

# ASWAC

Alberta Status of Women Action Committee

June 1991

Volume II, Number 3

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Summer celebrations

# ASWAC

Alberta Status of Women Action Committee

## 1990-91 Board Members

<b>Edmonton</b>	
Annette Aarbo	437-4938
Meg Dean	421-0306
Moyra Lang	421-0306
Dorothy Mandy	451-0933
Cathy Meade	421-0306
Deb Stewart-Furmanski	450-0158
<b>Calgary</b>	
Danielle Aubry	239-5197
Donna Gould	246-7531
Nancy Miller	233-0731
<b>Lethbridge</b>	
Sheryl McInnes	381-6868
Nancy Perkins	381-1685
<b>Magrath</b>	
Donna Dhaliwal	Box 403 (no phone)

## Regional Representatives

<b>Edmonton</b>	
Michelle Emslie	424-8451 r 422-0668 o
Valda Roberts	488-9659 r
<b>Calgary</b>	
Debbie Smith	263-9615
<b>Fort McMurray</b>	
Nicole Balmer	791-9210 r 743-2121 o
<b>Two Hills</b>	
Nancy Mereska	768-2180 r
<b>Westerose</b>	
Gerry Bailey	586-2983 r

ASWAC Edmonton:  
Box 1573  
Edmonton AB T5J 2N7  
Located at:  
Women's Building  
#10, 9930-106 St.  
Edmonton  
FAX 425-3293  
Phone: 421-0306

ASWAC Calgary:  
#303, 223-12 Ave. SW  
Calgary AB T2R 0G9  
FAX 269-2012  
Phone: 233-0731

ASWAC Lethbridge:  
#202, 325-6th Street South  
Lethbridge, AB T1J 2C7  
Phone: 329-8338

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Secretary of State Women's Program and the Alberta Wild Rose Foundation.

## Keep Those Clippings Coming...

Submissions welcome from the feminist community!

We are looking for people to help spread the word about current issues and events of particular interest to the feminist community by clipping articles from their local newspapers and circulating them.

We would like to start a regular clipping service, where women send copies of news clippings in to the ASWAC Edmonton office. We want to hear what is happening for women in your area, and to help other women keep updated as well.

So, sharpen your scissors and let's get the clipping grapevine into gear!

Send them to:  
ASWAC - Edmonton  
Box 1573  
Edmonton AB T5J 2N7

## Women Against Poverty Publication Project

### WELCOME ELAINE!

Elaine Murphy of Elaine Murphy and Associates Publications Management (Edmonton) has been hired by ASWAC to complete the editing and writing phase of the Women Against Poverty Report scheduled for distribution in early September, 1991. Funding for the publication project was received from Women's Program, Secretary of State.

## Thoughts and Reflections About Banff Conference

*At least 1,150 women attended the recent Women in a Violent Society conference in Banff. Much was said at the conference and considerable discussion continues in its wake among women in the community. Mainstream media gave some coverage, but by and large this coverage amounts to little more than a testament to the power of omission. The following are excerpts from articles written by two women attending the conference who give their thoughts and perceptions. The two are: Anne McGrath, vice-president of the National Action Committee (NAC) and Nancy Mereska, ASWAC regional representative.*

**Anne McGrath:**

"The tears, frustration and anger at (the recent) conference on women and violence were entirely to be expected. The emotions generated by the subject, the complexities of the issues and the exclusivity of the event combined to produce intense emotional and volatile discussions, debate and arguments...."

"While the conference went part way toward providing a national forum for women to address the issue of male violence toward women, 'unfortunately the conference itself was not accessible to those women who are struggling to increase the inclusivity of feminism. Women of colour, aboriginal women, women with disabilities, working class and poor women were excluded by the location, cost, format and content...."

"...As Rosemary Brown pointed out...the existence of racism did not depend on white women's ability to perceive it. That racism was experienced by the women of colour is true and it is incumbent on the white women present to acknowledge that experience and act on it whether or not we intended or perceived those actions to be racist."

"...While reports that focus on the divisiveness of many of the issues are certainly true, they do not embrace

**"...The existence of racism [does] not depend on white women's ability to perceive it."**

the strength, vitality and power generated through the collective experience of addressing issues that touch our lives as women so fundamentally. No attention has been paid to the fact that this was an incredibly successful, oversold conference bringing together 1,150 for three days in 68 workshops....Feminists have often noted that it is only when we are faced with turmoil and acrimony that the mainstream media picks up on our events and provides serious column inches...."

