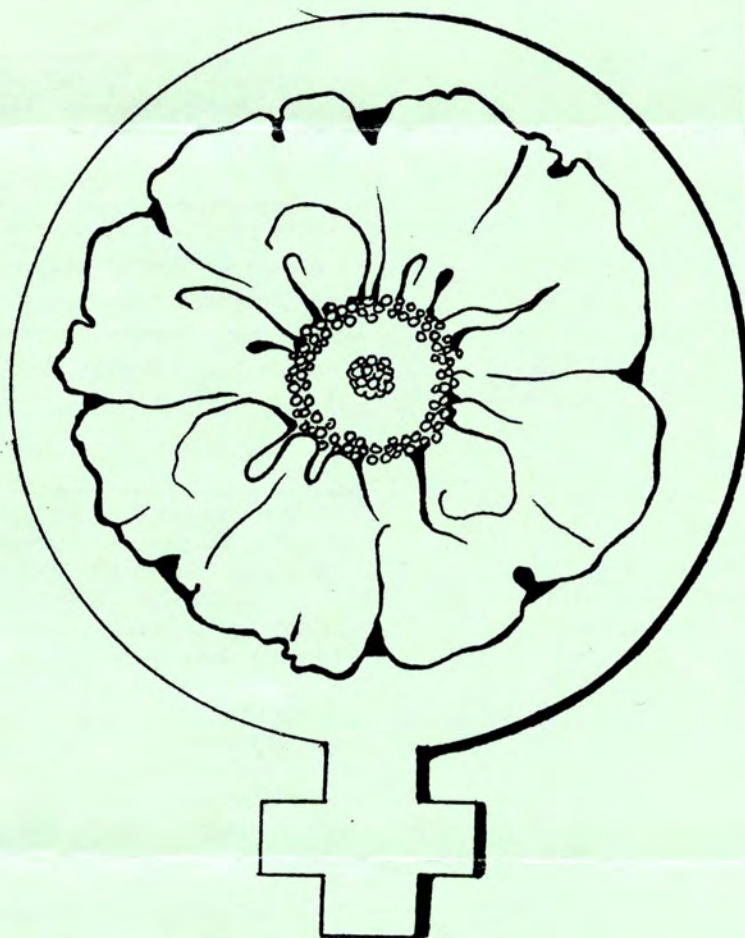

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

June/July/August 1994

Volume IV, Number 5



Happy Solstice
Have a wonderful summer

**The Alberta Status of Women Action
Committee
(ASWAC)**

1994-95 Board Members

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*ASWAC receives a portion of its funding from
The Federal Women's Program and gratefully
acknowledges the financial support from its
members.*

From the Newsroom

Our newsletter is an ideal way to advertise your events, resources or services to the women of Alberta as well as supporting ASWAC.

The next deadline for submissions is **August 26**, publication date is **September 9**, 1994.

We welcome your thoughts, ideas, concerns, submissions and advertisements. Please send to ASWAC Edmonton, Attention Newsletter.

Volunteers are needed, please call, Rosemary at 421-0306. Everyone is welcome to attend a volunteer social on June 20, call Rosemary for details.

The offices are closed for the month of July, due to our continuing financial restraints. This is a great time to renew your membership or make a donation. Volunteers will be returning phone messages.

The 1994 Canadian Women Entrepreneur of the Year Awards are accepting nominations. July 4 is the deadline. Applications are available through ASWAC Edmonton.

If one desires a change, one must be that change before that change can take place.

Gita Bellin

EDITORIAL POLICY

The ASWAC Newsletter is published by The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee, a non-profit organization. The newsletter is produced by, for, and about women in Alberta. The newsletter was created to share information with our members and women's organizations, as well as interested women. The views expressed and the events publicized are not necessarily supported by ASWAC. We neither endorse nor recommend; we seek to inform.

ASWAC news is produced on a collective, consensus, volunteer basis by the newsletter collective and ASWAC staff. We welcome submissions written or photo/graphic. All submissions may not be included; we reserve the right to edit to ensure that the content is not in opposition to our mission statement. We encourage women to tell us when we do not meet our own standards.

ADVERTISING POLICY

The ASWAC newsletter seeks advertising that is women positive to help defer publication costs. ASWAC does not necessarily endorse products or services offered. We reserve the right to refuse ads. Rates and sizes can be requested through the Edmonton office, please call for more information.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee is to advance the status of women in Alberta by providing a forum for women's voices, raising awareness and sharing resources to effect change.

Our Feature

STOP THIS NONSENSE: ASWAC PANEL ON PROVINCIAL BUDGET CUTS

by Jayne Nicol

The 1980's were a time of great social and economic change in Canada. Divorce rates went up; full time employment went down. More women entered the labour force to support their families, and unemployment and welfare both saw increases. In 1980 there were no food banks; now, over one million children live in poverty and the deficit keeps rising.

So what does the government do? Do they attack the underlying causes of our economic problems such as unfair taxation policies, high interest rates on government loans, cuts in transfer payments to the provinces or the negative ramifications of the free trade agreement? No! Instead they have shifted the responsibility to the poor, the elderly, the disabled and the children by planning across-the-board cuts to those who will suffer the most.

This is the plan:

\$1 billion will be cut from Health Care over next 3 years.

\$15 million will come from the pockets of seniors.

\$239 million will be slashed from education by 1997.

\$300 million will have been cut from social services by year end.

