



ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

Vol. 4 No. 6

Creating our own space —



the ASWAC provincial assembly

Regional conferences/networking open
the way to ASWAC November assembly

A study in woman-hate

I look forward to the Edmonton folk festival every year, the drove of people, excitement, children. Somehow, in its setting, even the mediocre performers sound special, and, for the past three years its been the only weekend I've been able to bask in luminary beams.

This year, though, I never left Sunday's performance feeling the harmony I had felt on previous festivals.

My feelings of discomfort came a few days before the festival when reviewing the festival's "star" line-up. I could only spot the names of six women, four of which I had never heard of before (although that never bothered me; I'm always excited to see new women performers) but there were names I'd really wished were there, female performers like Connie Kaldor and Ferron, and, I thought to myself, its about time Don Whelan (festival organizer) went in search of some local women performers that have been blossoming around Edmonton. Not to mention the fact he has hired the same male performers from the States time and time again. Wouldn't it be great to see someone like Chris Williamson at a festival?

My next disappointment (and it was a great one) came when Frances Adams, my roommate, informed me that ASWAC had received a letter from the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women stating that a performer by the name of Loudon Wainwright III performed songs that were "gross, misogynist, and generally promoted violence towards women". The letter also said that when the women in the audience at the Winnipeg Folk Festival voiced their complaints Wainwright mocked them and carried on as before.

I have been an avid fan of Loudon Wainwright for years and the material I am familiar with and have come to love is sensitive, cynical, about relationships; his songs about his children are especially conscious. I was shocked.

A late bus made me miss Loudon Wainwright's afternoon performance and I haven't found anyone yet who saw it. But I looked forward to the evening performance, honestly

(naively) thinking that something would be done about his misogynist material. Me, a small group of friends and a 4 year old girl who was entrusted in my care had carefully chosen our position in the crowd. Close, but not too close, in the middle of the crowd so as to get in on the high energy and audience participation (there's nothing worse than finding yourself the only one clapping along to a song in the middle of 200 people). I regretted this decision during Mr. Wainwright's performance and wished I'd picked a spot where the population of women was stronger.

The first thing I noticed about Wainwright's performance was that it had obviously been choreographed for the controversy it would create. And Whelan had given him total license to do it. Wainwright's brilliance as a performer can't be denied; his comical routines throughout each song definitely raised the audience's energy (and dulled their senses to his encore). His most offensive song was about some guy fucking his dead girlfriend and then using her as a surfboard; this is only a light summarization of what he actually verbalized during the song. At the time I found the need to carry on a pleasant conversation with the 4 year old child I had on my lap more prevalent than tuning in to him. I was panicking as I glanced through the crowd. The faces were mostly male in surreal laughter. I felt really threatened.

When he was through, a group of women stood to express their disgust. Those women seemed miles away to me, and I turned to my woman friend - we both knew there was no way we could stand and support those women behind us. The crowd threatened as we booed silently. Something else I found extremely disgusting was when I once glanced at the performers' tent and noticed a lot of the performers, men and women I'd come to respect, all on their feet applauding. Then came Wainwright's malicious attack on those (wonderful) women. "Whatsa matter, don't you ever get laid" and that did it for me. My anger and frustration with Wainwright, Whelan and the crowd reached a point where, once again, I found myself sitting with my fist clenched in rage at the woman-hating all around me.



In the last two years of becoming a feminist, this year has been the year where my awareness has finally reached a point where I feel like I need to take action. In writing this article (my first), I asked myself a lot of questions. Lately I haven't been able to listen to the radio, walk into a bar (I've even left two gay dances) without hearing abusive material. When listening to some of my old favourites recently - Neil Young for instance, I realized how bad some of his material is (Every man needs a maid for example). So, do I skip that song and listen to the rest? Do I make a trip to the Wee Book Inn? Somehow, I think I'd be left with two albums. I'm interested in doing something and hope I have some answers soon.

In the meantime I have lost all respect for Wainwright and will protest him performing anywhere within my range. I hope you'll join me - or I you.

Michele Barber

Calgary "Y" looks at porn

The Calgary YWCA is holding an awareness and organizational meeting on pornography on Wednesday, October 5th at 7:30 p.m. The YWCA hopes to make more people aware of the scope, easy accessibility of pornography and its effects on society. They plan to present possible strategies and plans of action.

The YWCA is at 320 5 Avenue S.E. Call Janice Thompson at 263-1550, local 348 for further information.

