

Focus on USA

In previous issues of *Home & Country* I have focused on the South Pacific Area, the two African Areas, Canada and the two Asian Areas. In the next issues, the focus will be on Europe & the Mediterranean and Caribbean and Central & South America Areas. The current focus is on the United States of America.

The Country Women's Council USA (CWC), formed in 1946, promotes and coordinates the work of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) in the United States. The CWC is composed of five national member societies – American Farm Bureau Women's Committee, National Association for Family & Community Education Inc., National Master Farm Homemaker's Guild, National Volunteer Outreach Network Inc. and Woman's National Farm & Garden Association – and several independent societies. The current Chair is Sue Jarvis of Oklahoma. Dorothy Camp of Iowa is the USA Area President for ACWW.

The USA Area has several members serving ACWW in various capacities: Susan Herbert of Connecticut is the ACWW Promotions & Publications Committee Chair, Judy Weinkauf of Oklahoma is on the Triennial Conference Committee and Pat Altshuler (a confirmed speaker at ACWW 2001) serves as one of ACWW's United Nations representatives in New York.

The CWC has offered the Ruth B. Sayre Memorial Scholarship annually since 1982 to residents of North and South America who demonstrate leadership ability and have financial need. The scholarship's purpose is to foster the educational development of women. (Ruth Buxton Sayre followed Madge Watt as ACWW President from 1947 to 1953. She is the only American to have served in this capacity.)

The *CWC News Sheet* has reported several interesting activities of member societies.

American Farm Bureau Women's Committee (AFBW)

Farm Bureau Women plan and implement youth activities, statewide conferences, safety programs and legislative activities. They also fundraise for worthwhile programs. One recent activity has been the support of a Community Canning Centre in western Ukraine. The Centre, which now employs 6 persons, cans cucumbers, tomatoes and apples. In May 2000 the AFBW held their first national conference. Following the theme of the conference, "Pathways to the 21st Century," the participants attended programs that explored the means to be strong leaders in the future.

National Association for Family & Community Education Inc. (NAFCE)

The mission of the National Association for Family & Community Education Inc. is to strengthen individuals and families through education, leadership and action. In Kansas, for example, television literacy has been targeted. The NAFCE sponsors the Saroj Dutt Memorial Society work in villages in India. Recently, packages of embroidery floss have been collected. Maryland FCE's 626 members donated 2,970 skeins, while in Kansas 15,500 were collected, an average of 4 per member!

National Master Farm Homemaker's Guild (NMFHG)

Six state guilds form the National Master Farm Homemaker's Guild. This group strives to better the environment and help others have a better life. Their national Native American Project has assisted the Shoshone Bannock Tribe in Idaho and Crow Agency in Montana with donations of Christmas gifts, clothing, non-perishable food, personal hygiene items, quilts, school supplies and cash.



National Volunteer Outreach Network Inc. (NVON)

The National Volunteer Outreach Network Inc. is composed of seven organizations. Some member states are working on the "Earth Flag" environmental project, which links schools in the United States with children in other countries. To date the links have been with South Africa and India. This program was first introduced in Pretoria at the 1998 ACWW Conference.

Currently the NVON is hosting Martina Hagna, daughter of the President of the Czech Women's Union. Martina will spend a year studying English at West Virginia University before returning to her native country to teach English.

Woman's National Farm & Garden Association (WNF & G)

The Woman's National Farm & Garden Association celebrated its 85th anniversary in 1999. As they focused on the future during their anniversary, the organization recognized that, although their basic aims set so many years ago are still meaningful, the pace and diversity of members' lives dictates that to be successful in the future the organization needs to streamline, to focus on a few areas and to improve communication within its membership.

In 1999, the WFN & G shipped a 40x8x8 foot Project Sew container of yarn, fabric, craft supplies, needles, thread, sewing machines, ironing boards and books to South Africa. It takes about a year to train someone in basic sewing skills, after that they learn to knit and crochet and develop literacy skills.

Rippers, Strippers and Patchers

Wellington South District has been busy ripping old jeans and making strips and patches to be used in the design of vests, purses, children's jumpers and skirts. The initial challenge, as reported in the *Spring 2000* issue of *Home & Country*, was to raise \$2001 for ACWW Pre-Conference Workshops. The success of the project has exceeded their wildest expectations with nearly \$4,000 raised to date.

The industrious ladies who have attended seven workshops this year, as well as others who prefer to take their sewing work home, are responsible for the success of this project. Ruth Laking, the project leader, has agreed to share her skills and experience with any interested Districts willing to organize a similar activity to raise funds for ACWW 2001. For more information contact Ruth Laking at 519-824-0679.



From left to right, Wellington South District members Betty Larter, Ruth Laking, Glenna Smith, Dorothy Ellis and Jean Hume model a variety of denim vests.

Submitted by Edith H. Eedy, PRO, Wellington South.