In all these areas, women are the hardest hit. On May 7, ASWAC members gathered from across the province to hear a panel of experts discuss "How the Budget Cuts Affect Women." The panel, facilitated by the NAC Alberta Regional Representative elect Pam Krause was comprised of five women who spoke about how the government strategy is detrimental to society as a whole. Each woman focussed on a specific area. Merrill Cooper, who currently works for Calgary Legal Guidance and has worked extensively with women and poverty, spoke about the cuts to Social Services. Susan Ruffo, representing the Quality Education Coalition and who is currently employed with the Alberta Federation of Labour, addressed the education cutbacks. Hazel Wilson, a community activist and past president of the Society of the Retired and Semi-Retired, related how cutbacks are affecting seniors. Sylvia Waller, who is currently involved with Oxfam Canada in Calgary and who is a past executive of the World Health Organization addressed the cuts to health care. As a single mother currently on social assistance (welfare) in Alberta, I related my experiences and others' personal experiences with the SFI (supports for independence) cutbacks.

The discussion began in the area of Social Services. In March, 1991, a remodeled welfare system was introduced in Alberta and given a "catchy" new name "Supports for Independence." Though based on some positive concepts, it showed little foresight as to the realities of people on the system. In fact, the end result of this new system is that benefits are more difficult to obtain, procedures and regulations are now arbitrarily decided and much of the funding is being diverted into inadequate and inappropriate training options.

By March, 1993, approximately 207,000 people were receiving

assistance (an increase of 60,000 people since 1991) and once again the government, touting itself as "family friendly" and "community oriented," instead of analyzing the real reasons for this increase and attacking the root cause, hastily decided to cut 60,000 people off welfare. Some of these people were sent to the Student Finance Board for training (putting unexpected and undue pressure in that area and providing few, if any, follow-up employment opportunities), single mothers with children older than three months were expected to return to work (with few opportunities for affordable child care and few, if any, jobs available to them), and the rest were arbitrarily deemed "employable" and were cut off without any support whatsoever. For those who remained, monthly benefits were reduced and supplementary benefits were decreased or eliminated entirely, leaving most to rely heavily on food banks or to become homeless. The past year has seen an incredible rise in food bank use and an increase in the homelessness rate. The fastest rising group negatively affected by the "family friendly" changes is single mothers (see new figures from Connexion Housing in Calgary recently publicized in the Calgary Herald).

The panel then went on to explore the devastating cuts to education funding. Susan Ruffo reminded the group that in Premier Ralph Klein's campaign literature last spring, promises were made to increase funding to education by \$124 million. This "promise" has ironically become a cutback of over \$200 million in the overall budget by 1997.

Not only do the education cutbacks affect the quality of education for future generations of Albertans, but again the most noticeable group of people hit immediately are women, since women are the majority of the workers and users in this area. Teachers are threatened with the loss of their union, support staff are being replaced with part-time and contract workers and here at the University of Alberta, 25% of the cuts will be in the Education Faculty alone!

With respect to the education cutbacks in particular, but also relating cutbacks in other areas, Ms Ruffo also referred to the situation which recently occurred in New Zealand. The Klein government has been modeling much of its strategy on the country of New Zealand whose government recently underwent a similar experience of massive cutbacks to public spending in order to control their deficit. The reality in New Zealand is that schools and universities have closed down, poverty has increased and the standard of living has fallen for a majority of the people.

In the process of dealing with their \$11 billion debt (1984), they privatized and sold \$12 billion worth of state assets and transferred individual dependency from the government back to the family and volunteer groups. This resulted in income distribution from the bottom up (the rich got richer and the poor got poorer). On top of all of this, the debt has not been brought under control but, rather, has tripled in the last ten years. Since 1984, tuberculosis cases in New Zealand increased by 7%, female teen suicide is now the highest in the developed world and unemployment has

Feature Continued

doubled. Obviously, all of this has taken a high toll on the women of New Zealand. (More information on the "New Zealand Reality" is available through the Quality Education Coalition or ASWAC).

Another group which has been hit hard by the recent and the proposed cutbacks is seniors - female seniors in particular. Each generation has seen an increase in life span (higher for women) and, with this, comes the added responsibility that we, as a society ensure their dignity and well-being. At present there are over 31,000 Albertans who are 65 years and over and the number is growing. Women live longer so are more affected by the rising long term care costs, decreases in rental subsidies and increase in co-payment on prescription drugs (currently at 30%).

Women are also the primary care givers for the elderly, so where the budget cuts leave gaps, you can be sure it will be women who will have to fill them in (taxing her own lifestyle and family responsibilities highly). We all have a stake in Alberta's seniors issues; as we either have a senior in our family or we will more than likely become one ourselves.

Seniors issues are closely related to the health care cutbacks as well. Over the next three years, 25% of the health care budget will be cut. Again, both as users and workers, women will be hardest hit. Women and children are the primary users of health care. While the health care industry is growing by leaps and bounds, we face cuts to health education and other services related to sexuality, birth control, parenting etc. Also, women fill the majority of jobs in the caring professions so jobs are affected as public expenditures are slashed and the infrastructure is prioritized (hospital closures).

NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) has also had a devastating affect on health care, as it has provided a foundation for health care to be treated as a "consumer product," making way for private clinics and a two-tiered health care system. Health care issues are closely related to employment issues, and as NAFTA negatively affects employment for women, the more expensive health care becomes, the less of it women will be able to afford.