Membership and donations

Membership renewal for 1984 will start in earnest at the upcoming regional conferences and Annual General Meeting. But you can beat the rush! ASWAC has a policy that members who join after September 1st will be considered up-to-date for the following year. You can renew now and perhaps save yourself some time in the registration line.

Of course all this information is on the back page of every newsletter but we've a hunch it does not get read. Please renew when you can especially if you have been seeing stars on your mailing label for ages!

Between May 15 and September 7 we have received \$277 in donations from our members. This helps! Thanks to Sylvia Dubrule, Laurie Ankenman, Rose Marie McLean, Elaine Kalynchuk, Jane Brindley, Barb Clubb, Audrey Sargenia, Mary Howard, Marjorie Crews, Helen Murray, Linda Long, June Sheppard, Barb Cameron, Fran MacPherson, Rosemary Moon, Dorcas Blair, Shirley Kabachia, Ethel Taylor, Lesley Rhys-Williams, Carol Anne Riome, Yore Daniels and Betty Crown.

Logo logic

We've been selling the well-known ASWAC pin - the ASWAC logo, since 1978, and many people have bought and worn them. Now there's a new design of pin (see sketch) which is basically the same two symbols - women's symbol and outline of the province - but reversed!

The new design was born one day when we realised that the old logo could symbolically represent a woman trapped in Alberta - with a patriarchally chosen boundaries - and that just didn't seem to fit the reality any more. The new design liberates her from those confines and leaves her free to form her associates and alliances anywhere in the world - and puts the patriarchy where we want it!

The new pin is gold on white. The original design is still, of course, available - gold on brown, silver on green or red. All pins are \$5.00 each.

ASWAV → ASWAC

The ASWAC office has become the new home for the materials produced and collected over the course of the two funded projects ("Looking at Ourselves" and "Project Outreach") of the Alberta Society of Women Against Violence (ASWAV). A small number of workshop kits are still available for a nominal fee (\$6.00 for the information packet and \$6.00 for the accompanying evaluation packet) as is archival information compiled on the subject of violence against women.

Most of the materials are still in labelled boxes, but we hope to improve their accessibility for those interested in consulting them. While we no longer have the time or resources to reproduce or send materials on request, we invite you to contact the ASWAC office (contact person: Anne Runyan) if you wish to peruse the files.

We are pleased to report that the work of women against violence is progressing far beyond the confines of external funding sources and artificial structures (a revelation which we hope to describe more fully to you in other fora

over time). Thank you individually and collectively for your continuing efforts towards a peaceful and egalitarian world where all women can be free from direct and structural violence.

Anne Runyan

Conference happenings

National Conference of Advisory Councils on the Status of Women

Westin Hotel, Edmonton
October 24, 25

No fee but pre-registration is requested. Forms will be available soon at the Status of Women office. Panel discussions will include: family law, pornography and violence, women, education and technology, update on the charter of rights. Speakers include: Lucie Pepin (President CACSW), Mark McGuigan (Minister of Justice), Dave King (Alberta Education Minister), Maude Barlow (President, Coalition Against Media Pornography) and Stuart Smith (Chairperson, Science Council of Canada).

International Childbirth Education Association: Childbirth Canada

The University of Calgary
September 23, 24, 25

This conference is designed for childbirth educators, health care providers, nurses, midwives, doctors, parent educators and interested consumers. It will focus on how the childbirth educator, nurse and physician can work together to ensure that client needs are met. For more information, contact Lois Kokoski, Faculty of Continuing Education, University of Calgary, 2500 University Dr. NW, T2N 1N4.

Edmonton Social Planning Council & Other Friends of Medicare - Health Policy Conference

Banff Centre

October 8, 9, 10

Theme Sessions: models in community health centres, alternatives to institutionalization, new approaches to occupational health and safety, preserving universal medicare. For registration form and information, contact: #418, 10010 - 105 Street, Edmonton, T5J 1C4.



HAVE YOU HEARD

NWT bans Playboy



On Friday, September 16th, the Territorial Council of the North West Territories passed a motion to ban Playboy Channel in the Territories.

This decision followed a series of showings by the Native Women's Association of the NWT of a film made from clips of playboy channel movies from the States. The film shows clearly the escalation from the original fairly soft-core movies to scenes of explicit violence and degradation toward women,

New group for lesbians

The Edmonton Sexual Assault Centre will be starting a group for sexual assault/incest victims run by and for lesbians only. If you are interested in joining the group, or in seeing someone individually please call Tanya at the Sexual Assault Centre, 423-4102.

