



PAULINE WINKLER

MARGARET QUINN



Producing the milk bag mats, this team from the Wellington Women's Institute includes (left to right) Sheila Prestidge, Sheena Kennedy, Wilma McCagg and Anne Trant. Also part of the team last Thursday were Betty Cronk, Evelyn Sprigings and Margaret Quinn.

From milk to mats

The Wellington WI takes on a global project

Working in a church basement, members of the Wellington Women's Institute each take a job in the rudimentary production line. Someone folds, another measures, another cuts and a handful of the ladies loop the strips of plastic together and roll into balls waiting to be crocheted. Together these women are transforming gathered milk bags into sleeping mats to be sent to Haiti.

The properties of the four-litre milk bag are such that they repel bugs and mildew and they offer some cushioning against the hard ground. They can also be rinsed and cleaned, and they dry easily. Between 250 and 350 bags are required to make one of the two sizes of mats (child and adult).



Before and after.

The Wellington WI was first presented with the idea by member Betty Cronk, who read about an eight year long project in Barrie and thought that it was something that could be done for the victims of the January earthquake in Haiti. Between Cronk, and fellow WI member Sheena Kennedy and other members of the WI, the project is being pushed forward.

"It all just came together after the earthquake in Haiti," said Kennedy. "The mats eradicate 80 per cent of hookworm, it gets people off of the ground, it can be rinsed off and it is being used in hospitals. It is also being used for packing fragile medical supplies being shipped."

The group is appealing to the community to save their milk bags and contact a member of the Wellington WI or drop them off to the Wellington Public Library.

They also hope to enlist some help from the students at CML Snider School to donate milk bags and to help with the production of the mats.

The WI hope to make this an ongoing project, making as many mats as supply allows, before sending them to an agency in Canada to be shipped to the earthquake-ravaged area.



SHEENA KENNEDY

WILMA MCCAGG

ANNE TRANT