After the initial panel discussion, everyone divided into smaller groups to discuss strategies for action. Upon reconvening, the issues on the table brought out feelings of desperation and hopelessness, but simultaneously women were also invigorated and encouraged. Considerable work is being done by groups and coalitions across the province attempting to both counteract the immediate effects of the cuts, as well as to analyze the political impact for years to come. Some of the strategies for action include (in no particular order):

- make the public more aware of the effects of the cuts on women
- suggest alternatives to the decision makers (get our message out)
- teach children and teach the teachers
- educate women & stop advocating & adjusting the male agenda
- encourage people to "transform" not "reform"

- initiate a public awareness campaign about "where the money really is"
- focus on the middle class and how the cutbacks are and will affect them
- initiate an "alternative" media blitz
- publicize salaries and benefits of CEOs of major companies
- initiate writing campaigns to newspapers (letters and editorials)
- emphasise the importance of individual action
- rural outreach as part of the common front
- motivate the grassroots from "desperation" to "action"
- coalition building
- town hall meetings
- publicize the "New Zealand Reality" and share information

Case in Point: single mom

The monthly budget for this single mother and 21 month old child is \$766 from SFI (a recent decrease of \$76 per month) and \$135 from the Child Tax Benefit program (formerly child tax credit and family allowance). There is only limited help from this woman's family, as both her parents live on fixed pensions, and no support from the "deadbeat dad" (delinquent payer of child support). She has reluctantly accepted assistance for ten of the last 21 months and has worked most of that time in some capacity. Here is her "real life" monthly family budget:

\$525	Rent
\$45	Utilities/Phone
\$15	Tenant's Insurance
\$45	Bus Pass
\$35	Laundry
\$60	Diapers

This leaves \$176/month for food, clothing, non-prescription drugs, personal/household needs, baby-sitting, recreation (ha!), emergencies, incidentals etc. She had planned to move into her mother's basement for \$300 per month, but the new budget allows for no rent money to be paid to family members and her mother relies on some rental income from her suite. This woman does not want to be on assistance. She wants to work and give her daughter the things a child deserves.



Michael A. Garska

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Alberta Feminist Calendar

CALGARY

Calgary Status of Women Action Committee regular meeting 5:30-7:30 pm at the Old Y, 223 - 12 Avenue S.W. All women are welcome. Light supper provided and childcare cost reimbursements available. Call if you need transportation. For more information, call 262-1873.

Friday, June 24: "Strategies of Resistance: Subverting the Narrative," a screening and lecture on ways of looking that represent race, class and gender, by Leila Sujir. Hosted by EM Media, 7 pm at 200, 116-8 Avenue S.W. \$3 for EM members and \$5 general admission.

Sunday, June 26: Gay and Lesbian Pride Week Rally, Parade and BBQ. Begins 5 pm at City Hall Plaza. Everyone is encouraged to attend and support equal rights for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. For more information, call CLAGPAG at 266-5318.

Tuesday, June 28: Women Looking Forward Annual General Meeting and Roundtable on the Social Policy Review. ***RSVP REQUIRED by June 15***. To RSVP and find out time and location, call Michele at 269-1144. Location will be wheelchair accessible and childcare subsidy is available on request.

Wednesday, June 29: Calgary Immigrant Aid presents an information session on the Education System in Alberta with speaker Saif Mabrouk in Farsi (Interpretation/Coordinator: Shiraz Amiry), 3-5 pm in the CIAS Boardroom, 12 floor, 910-7 Avenue S.W. For more information, call 265-1120.

Every Monday the Women's Financial Planning Centre presents WOW (Women of Worth) a free financial seminar to educate and amancipate women economically, 7-9 pm at 1000 Centre St. N. For information, call Faye at 277-3991.

First Tuesday CNC is a business and networking club for gay and lesbian professionals which holds monthly socials with guest speakers, from 5-7 pm at TRAX, 1130-10 Avenue S.W. For more information, call Susan 286-0752 or Kevin 240-1094.

The 1994 Committee for Take Back the Night meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Old Y Centre, 223-12 Avenue S.W. (wheelchair accessible). All women are welcome. For more information, call Peggy at 283-7650.

Lesbian Mother's Support Society regular meeting at 7 pm every second Wednesday in room 200A of the Old Y Building 223-12 Avenue S.W. For more information, call Penni at 278-2927.

Action Canada Network regular meeting at 7 pm every third Wednesday at #307, 315-10 Avenue S.E. Everyone welcome! For information, call Amy Anderson 286-1058 or Yvonne Schmitz 240-0311.

Drop in at the YWCA Women's Resource Centre from 1-4 pm every Friday to learn or use sewing skills, find out about the

Centre's services, discuss issues and get together with other women at 325-10 Street N.W., phone 284-5994 for information.

Celebrating Women is an evening of presentations by women artists and performers, usually one of the last two Mondays of the month at 8 pm at the Republik, 219-17 Avenue S.W. For exact date, if you want to perform or for other information, call Kerry at 244-7732.

Pandora's Studio (CJSW 90.9 FM) radio by and about women for everyone. 8-9 pm.

Women on the Verge (CJSW 90.0 FM), featuring women's music from a range of genres. 9-10 pm.

The Outreach Program for the Native Women's Shelter accepts referrals from all local agencies. Two weekly healing circles, Monday evening and Wednesday afternoon, are open to anyone who is interested. For more information, call 531-1970.

