

International Connections

By Mary Janes

Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)

News Flash!

Area President Mildred Keith has just announced the Canada Area ACWW Project for the 2004-2007 triennium. At the Hobart ACWW Triennial Conference Canadian members requested a specific project to support. That project has now been chosen. It is a \$7,000 nutrition and catering project of the organization Kimako in Tanzania, whose purpose is to train women in nutrition and catering skills. The profits will be used to expand the business, to improve the quality of life for their families and to promote health and education. Donations should be sent to FWIO, with cheques marked Canada Area ACWW Project.

The FWIO Board has approved a project between Ontario Women's Institute Branches and the seven societies of the Caribbean, Central and South America Area of ACWW, responding to members' requests that we support ACWW members in our own hemisphere.

The Caribbean Area members are active making crafts, but often have problems obtaining supplies. They list such items as embroidery floss, embroidery patterns, coloured raffia, cross-stitch materials and huck a buck materials. Other items may be added to this list as I hear from the remaining societies. There are ACWW societies in Colombia, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago and Brazil. This is a Branch-to-Branch project, but please inform me when you send a package, so that the FWIO Board knows how well this project has been received by FWIO members. If your Branch wishes to mail a package to a society in the Caribbean, please contact Mary Janes (see information below) for the address.

Links and Penfriends

ACWW has a "Links and Penfriends Scheme" whereby a Branch or an individual may have contact with members around the world. This is one way to promote international friendship. The Links program is between societies or groups in different areas of the world. Penfriends is for individual members within the ACWW family. Although there is no charge for this service, a donation to Pennies for Friendship for administration and postage is appreciated. For more information, contact

Mrs. Debbie Czarnopys-White
ACWW Penfriends Coordinator
27284 South Dakota Road
Dubois IL 62831-1622
United States of America

Pennies for Friendship

ACWW is totally dependent on dues and donations. It receives no government funding. The "Pennies for Friendship" Scheme is the voluntary fund, which supports project work, United Nations networking, international extension work and management of the core work of ACWW. For more information check out their website at www.acww.org.uk The email address is info@acww.org.uk

Tsunami Relief

I received a letter from the Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate (DMI) in Chennai, India, shortly after the December Tsunami. The DMI is one of the societies of ACWW. They opened two disaster management institutes, also known as tsunami rehabilitation centres. Their concerns are for the orphaned children – looking for sponsors who will provide food, clothing, education and medical expenses on a monthly or annual basis - and the women – pulling together resources to guarantee loans for boats, nets and other fishing accessories. They have also set up counselling centres and counsel door-to-door and at relief camps (see the April-June 2005 *Countrywoman*).

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Creating Puppets for Afghanistan



The Binbrook Women's Institutes involvement with the Afghanistan Puppet Project began in response to an article in *The Hamilton Spectator* in February 2003. The directors of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster University were seeking volunteers to make puppets to go with 16 stories they had written.

It was proposed that a book of illustrated stories and a "family" of four puppets go to each school in Afghanistan. The goal of these books and puppets were to help the children of this war-torn country deal with the upheavals and problems of war and its effects on their family life.

When the Binbrook WI heard that members Caren Banda (right) and Judith Phillips (left) had been part of the original group making 200 puppets at McMaster, they wanted to become involved. Caren, a member of many talents, is leading this Binbrook WI project.

The goal of 100 more puppets, enough for 25 schools in Kabul, has been completed with the help of a small group of dedicated helpers and donations of material and money. A further 100 puppets are currently being produced.

Submitted by Judith Phillips, President, Binbrook WI, Wentworth, Hamilton Area.
Photo courtesy of The Glanbrook Gazette.