

Towards ACWW 2001

By Mary Janes

Are you using "Volunteers Make Visions a Reality" as a theme for one of your Branch, District and Area meetings in the coming fiscal year? Are you preparing now to greet the world next June? Or are you considering getting involved in some other way – perhaps one of the opportunities listed below? By the time you read this article, it will be one year to the start of ACWW 2001 – the 23rd Triennial Conference being held in Hamilton, Ontario.

Postcards – Members may wish to submit postcards of their communities, with their name and address and a bit of personal information, to welcome delegates to Ontario and perhaps form a personal or letter link. The postcards will be collected

at the Area Conventions in the fall of 2000 and will be placed in the delegates' conference bags.

Branch Programs – Branch programs will also be collected at Area to be put into the delegates' bags. It's always interesting to see what activities other groups are involved in and how they organize their yearly plans.

Quilt Blocks – Have you prepared your quilt blocks for the Sales Table (see *Home & Country*, Winter 1999-2000, p. 16)? Proceeds will go towards Conference expenses.

Individual Membership – To be a full conference delegate and attend all activities, you must be an individual member (Category IVb) of ACWW. Membership forms are printed in each issue of *The Countrywoman*.

Home Hospitality – In response to some queries, it doesn't matter where you live in the province. If you are interested in hosting an ACWW member either before or after the

conference (as per restrictions in *Home & Country*, Summer 1999, p. 7), submit your name now! People from outside the province may be interested in visiting even the most remote spot in Ontario for the unique, unforgettable experience that your location may provide.

Registration Forms – If you wish to attend the full conference, registration forms are now available in the Jan.-Mar., 2000, issue of *The Countrywoman*. Day visitor forms will be available at a later date.

Used Stamps – Donna Russett, Chair of Displays and Sales, continues to collect used stamps to sell at the conference sales table (see *Home & Country*, Summer 1999, p. 7).

Pre-Conference Workshop Fund – You or your Branch may wish to help a delegate attend the Pre-Conference Workshops by making a donation (see *Home & Country*, Fall 1999, p. 16).

Mary Janes is the Public Relations Director for the Ontario Coordinating Committee planning the ACWW 2001 Conference.

Focus on Asia

This article continues the series of visits to the 9 Areas of the Associated Country Women of the World by focusing on Asia. The information contained is taken from *The Countrywoman* and ACWW Annual and Triennial Reports.

South East and Far East Asia Area

The continent of Asia is divided into two Areas for ACWW administrative purposes. The Area President for South East and Far East Asia (Brunei, China, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand) is Enna Tamimi of Indonesia. Ms. Tamimi is a lecturer and translator at the National Academy of English Language in Jakarta. She is a member of the ACWW Society Persatuan Wanita Republik Indonesia (PERWARI).

The current ACWW Deputy President is Ursula Goh of Malaysia, a Past President of this Area. Mrs. Goh is a Life Member of the Sarawak Federation of Women's Institutes and is currently Chair of the ACWW ad-hoc committee on agriculture.

The following examples from China and Korea provide concrete evidence of how ACWW works to help women help themselves.

- The National Social Welfare Association of Shenyang (NSWAS) of China officially joined ACWW in 1996. Local women saw the advantages of ACWW affiliation to help local development and to empower women and decided to get involved. NSWAS is now the first organization



devoted to women's welfare that has the Chinese Government's seal of approval, in spite of its reluctance to encourage non-governmental organization (NGO) activities and rural development without state intervention.

The first development activity has been a goose-rearing income generation project to alleviate poverty and promote self-reliance. It is fast becoming a lucrative enterprise. Initially 20,000 goslings were purchased and distributed to 100 participants. When they were ready for market, participants handed back 10 pairs, kept 5 pairs for the next season's breeding and sold the rest to boost the family's income. The geese handed back will be distributed to another group of families to ensure the sustainability of the project. Money raised will be used to set up scholarships for basic education for disadvantaged orphans. The goose feathers will also be used for income generation and skill training projects.

- Cheju is an island south of mainland South Korea. The challenges facing women there included lack of clean water and poverty.

The Cheju Christian Social Welfare Association became an ACWW member during the 1983-1986 triennium. Since then, the drinking water situation has been alleviated by the installation of a water conservation tank and pipes, thanks to the Water for All project. Now, rainwater can be collected for use when needed.

Central and South East Asia Area

Aloka Basu of Calcutta, a member of the County Women's Association of India, currently serves as Central and South East Asia Area President. This area includes societies in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Franey Irani of Pakistan is a member of ACWW's United Nations Committee.

- One of the most recent projects to encourage women has been in southern India. The 1998 Annual Report describes the 15 bore wells for 15 villages. "A reliable clean water supply is of paramount importance to rural Indian communities. It can transform village life, removing the burden from women who routinely have to carry water for many miles. Access to clean drinking water also results in a reduction in water-borne diseases and a marked improvement in the general health of the community. In Tamil Nadu with a grant from ACWW, SCAD [the ACWW society] has been able to construct 15 bore wells, reaching 8000 'saltpan' workers, gypsies and tribal people trying to scratch out a living in this drought-prone area. The aim of the project is to reduce poverty and encourage self-sufficiency amongst some of the poorest inhabitants."