EDMONTON

ASWAC, the political action committee is holding a strategy meeting on July 9 at the Edmonton Women's Building, 50-9930-106 Street from 1:30 to 4:00 pm. Discussion will include Social Security Reform, Provincial Cutbacks, Communication with Rural Women. Everyone welcome, call Moyra at 421-0306.

Adamant Eve. Feminist radio program broadcast on CJSR FM 88.5 (University of Alberta) Thursdays from 5-6 pm.

Gaywire. A lesbian and gay radio show from CJSR FM 88.5. Thursdays from 6-7 pm.

Lesbian Life Line: 425-0511.

Take Back The Night organizing committee is meeting June 15 at 7 pm. Please call Debbie or Lenore at 488-4949 or Rosemary at ASWAC at 421-0306 if you are interested in attending.

Come out and meet some interesting women! On Monday, June 20, from 7 to 9 pm there will be a social for all ASWAC past, present and future volunteers. Please RSVP to Rosemary at 421-0306.

October 2: The 1994 AIDS Walk For Life will be held at Rundle Park. For more information, call the AIDS Network at 488-5742 and ask for the AIDS Walk office.

November 18 - 20: Women Creating Change - A Women's Agenda Conference at the Marlboro Inn, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Action Committee, Status of Women. Pre-registration begins September, 1994. SAC, 2343 Cornwall St., Regina S4P 2L4, phone (306)525-8329.

January 27-28, 1995: Conference coordinated by Alberta Farm Women's Network, Common Ground. Session January 27: Farm women sharing with city women. Call Janet Walter 347-0660.

CalendarContinued

PRIDE WEEK EVENTS

June 17: Queer Sightings Film Festival Opening and Reception at Garneau Theatre 8712-109 Street.

June 18: "Loving Her Safely," a Safer Sex for Women Workshop at AIDS Network, #201, 11456 Jasper Avenue, 1-5 pm.

Stonewall Pride Dance, sponsored by Womonspace and Gay and Lesbian Community Centre at Bonnie Doon Hall 9240-93 Street, 8 pm - 1 am.

June 21: Womonspace Pride Women's Night .8 pm at the Option Room Club, 10148-105 Street. Live music/Club Dancing afterward.

June 22: "A Celebration of Pride and Freedom" Metropolitan Community Church Service, 7 pm, followed by a potluck dinner at 8 pm, 10086 MacDonald Drive.

June 23: Gay and Lesbian Community Centre Open House, 11745 Jasper Avenue, 7-10 pm.

June 24 :The Roost's Pride Benefit Party 8-11 pm, 10345-104 Street. Queer Sightings Film Festival continues at Garneau Theatre 8712-109 St.

June 25:Pride Day March and Rally sponsored by Gay and Lesbian Awareness and Pride Committee, 1-5 pm at McIntyre Park Gazebo, 8331-104 Street. March is 1:30 pm. PFLAG Picnic after the parade.

June 25:Voices of Pride, an uplifting concert saluting the strength, diversity and richness of our community. Saturday 8:00 pm, University of Alberta, Convocation Hall. \$8 low income advance tickets, \$10 advance tickets, \$12 at the door. The AIDS Network of Edmonton, #201,11456 Jasper Avenue phone 488-5742.

June 26: "Debutante Ball" presented by Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose at Boots N' Saddle, 10242-106 Street. Barbeque on the deck followed by a show at 11 pm. A draw will be held for a beautiful Rainbow Flag Quilt valued at over \$300. Get tickets at Boots N' Saddle where you can see the quilt after May 30. Proceeds go to buy a van for Kairos House.

If you would like to list your communities events in the calendar for no charge, call Moyra at 421-0306.

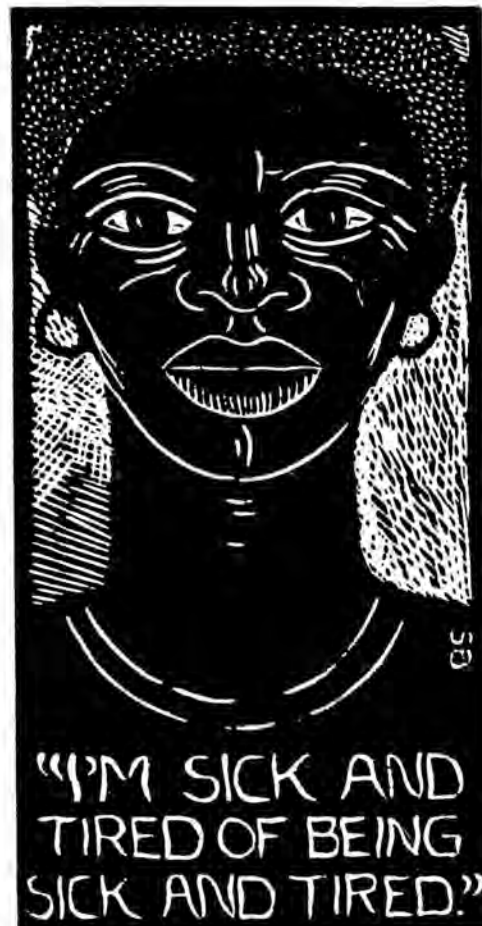
The average person blinks 25 times/minute and scientists say each blink takes one-fifth of a second. Thus, if you average 40 miles per hour on a ten hour car trip, you would drive 25 miles with your eyes shut. *Taken from A Centre for Women's newsletter.*

Every day is Straight White Male Pride Day ... except for June 25, Lesbian & Gay Pride Day.

