abattoirs. The Malcolm WI initiative is proving to be a useful advocacy model in how to: build local alliances (Christian Farmers, Farmers' Union and Federation of Agriculture, etc.); engage the public (about 300 people came to a public meeting); jointly fund the effort (Malcolm WI and each of the Grey-Bruce farm groups put \$250 into a fund); manage a media strategy; and adjust our thinking as issues evolve from the original resolution.



For more information on the current demands of small abattoirs and other high profile FWIO issues, a detailed Advocacy Report can be found on the FWIO website at www.fwio.on.ca. Judith Moses can be reached by email at judithmoses@rogers.com.

RIGHT: In June of 2010, Malcolm WI held a ROSE Session to educate and engage the public on this issue.