**"...We have had precious few opportunities to come together to share our collective rage, passion and wisdom."**

"...Whenever we come together to discuss male violence against women there is division. This is not only healthy as a process that leads us to more meaningful agreements and strategies, it is also inevitable, given the way our governments have forced us to work. Chronic underfunding--not only of the grassroots feminist services that named the reality of male violence and organized the services to assist the victims--but also of feminist organizations working to create economic, social and political changes to further women's equality, make it almost impossible for us to meet and devise our strategies...."

"...When women have the opportunity to attend a conference such as this there is a great deal of work to do in a very short time....It is extremely unfortunate that while many of the controversial items were bubbling among the conference delegates, we were subjected to long, patronizing, political and pointless speeches by federal government bureaucrats and federal and provincial cabinet ministers....While we were treated to speeches from some very powerful and riveting feminists, there was very little opportunity to discuss as a group the reality of Canadian women's lives, the violence we experience, the day-to-day strategies that we use to heal ourselves and the feminist political action that we need...."

"Feminists have been working hard to end violence against women,"...but we have had precious few opportunities to come together to share our collective rage, passion and wisdom. The CMHA conference was part of that work and it will be difficult and painful, but it is necessary for us to confront our biases, divisions, distrust and weaknesses to create a stronger movement that is capable of doing, as Sandra Butler noted, '...what we set out to do in the first place, and that is ending violence against women'."

**Nancy Mereska**

...I am going to highlight the messages given by the keynote speakers: Andrea Dworkin, feminist activist and writer; Sandra Butler, feminist activist and author of *Conspiracy of Silence*--one of the first recorded documentations on incest; Shirley Turcott, survivor and activist; Kate Millett, writer and anti-psychiatric activist; Rose Mar Brown, global activist and president of MATCH. Andrea Dworkin

"I could have entitled her talk 'Sick to Death'. She spoke of being sick to death of the amnesia of society when it comes to attitudes toward women and the violence they suffer....Although the Hollywood version about the pool hall gang rape, *The Accused*, ended with victory, the real life story ended with the woman who had been raped committing suicide.

"Andrea addressed violence as a political institution in the family and in the capitalist scheme of things....That actions against men and institutions that hurt women need to be real. 'Stop men who hurt women,' she said, 'Get them jailed or get them killed.'" Sandra Butler

"I would give her speech the title *A Holistic View of Feminism*. She spoke of the urgency we have to be with other women, to feel deeply with other women and to celebrate ourselves.

"As we age, we have less certainties and more concerns and urgencies. It is up to us to create answers, not to be vulnerable to answers that have been offered by 'experts'."

(Cont'd. page 4)

# WOMANSOURCES IN ALBERTA

The following is a list of resources for women throughout the province. We receive a number of phone calls for women looking for resources or support groups in their area, if you have such information that you'd like to share please write to us. We welcome all input.

## CALGARY

Women Looking Forward at #305, 223-12 Ave S.W. Calgary T2R 0G9, 269-1144, has a calendar of events for the Calgary area. Call the office to receive your copy. The annual general meeting and round table will be held June 20, 4 to 7p.m., RSVP by June 17, childcare subsidy available.

## EDMONTON

Women's Program and Resource Centre, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta, has a wonderful library, offers a wide selection of non credit women's courses and brochures on services available to women within Edmonton, the monthly Generic Women's Newsletter is produced here.

A newly established program, Counselling Women Certificate Program combines feminist theory with the practice of counselling. Nurses, teachers counsellors from shelters and sexual assault centres, crisis workers, social workers, family life educators, adult educators and vocational counsellors will find the program both relevant and timely. Brochures and application forms are available from the office. Closing date for applications for admission for the fall term is June 15, 1991 and November 1, 1991 for the winter term.

They are at 11019-90 Ave Edmonton, Alberta T6G

2E1, 492-3093. Call or write to receive a brochure or for further information.

## FORT McMURRAY

Women's Resource Society at #305-8706 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, Alberta T9H 3G2, has a lending library of books, tapes and videos. They put out a quarterly newsletter and receive a number of newsletters and papers from other women's groups so drop by and browse. For further information call or write.

## LETHBRIDGE

The Women's Resource Centre at #202-325-6 Street S., 329-8338 is also the home of ASWAC Lethbridge. The resource centre has a small library and a calendar of events, they also put out Womyn News, call the office for more information.