In 1992, Calgary artist Teresa Posyniak created a moving tribute to women in Canada who "died in a battle fought under the most intimate circumstances; women murdered by men claiming to love them or by men lashing out at women in general."

The seven foot high mixed-media sculpture entitled *Lest We Forget*, is covered entirely with handmade paper painted a silvery bronze and surrounded by painted leaves. The names of 133 murdered women are carefully written on the paper surface.

The task is to raise \$8,000 to install the sculpture in a manner which will protect it. Tax-creditable donations should be made payable to: *Lest We Forget*, The University of Calgary. All donors will be publicly acknowledged, unless they indicate otherwise. Mail to: The Lest We Forget Fund c/o The Development Office, U of C, 2500 University Drive, NW, Calgary, T2N 1N4.



Sister Support

FINANCIAL CRISIS THREATENS PRO-CHOICE AGENCY

If you support reproductive choice and want to help combat unwanted pregnancies, AIDS, STDs and other sexual health problems, please help save Planned Parenthood Alberta (PPA).

For over 20 years, PPA has protected Albertans' sexual health by distributing accurate sexuality information and by speaking out for effective health care, sexuality education and reproductive choice.

But today a financial crisis threatens to shut down PPA. That could have tragic results - especially in rural areas, where PPA is often the only source of unbiased sexuality information.

Please help PPA to keep up its vital education and lobbying efforts on your behalf, by becoming a member or sending a tax-creditable donation to: Planned Parenthood Alberta, 106, 223-12 Avenue S.W., Calgary, T2R 0G9. For information or membership applications, please call 265-3360. Thank you for your support.

A Report From Red Deer

Things in Red Deer are getting fairly desperate. The cuts to Social Services have affected so many people in a lot of ways. Two positive attributes are that more people are looking at education and others have found employment. The down side though, reaches the same people who are already victimized.

Battered women have to prove their case to get a damage deposit - more self esteem gone. Worse yet are the ex-husbands who return and destroy homes. These women have no recourse as they don't get a damage deposit back and aren't considered battered.

Arbitrarily, people are being forced into employment. Their whole situation is not considered. Women are set up to fail by doing this, as some, not a lot, of these women are not emotionally ready to work. This leads to job loss and even more fragile self-esteem.

What are we doing at the Outreach? Well, we have set up a furniture bank, much like a food bank. Women now get furnishings. We also advocate by phone calls and letters on behalf of the women who are emotionally unable to work at this time.

We have found that our interventions on these levels have had excellent results. Unfortunately, depression and hopelessness continue to rise. The fear of a two tier society is becoming more evident. This, I believe, destroys our most valuable resource....our children.

Bess Rasmussen, Director, Central Alberta Women's Outreach Society.

Bess can be reached in Red Deer at 347-2480, #112-4818-Gaetz Ave, T4N 4A3.

Calgary and Area

Women with Disabilities Invited to Participate! Women with disabilities are required for a research study on transportation use. Private, no-cost transportation will be available for the interviews; location to be arranged according to your convenience. Interviews will be conducted by women with disabilities. Interpreters will be arranged as required. Interviews will be completely confidential. This study is sponsored by Women Looking Forward with assistance from Health & Welfare Canada and the Secretary of State. For more information, call Brenda at 234-9266 Thursdays and Fridays.

What Are We?

The Quality Education Coalition is broad-based and province wide. Its mandate is to combat the government's cutbacks to education funding. Its membership is committed to educating and mobilizing students, parents, faculty members, teachers, support staff, small business and the general public.

You can call one of the co-chairpersons or regional contacts: **Edmonton** Susan Ruffo, Coalition Co-Chair, Canadian Union of Educational Workers, Phone 448-0965 Fax 425-3293; Doug Luellman, Coalition Co-Chair, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Phone 424-9696 Fax 426-6202; **Calgary** Stephen Davies, Mount Royal Support Staff Association, Phone 240-6207; **Lethbridge** Pam Kirkwood, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, Phone 329-1210; **Grand Prairie** Stephen Downes, Canadian Union of Educational Workers, Phone 532-9837; or contact the Coalition c/o the Alberta Federation of Labour: Quality Education Coalition, 350, 10451 - 170 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4T2, 483-3021, Fax 484-5928.

ASWAC Events

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on May 7, was a great success. We received positive feedback from the members and we will take your suggestions into consideration for the next AGM.

Thank you to all of the outgoing Board and welcome to all the incoming new Board. Special thanks to LEAF for all their support and supplying the refreshments. Special thanks to the Women's Program and the University of Alberta, especially Susan Boychuk.

ASWAC office's will be closed for the month of July although messages will be checked on a regular basis. Please help us in this time of cut backs by renewing your membership and or making a donation. Thanks for all the support we have received.

Fringe Volunteers Needed

ASWAC has a booth at the Fringe this year running from August 12-21. We will be sharing the table with some member groups for 8 of the 10 days and they will be responsible for their volunteers at the booth. ASWAC will be looking for committed volunteers who will be able to woman the booth for 2, 3 hour shifts. Anyone who is interested in volunteering please contact Rosemary at 421-0306. Any member group who has not been contacted and would like to share our table, please call Rosemary.

