

O. S. O. M. M.

NEWSLETTER

Hi !

Here we are in 1985. Happy New Year! Like most other organizations, OSOMM would like to reflect on its accomplishments in the past six months in 1984. I won't bore you with tedious details, however, I will tell you that to organize a group from nothing is a very time consuming endeavour, especially when the goals of that group have never been undertaken by anyone else before.

In August 1984, we initiated action on a Women's Resource Centre. On January 16, 1985, the Mynarski Park Community Resource Centre, opened for business, under the careful direction of Padre Needham. The centre has adopted many of our goals and we know it will succeed in helping to improve the status of women in the military community.

Throughout the last few months of 1984, we have been busy writing letters seeking recognition and support from our government. The following is an excerpt from the letter written by the Honourable Walter F. McLean, Minister responsible for the Status of Women:

".....It is encouraging to learn of the objectives of your organization and I feel confident that the proposed activities will contribute toward attaining the objectives of the Women's Programme.

.....May I offer you and the members of your organization my congratulations and best wishes for success."

This letter accompanied the government grant that we were awarded for the purposes of organizing OSOMM.

We have also written to the Minister of Defence, the Honourable Robert Coates, and have received, at this time, an initial reply; an excerpt:

".....I am sure that you will appreciate that your letter raises several significant issues which will require more in depth study by a number of agencies within the Department. I do not anticipate that this review can be completed before the end of January 1985, but you can be assured that the proposal will receive full consideration.

Thank you for your concern for the welfare of the military community and for your continued patience....."

This letter was signed by Richard B. Logan, Executive Assistant.

We have also initiated action on the Dental Campaign, however, we are waiting for confirmation of our actions from the Minister of Defence.

We have attempted to inform you of the Homemakers' Pension proposal now before the government and of the importance of a Homemakers Pension especially for military spouses.

We have had other small victories, some that I would like to briefly mention. It is because of OSOMM that a dangerously hot pipe in the swimming pool change room at Harvey Hall, CFB Calgary, which burned a number of children over the past year, is now safely covered. It is because of OSOMM that a recently posted Canadian from Lahr Germany, was finally given her right to vote. It is because of OSOMM that women are now allowed to be members of the Canox Video Club at CFB Calgary. It is amazing the number of issues that take the strength of a supporting organization to correct. And all of this brings us to a very important question;

WHO CARES ?

Who cares whether the dependents and spouses of the military have a dental plan? Who cares that the Accommodation Assistance Allowance was cut in half in Calgary? Who cares if the government wants to de-index the public service pension? Who cares if your UIC is cut off because your spouse is posted to isolation? Do you think the people of Red Deer, Ottawa or Chibougamau care? If people in the military community don't care about their own future, who will? We obviously like life in the military or we wouldn't still be here. These are difficult economic times for many people. Perhaps, we are lucky to have as much as we do, but it's up to us to try to change the things we can by making our needs known. If WE don't, who will?