## RED DEER

Central Alberta Women's Outreach Society, #112, 4818 Gaetz Ave. Red Deer, Alberta T4N 4A3. The society promotes involvement of women in activities aimed at understanding and improving the social, political and economic position of women living in both rural and urban Central Alberta. They have a resource library, advocacy and referral service, career planning, Women of Canada study kits, meeting room and monthly newsletter. There is a small membership fee, contact the office at 347-2480 for further information.

## Banff Reflections Cont'd.

-We have to live with the consequences of our consciousness--our awakening. It is difficult. How do we bear the grief that our work forces us to face? It is through finding a way to not let our grief be paralyzing. We have to shape grief and make it work for us; turn it to righteous indignation, not one more woman, not one more child.

Shirley Turcotte

-Her talk on her own childhood torture was almost more than I could bear. Shirley and her sister were tortured by a Christian cult as children. Shirley starts plastic surgery May 31 on her legs to attempt to give them some appearance of being normal.

-She told of her hallucinations and flashbacks and finding ways to interpret them. "I know I'm not crazy. I'm just living two time zones at the same time. Flashbacks and hallucinations are simply old times visiting the present."

-She has learned to believe, support and love the person she is.

Kate Millett

-Kate reviewed her new book *The Loony Bin Trip*. She calls herself a "certified mad woman". She was locked up by family members 20 years ago and is a survivor of psychiatric oppression.

-One out of every five Americans is an American woman under the control of a psychiatrist.

-Psychiatry sets itself up as a "priesthood", an untouchable hierarchy of specialization in treatment.

-She asks us to make the exploration of the patient's rights movement a part of the feminist cause. There are enormous political ramifications involved in the psychiatrist-as-god attitude of society. Women are being managed and controlled by it. Psychiatry has eclipsed organized religion for controlling society and its criteria are legalized and enforceable....We support a system that relies ultimately on absolute force over absolute helplessness which is the pattern of violence in our society.

Rose Mary Brown

-She spoke about violence from a global perspective....Speaking from the perspective a Third World woman, she said forms of violence against women are focused on our sexuality having patriarchal foundations and demands. This can be generalized across any ethnic boundary in the world.

-The violence of racism is a form of violence from which there is no escape. It is like being female in a male dominated society. We should listen and respect the accusations that we are racist among ourselves. We should not put our guilt on a pedestal and worship it; rather, we need to analyze, accept, examine and change our actions. There can be no feminism where there is racism.

# ALBERTA FEMINIST CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Edmonton Avenmore Constituency Office presents:  
**WOMEN'S SUMMER CELEBRATION '91**

Performances by: Viola Braun-Fox, pianist  
Anya Fox, singer  
Rosalind Harper, singer  
Shelley Younger, flutist

Films : Mother Earth (1991)  
Sabina (1991)  
Great Grandmother (1975)

Poetry Reading  
Excerpts from WOMANSTRENGTH  
Solstice Ritual

Thursday, June 20  
7:30 p.m.

Room 2-115 Education Building North  
University of Alberta  
No Admission Charge Child Care Available  
R.S.V.P. before June 18 to 465-6652

## SUMMER SOLSTICE DANCE

Saturday, June 22  
8:30 pm - 1:00 am

Riverdale Community Hall 9231 - 100 Avenue  
\$7.00 Sliding Scale  
Non-alcoholic Beverages  
Softball game at 7:00 pm.  
Sponsor: Edmon. Women's Music Collective  
All Women Welcome!

## CALGARY IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S CENTRE

### FREE WORKSHOP

Monday, June 17

Initial Steps to Build Up Self-Esteem and Assertiveness  
To register call 245-6785. Childcare available.

## ARAB-JEWISH WOMEN'S COALITION (Women's Action for Peace in the Gulf)

### OPEN RECEPTION

July 30 at 8:00 p.m.  
Location: Edmonton Multicultural Society  
#414 10136 - 100 Street  
420-6866  
Contact: Elise Maltin 992-1076

## TOUR THE CAMBODIA PAVILION

May 17 to June 30, 1991  
Tues. thru Sun at 7:30 pm, Fri. and Sat at 11:00 pm  
102 Street & 85 Avenue (behind Yardbird Suite)  
Tickets available at Greenwood's Book Shoppe and Audrey's  
Books or phone 448-1735.

## ENDOMETRIOSIS ASSOCIATION

### MEETING

June 20 at 7:30 p.m.  
The next meeting of the Edmonton Chapter of the  
Endometriosis Association will be held in room 2f1.04,  
classroom D, WC Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre,  
University of Alberta. The guest speaker will be  
Homeopath, Dr. Robert Pearman. For further information  
and for July's meeting date, call Maureen at 456-6899.