Social Security Review

Lloyd Axworthy spoke to a group of Edmonton social action groups and politicians on May 17 and pleaded with Albertans to become involved in the Social Security Review process by submitting briefs and giving input to the Parliamentary Committee on Social Security Review.

Mr. Axworthy outlined the process for the review and mentioned that funds would become available through his department for groups to make recommendations on how they see Canada's Social Policy developing. The funding will be available after the Federal Provincial Task Force Report is released (within 5-6 weeks). This report will outline the choices Canadians will be asked to make in order to reform Canada's Social Policy (areas such as Unemployment Insurance, Training Programs, Social Programs, Pensions, Grants and all national income security programs).

Within Mr. Axworthy's comments, he gave clear support to a National Child Care Program for Canada. He asked that groups make recommendations about such a program in their submissions to the government on Social Policy. ASWAC will be preparing a submission to this committee along with many other groups in Alberta. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women is currently developing a national campaign on Social Policy, the details of which will be announced shortly after NAC's annual meeting in June.

Lloyd Axworthy is Minister of Human Resources Development and can be contacted at the House of Commons in Ottawa.

Lost People

We have received "returned mail" from the following people. They are still registered as current members but we don't know where they are! Can you help? Denise Wood, Alexandra Patience, Jane Whelan Banks and Heather Mackay.

What's Up?

ASWAC was represented in a national meeting of women's groups to consult the Justice Department on issues relating to violence against women and social policy. Watch for a more detailed report in our next issue.

ASWAC will also be at the National Action Committee's Annual General Meeting in Ottawa, June 10 - 13. A report of this conference will be given in the next issue.

News From NAC will be written after the NAC AGM.



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HELPING WOMEN ACHIEVE FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Write On

Common Front

The recent announcement by Human Resources Development Minister Lloyd Axworthy of a Comprehensive Social Policy Review makes this a critical time for social programs. Women must participate fully in creating these future programs to ensure that the needs and concerns of women are identified, recognized and incorporated into the forthcoming programs. To ensure your participation write Lloyd Axworthy at House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6. (No postage required)

Keep the Pressure on Government! You can reach provincial Ministers at the Legislature Building, 10800-97 Avenue, Edmonton T5K 2B6

Hon. Mike Cardinal, Minister of Family and Social Services, Room 104, phone 427-2606, fax 427-0954

Hon. Shirley McClellan, Minister of Health, Room 127, phone 427-3665, fax 429-5954

Hon. Halvar Johnson, Minister of Education, Room 324, phone 427-2025, fax 427-5582

Hon. Gary Mar, Minister of Community Development (women's and seniors programs, human rights), Room 227, phone 427-4928, fax 427-0188.

Hug These Women

The following women have helped in the preparation of the past few newsletters: Jackie Yurko, Aine Humble, Moyra Lang, Del Marlow, Christine Leonard, Leslie McLean, Lorraine Gregoire, Martha Dobbin, Jayne Nicol and Rosemary Putman. Thanks very much we couldn't have done it without your help.

Big hugs & kisses to Leslie McLean, Iona Haggard, Bev Palibroda, Lenore Lemay, Debbie Bryson, Jayne Nicol and Rosemary Putman for all your help at the AGM.

Hugs and kisses to Merrill Cooper, Sylvia Waller, Lorraine Moulding, Margaret Roper, Pam Krause and Nancy Miller.

Special thanks to Debby Carlson for her donations and continuing support.

A vital and energetic new coalition, Common Front, has formed in a cooperative effort to fight the cutbacks in Alberta and to develop an alternative budget. An information clearinghouse has been established at 200, 540-12 Avenue S.W., Calgary, T2R 0H4. Phone 265-2672 (1-800-332-1280 outside Calgary), fax 266-6190. Please forward any and all information on government cutbacks and alternatives to Common Front at the above address.

Update:

Join Alberta's Common Front and stop the De-Klein of our province. Concerned people and organizations that were taking on the fight by themselves have decided to work together and support each other. Community Action Teams are being formed throughout the province with a special emphasis on rural communities. If you would like to be included on the mailing list and organize events in your area call: Trudy Richardson in Edmonton at 425-1025 or Brenda Kuecks in Calgary at 283-2871 or Ronnie Leah in Lethbridge at 329-0922.



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Sources & Resources

Memorial for Women who have died of breast cancer

The National Union of Public and General Employees will erect a memorial as a tribute to those women who have died from breast cancer. The disease will claim more than 5,000 lives this year and will be diagnosed in more than 16,000 women.

Relatives and friends of women who have died of breast cancer can send information - name, age, year the woman died and province they are from to Carol Spiro, Executive Director, Breast Cancer Action, P.O. Box 39041, Ottawa, Ontario K1H 1A1 or fax (613)736-8422. Spiro will compile the information for the memorial.

Copies of the union's information guides to breast cancer are available from Hollander Layte, c/o The National Union of Public and General Employees, 204-2841 Riverside Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1V 8N4 or phone (613)526-1663.

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Sharing our Strengths: Women in Recovery is a practical, simply written guide, by women for women interested in recovering from dependence on alcohol or drugs. It's available from Women In Active Recovery, Box 964, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia B2H 5K7.

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Canadian Women's Studies is excited to announce the publication of their latest issue, "Racism and Gender." Among other things, this journal critiques racism in the feminist movement and in women's services across Canada, as well as examining misconceptions concerning the representation of marginalized women within a realm of power where changes can be made. To order this essential resource, send \$10.81 (includes GST and postage) to CWS/cf 212 Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3.

