

# THE GRAPEVINE

ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN



OTTAWA

Vol. 1 No. 2  
February, 1988

**Join OWW!  
Sign up new  
members!**  
OWW is a trade  
union organization.  
We provide strike  
support, skills  
building, and a  
forum to meet  
other union  
women. Send your  
cheque for \$20 to:  
OWW  
Ottawa Chapter  
c/o ODLC,  
288 Dalbousie St,  
Ottawa.  
Or call Deborah,  
234-4456

## Annual General Meeting

Monday, March 28, 1988

PSAC Regional Office

279 Carling Avenue

### **Buffet Dinner**

will be served from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. ( no charge )



Chapter business will start at 7:30 p.m

### On the Agenda:

✿ CUPW video : " Holding  
the Line After the Strike "

✿ Child Care Presentation

✿ Written Committee  
Reports

✿ Constitutional Changes

✿ Chapter Plan for the year

✿ Chapter Elections

### Coming up in March:

Union Sisters Dinner

Friday, March 11, 1988

7:00 p.m.

My Cousins Restaurant

283 Elgin Street at MacLaren

*Everyone Welcome*

## Please attend!

Have your say in the future of your OWW Chapter!  
For more information call Deborah, at 234-4456 or 234-3898

## Introduce your local to OWW!

OWW would like to meet your Union. In the next few months, the OWW Ottawa Chapter will be writing to your local executive asking for a spot on the agenda of a local membership meeting to talk about Organized Working Women and what we do.

Please speak to people in your workplace about OWW and suggest to your executive that we be permitted to give a presentation to a membership meeting.

OWW has a lot to offer women in your Union and the women in your union have much to share with us! What we need is the opportunity to get together.

## Alberta Nurses Need Support

by Jackle Desrochers

On Saturday, February 13, 1988, 11,000 nurses of the United Nurses of Alberta went back to work after 18 days on strike. In Alberta, nurses' strikes are banned by law.

They were fighting for better wages and working conditions, a safer work place and dignity at work. They won some improvements (nurses with over 6 years experience will get \$1.82 more per hour) but not everything they wanted. Nevertheless, it was enough to take down their picket lines.

The large majority of nurses are women, women who had to defy provincial laws that say they have no right to strike. They stood strong together to fight for their rights. Even when faced with police harassment, arrests and enormous fines, they stood in solidarity, prepared to go to jail if that is what it took to win.

The Alberta government is Tory. This strike shows just how far the Tories are prepared to go to use anti-union laws to smash unions. The government and the hospital association forced the nurses to break their unjust laws, and then they tried to use the courts to break their solidarity. Unions across the country came through to show their support for the nurses. Eventually the Tories had to back down, the hospital association had to negotiate an agreement and reprisals against individual nurses were dropped.

The nurses' courageous battle shows that it is possible to take the Tories on, provided workers are united and prepared to take whatever action is necessary, even if that means challenging unjust laws. That is how workers won the right to strike to begin with.

Our sisters in the United Nurses of Alberta have had a long, hard and costly strike. They need financial support. Please send any money you or your local can, to:

Friends of Alberta Nurses Society  
c/o Romanovski and Co., Chartered Accountants  
510-10665 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta. T5J 3S9

**Sign up now!**

## How to deal with Sexual Harassment CLC / ODLC Course April 8 - 9

OWW member Rosemary Warskett is teaching a workshop on dealing with sexual harassment. She says, "Most incidents of sexual harassment occur between an employee and a supervisor. Through our unions, we can fight the long-term causes of sexual harassment as well as develop short-term solutions that give relief to the victims. A union policy against sexual harassment will focus specifically on the types of harassment encountered in your workplace, and outline methods to combat it."

Other courses are also available. Contact your local union for information. Don't delay! Courses are on a first come first served basis.



## A Victory for Women

by Deborah Bourque

In 1929, women were recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada as persons. Finally, more than 50 years later, on January 28, 1988, women were accorded control over our own bodies. In a 5 - 2 decision, Supreme Court judges found that section 251 of the Criminal Code violates a woman's rights under the Charter of Rights. "Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a foetus to term *unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations* is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person," the judges wrote.

While this is a great victory for a woman's right to have a choice, the absence of guarantees or leadership from the federal government means that women in all provinces must continue to fight for equal access to safe abortions which are completely paid for by provincial health care plans.

## Celebrate International Women's Week!

Participate in the March  
and Rally, March 6,  
Parliament Hill,  
12 noon to 3:30 p.m.  
Go to the IWW Fair at  
Landsdowne Park,  
February 27-28,  
noon to 5:00 p.m.

Don't forget the  
Celebration, March 12, at  
Le Patro, 40 Cobourg,  
8:00 p.m.- 1:00 a.m.

These are just a few of  
the over 200 events taking  
place in Ottawa from  
February 27 to March 12.