## GAY AND LESBIAN PRIDE WEEK

### RALLY

Sunday, June 16, 6:00 pm  
Municipal Plaza, Calgary  
Guest Speaker: ND MP SVEND ROBINSON  
Parade and Concert to follow featuring Peggy Ward and  
Faith Nolan  
Tickets \$10 or \$7 (un/under employed)  
Tickets available through Calgary Lesbian and Gay Political  
Action Guild (266-5318) and Woman's Place  
Bookstore.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OTHER GAY  
AND LESBIAN PRIDE WEEK EVENTS CALL LESBIAN  
INFORMATION LINE AT  
265-9629.

## ALBERTA WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

### MEETING

June 19 at 7 p.m.  
Theme: Women Handling Anger and Guilt  
Women in rural areas are invited to participate or to write  
letters of inquiry.

# ASWAC Events

*This section has been set aside for ASWAC related events, we welcome your comments and suggestions. We would also like to hear from areas of Alberta that celebrate "Take Back The Night". The annual march is planned for September 13/91 in both Calgary and Edmonton.*

## ASWAC CALGARY

Calgary's 10th annual "Take Back The Night" planning is now underway. An information and planning session will take place on June 26/91, between 4:30 and 7:00 p.m. in the old 'Y' Common Room at 223-12 Ave, for more information call the ASWAC office in Calgary.

## ASWAC EDMONTON

The first organization meeting for "Take Back The Night" in Edmonton is being held June 19/91, 7:30 p.m. at 9930-106 Street #10, all are invited to attend and share your ideas for this year's event. Call the Edmonton office for more information or if you are unable to attend this meeting and are interested in upcoming meetings.

## ASWAC GENERAL

Call for submissions for t-shirt design competition. We need creative women to design our first of four limited edition t-shirts and a general ASWAC design for posters and t-shirts. We need an 8 1/2 by 11 image of the design. You will receive an honorarium if your design is chosen, all submissions will be retained by ASWAC unless otherwise requested. The first t-shirt design called for will be for the annual "Take Back The Night" march in September. If you have any questions please call in Calgary, Danielle at 239-5197 or Donna at 246-7531, in Edmonton call the office at 421-0306. Entry deadline is August 1/91, send submissions to #303, 223-12 Ave, S.W. Calgary, T2R 0G9.

## WOMEN IN ACTION 1991-92

Action, action, action is very much the theme of this year's ASWAC projects. Women in Action projects have particular emphasis on areas outside the major centres of Edmonton and Calgary. We will use ASWAC's resources and activities to initiate, support and help coordinate the resources and activities of groups throughout the province working actively to improve the status of women.

We want to establish and support regional outreach by building communications and sharing resources with women's groups throughout Alberta.

Our annual general meeting will be held in Edmonton as a one day business meeting. A major conference is planned for the spring of 1992, aimed at bringing together all the contacts made during these networking activities, it is hoped the priorities and projects of ASWAC for the future will be decided by the input from all Women in Action projects.

## ASWAC LETHBRIDGE

The Lethbridge office has already had its first "Take Back The Night" meeting please call the office to find out the date of the next meeting.

## ASWAC REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

The regular ASWAC Isolation Brunch will be held Saturday, June 15 at 11 a.m. in Wetaskiwin. The brunch is an opportunity for interested women to get together and network about their concerns, as well as have a fun time. Relaxation, enjoyment and good talk are guaranteed. The Isolation brunch will be at R's Place Dining Lounge, 5411-40 Ave Wetaskiwin. For more information contact Lori at 227-3882 or Gerry at 586-2983.

## FROM THE ASWAC NEWSROOM:

The deadline for submissions on our next newsletter is August 5/91, publication date is August 12/91. So please send all submissions as soon as possible to our Edmonton office.

We have some exciting plans for our future newsletters some of which will feature a humorous look at life in the ASWAC office, such as phone calls, and we get plenty of them, so stand by. If there is something you would like to see in our newsletter please let us know.



► Celebrating Beryl Schmitke

# INTRODUCING OUR NEW STAFF

## MOYRA LANG: Project Co-ordinator

Hi, I am Moyra Lang the newest ASWAC employee as of April 91, and I'm very pleased to be working with this energetic group of women. I've spent the last month getting to know the place and meeting with some board members. I'm starting to feel more at home with my new position as project coordinator and welcome suggestions from all members.