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110 Canadian Statistics on Work & Family

The CACSW has published a practical compendium which analyzes statistics on various work and family issues to mark the International Year of the Family as was released April, 1994. There are eight main subject areas, as well as Child Custody and Access Policy which was released February, 1994. To order, please call (613)992-4976, fax (613)992-1715 or write to CACSW Distribution Centre, P.O. Box 1541, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R5.

Just released

Misconceptions: The Social Construction of Choice and the New Reproductive and Genetic Technologies. Edited by Gwynne Basen, Margrit Eichler and Abby Lippman. Voyageur Publishing: 1-800-268-2946 toll free. Misconceptions is a collection of papers by 28 women from diverse activist and academic backgrounds. In two volumes, they challenge the claims made about these technologies, uncover the scientific/industrial interest behind them and expose their profound social consequences.

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TIME TO ACT ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

"We believe that female genital mutilation is a form of violence against girls and women which violates their basic human right to bodily integrity. The federal government must take a leadership role in ensuring that FGM is not practised here. As well, our recommendations are intended to ensure that women suffering the long-term health consequences of FGM are treated appropriately in Canada," says CACSW President Glenda Simms.

For copies of the CACSW's recommendations and a backgrounder on FGM, contact the CACSW Distribution Centre at (613)992-4976.

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The Norplant system was approved by the Health Protection Branch of Health Canada in December, 1993. Norplant was developed by the Population Council and manufactured and distributed in North America by Wyeth Pharmaceutical. It was announced at a press conference in January, 1994, that this new technology would be available as soon as Canadian doctors are trained in its insertion and removal. At this time, it is not known if the medial costs will be covered by medicare, however, it is certain that the \$500 plus cost of the rods will make the contraceptive prohibitive for many women.

About 60 percent of Norplant users report irregular bleeding patterns for the first year of use. Breast discomfort and acne account for about five percent of removals in the first year.

Oral contraceptive containing progestins protect the user from endometrial and ovarian cancer, while extensive reviews of the literature have not demonstrated any increased risk of breast cancer.

Training of physicians on the insertion and removal of the Norplant systems are essential to preventing complications. To ensure safety, women would be wise to consult physicians who are experienced and do the procedure frequently.

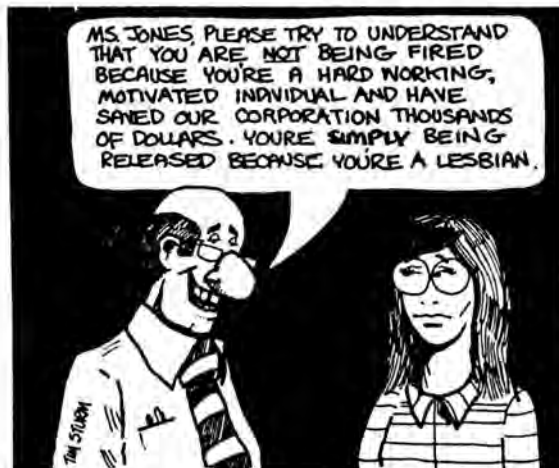
More Sources & Resources

Alberta Community Development has released a new document which provides an overview on labour force characteristics, education characteristics, and income levels of women in Alberta titled *Women in Alberta Selected Statistics*. Copies are free and available through the department call 422-4927.

An Evening Out?

Several major bills have been and are slated to be debated in the Alberta Legislature. Major bills such as Bill 19: School Amendment Act and Bill 20: Regional Health Authorities Act will fundamentally change the face of the province. Politicians debate these bills rigorously, usually after 8:00pm Monday through Wednesday. You can help to influence the decisions by visiting the public gallery to witness important debates. Unfortunately, a calendar of the Legislature Assembly cannot be provided as the government controls this agenda and this is a political reality of the Klein government's manipulation. You can get as current a list as possible by calling the Legislature **Update Hotline at 422-5848** or by calling your MLA. After attending these sessions, you are encouraged to call politicians and let them know what you think about their comments. It is often helpful to call both the governing party MLAs as well as Opposition MLAs. To obtain a pass to the gallery, call Visitor Services, 427-7362. Passes will be provided at the 4th floor Security desk in the Legislature. They can be picked up at the time of visit and do not need to be ordered in advance (although priority is given to those who have previously registered).

Women in Business network directory for Northern & Southern Alberta is available through ASWAC Edmonton for \$5.95.



The Calgary Women's Health Collective is a counselling service specializing in the mental health needs of women. A sliding fee scale is offered based on net income and number of dependents. To make contact with a counsellor, call our booking service at the YW Women's Resource Centre, 283-5994 weekdays 9:30-4:30, or call the main Health Collective office at 265-9590. Accessible locations can be arranged.

The Calgary Society for Women Plus, a support system for battered women, offers two services for formerly abused women and their children where women can break out of isolation and receive emotional support. There are no fees and no waiting list. For information about either group, call Patti at 228-0293.

The YWCA Women's Employment Counselling Service offers individual career and employment counselling and workshops to any un/underemployed woman. For more information, call 531-9620 (Calgary).