I have been living in the Edmonton area now for four years and arrived here soon in tow from the Yukon. I spent most of my time up north being someone's mother and being back in the city has given me an opportunity to pursue my interests more actively. At present I'm actively involved with the Endometriosis Association with regards to public awareness, I volunteer at the Women's Program and when the moon is right I am circling with a women's spirituality group. I look forward to my work here and again invite any members or interested women to drop by and visit or phone and introduce yourself. See you all at the "Take Back The Night" rally September 13, 1991.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SEXUAL STEREOTYPING AND PORNOGRAPHY

#### FILM NIGHTS

July 2, 7:30 pm: The Goddess Remembered  
August 6, 7:30 pm: The Burning Times

Location: PASSP Office  
#209, 9246 - 34A Ave. Edmonton  
Contact: Joyce Miller

## VOLUNTEERS WELCOME !!

There is always plenty of help needed with ASWAC activities, so if you would like to help out, don't hesitate to contact us.

Among the activities on the go at the moment are:

- Newsletter collective (helping out with all aspects of production: from ideas to mailout)
- Speakers' Bureau. We are always asked to provide speakers and resource people on a variety of subjects concerning women. If there is an issue that particularly interests you, please contact the Edmonton office for an application form.
- Fundraising - A number of interesting and exciting fundraising activities are planned for this year. Help with their planning and implementation is welcome and needed.

Please call Cathy Meade at the Edmonton office (421-0306) if you want to help, if you're just plain curious, or if you want to take her out for dinner.

## CATHY MEADE: Volunteer Co-ordinator

Hello, I'm Cathy Meade. I began my position as Volunteer Co-ordinator in mid-February. Since then I've:

- a) single-handedly tripled our pool of volunteers
- b) revamped our organization and doubled our membership
- c) met a lot of great women who I hope will volunteer for ASWAC one day
- d) all of the above

Well, the answer is (d) as I'm sure you've all guessed. I've been travelling all over the province - Medicine Hat, Peace River, Lethbridge, Calgary, etc. - meeting Albertan feminists (even if they didn't know or want to admit they were). I'm looking forward to meeting more of you during these summer months.

I'm originally from Toronto, Ontario (or 'Onterrible' as some of you would call it) but I trust you won't hold that against me. I came to Edmonton in Fall of 1988 to begin a Masters degree in Sociology of Sport examining issues of race and gender in the Canadian sport sphere. I was about two thirds through the degree when I began working for ASWAC. But, there's no need for concern about me interrupting my studies to work full-time - like the classic perpetual "grad student", I wasn't doing any work on my thesis anyway.

I'm quite excited about our new projects for this coming year. I hope that many of you will also get excited and will transform that enthusiasm into volunteer time. There are many opportunities for you to become active member of ASWAC. Please write, call, or come down to the office for more info. By the way, the answer was (c).

## HUG THESE WOMEN:

The following is a list of women in our newsletter collective.

Meg Dean  
Louise Janzen  
Brenda Kerber  
Moyra Lang  
Christine Leonard  
Dorothy Mandy  
Hazel McClarty  
Cathy Meade  
Judy Peters

If you would like to become involved and be hugged, please contact the Edmonton office.



# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR T-SHIRT DESIGN COMPETITION

WE NEED CREATIVE WOMEN TO  
DESIGN OUR FIRST OF FOUR LIMITED  
EDITION T-SHIRTS  
AND  
A GENERAL ASWAC DESIGN FOR  
POSTERS AND T-SHIRTS

WE NEED:

an 8 1/2 by 11 image of the design

You will receive an honorarium if your design is chosen

All submissions will be retained by ASWAC unless otherwise requested

The first T-shirt will be for the annual "Take Back The Night" march in  
September.

The rights to winning submissions must be signed over to ASWAC in return  
for public display of your work.

If you have any questions please call Danielle at 239-5197 or Donna at  
246-7531 (Calgary) or the ASWAC office in Edmonton at 421-0306.

Entry deadline is August 1/91, submit designs to #303, 223-12 Ave  
S.W. Calgary, T2R 0G9

ASWAC memberships run from September to September. If your membership is up to date please pass this newsletter on to someone who may wish to join.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ New  Renewal

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work)

\* *Suggested membership fee is  
\$20.00 but we will accept  
whatever you can afford.*

Please make cheques out to: ASWAC, Send to: Box 1573 Edmonton AB T5J 2N7

YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DONATIONS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF ASWAC'S INCOME.