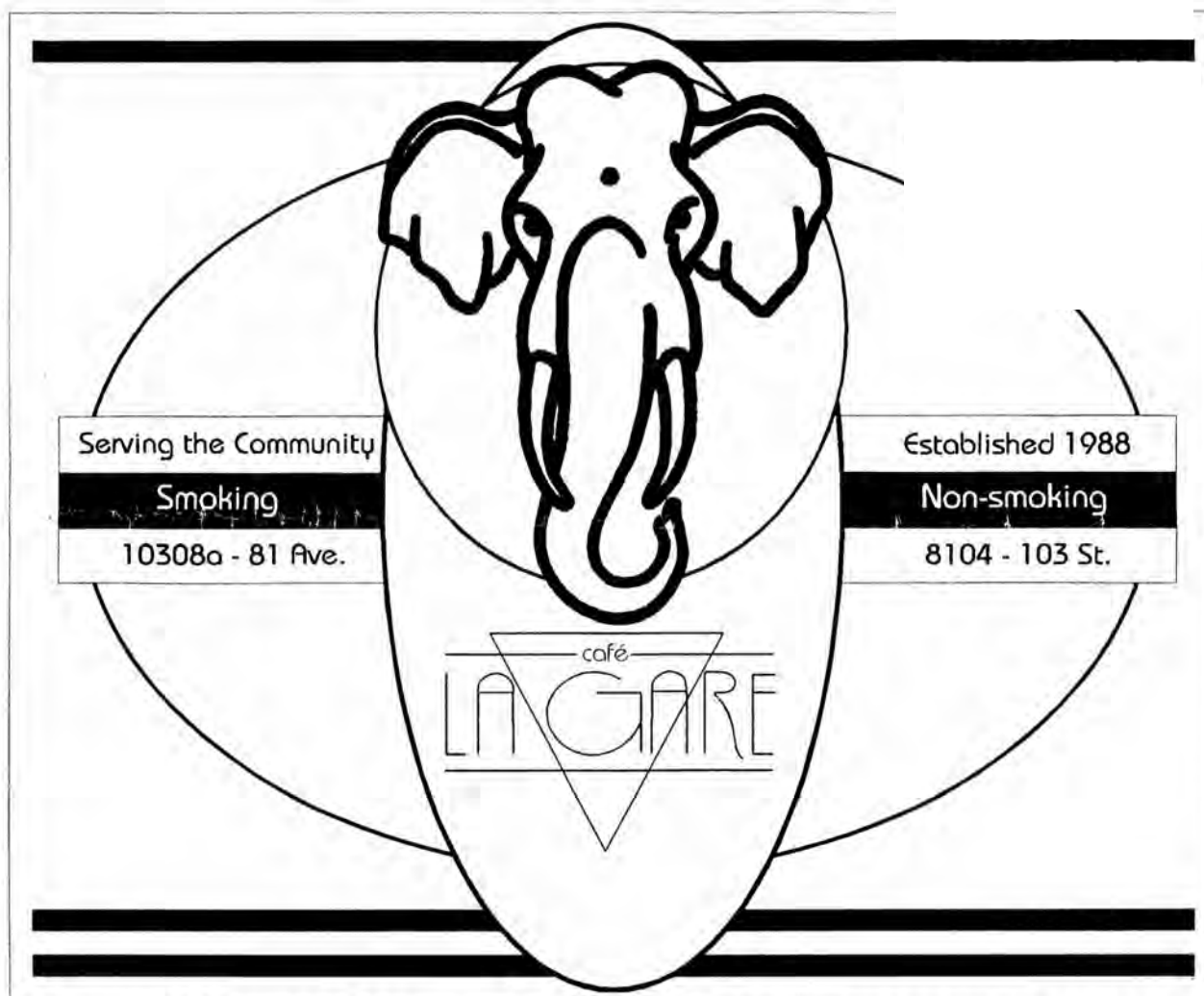
WIN has moved

Please note that WIN has moved their business office from Lawton Junior High School to: #209, 11717-42 Street, Edmonton, T5W 4V8.

WIN I & WIN II admitted 378 women and their children. 1,176 women & children were admitted into the shelters. The occupancy rate was 95%. 178 women went on to establish independent living arrangements. 4,748 information and crisis/support calls were made to the shelters. 1,367 hours were logged taking these calls. 1,381 referrals to other shelters were made due largely to lack of space.

editors note: This represents only the WIN house statistics there are other shelters and centres not noted in these numbers. Please write to your MLA & MP and demand more money be given to women's shelters, transition houses and sexual assault centres in our province.

Feminist: more than a label



Membership fees are an important source of ASWAC revenue, but more importantly, your membership means a vote in support of increasing the status of women in Alberta. Whether or not you can afford our suggested fee of \$20, it is important to keep your membership up to date (check your address label for renewal month). Renew early. Don't wait for the membership renewal invoice to send in your fee. All mail, and now our business reply mail, costs ASWAC one dollar which could be put toward programming, lobbying and advocacy work. As it is now, ASWAC is operating 9 months out of the year, due to continued cutbacks in federal funds. If we can double or triple our membership, we can keep operating all year. Please sign up new members, buy memberships for your friends, and make donations if you can.

ASWAC's membership base is our most important resource.

- ☐ I want to renew my membership
- ☐ Enclosed is \$20 for one year membership
- ☐ I can't afford \$20 for membership
Enclosed is \$ _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postal Code: _____
Phone: _____

Enclosed is my donation. Please distribute to:

- Political Action Campaign
- Reprint Women Against Poverty
- Daily referrals/operations/research
- Newsletter production
- Travel/childcare expenses
- Lobbying efforts