Curfew spreads to Toronto

This summer the Edmonton Ladies Urban Improvement League put posters up all over town announcing a curfew for men. Rather than women having to impose a curfew on them/ourselves because of men, the men, who are raping and robbing and crippling should have the curfew.

The ingenious idea has been taken up by Toronto women, calling themselves Women, Persons Unknown. The "organization" told a radio station, CKO, that its members were frustrated and angry at band-aid methods of dealing with violence against women. The poster announces that the curfew is necessary because

which took place over the first four years of Playboy Channel's operations in the U.S.

The Native Women's Association showed the film to the territorial council, city council and other, mostly men's groups. At each showing there were young teenagers present, which helped to focus attention on the fact that children are inevitably part of Playboy's audience. Margaret Cook, of the Native Women's Association, believes that the presence of the children at the showings is an important reason for the success of the action.

The film is available from the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, P.O. Box 1541, Station B, Ottawa, K1P 5R5.

The City of Edmonton Social Services Department is starting a support group for women who are physically and/or emotionally abused in their relationships with men.

The group sessions will be held on Wednesday afternoons, 1 - 3 p.m., from October 12 to December 15 at the Beverly Centre, 5005 112 Ave. Child care will be provided at no cost.

last year, in Toronto, men committed 500 rapes, 44 murders and 1,823 assaults.

When the posters first went up in Edmonton I was reminded of Golda Meir, former Prime Minister of Israel. At a time when male violence against women was increasing dramatically, a member of the Knesset (male of course) suggested that a curfew be imposed on the women. Meir rose and angrily said if there was going to be any curfew it would be imposed on the men.

Do you think the men will ever hear us? I won't hold my breath.

Frances Adams

Centre offers needed support for domestics

A centre to help foreign domestics integrate into the community has been set up in Edmonton by the National Household Careers Corp.

The Centre will give support to foreign household workers who encounter problems or isolation in their jobs. Its main function is to promote activities that will improve the status of women in paid household labour. The Centre will also help domestics understand immigration laws, provide counselling and assist them to acquire an understanding of Canada and the skills necessary for landed status.

In 1981, Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced measures to help foreign domestics gain permanent status in Canada if they have upgraded their skills and can meet certain requirements.

The National Household Careers Corporation is a non-profit association. Anyone willing to volunteer their time to another good cause please contact Bernadette Swan at 15105 Stony Plain Road or phone 484-6755 between 1 and 4 p.m.

Women working as domestics are welcome to drop in at the Centre on their days off.

Bernadette Swan

Shelter opens



The Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter officially opened on August 23rd. The 16-bed shelter is for women with children who are victims of violence. For more information, the shelter can be contacted at 346-5643, Box 561, Red Deer T4N 5G1.

CHOICE

A Campaign for Reproductive Freedom

ASWAC has obtained, from the Manitoba Coalition For Reproductive Choice, buttons, T-shirts and bumper stickers promoting choice. The Coalition is in the throes of a massive battle over women's reproductive freedom and has initiated a print and broadcast campaign to get its message to the public. Television and busboard advertisements have been produced as well as two pamphlets. Concerned Manitoba Physicians and the Manitoba Association of Women and the Law prepared the copy for Abortion in Manitoba: A Legal and Medical Perspective. This excellent pamphlet and a smaller, more general one have been produced and may be used as a blue-print by other groups.

Nicaraguan women

Margaret Randall, journalist, waitress, photographer, poet, translator and textile worker is coming to Edmonton from Nicaragua on Monday, October 17. She will be speaking at 8 p.m. at the Garneau United Church, 11148 - 84 Avenue. Randall is the author of Cuban Women Now, Sandino's Daughters and Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution. She will be talking about women's rights, U.S. intervention and religious freedom in Nicaragua.

For more information, contact the Edmonton Learner Centre at 424-4371.

Solidarity events

As part of a Solidarity Week action with El Salvador and Central America, the Farabundo Marti Solidarity Committee (of Edmonton) is organizing a fiesta, picket line and demonstration on October 1st, 5th and 8th respectively. The demonstration is against American intervention in Central America and in celebration of the 3rd anniversary of the F.M.L.N. For more information call the Solidarity Committee at 424-4818.

You can order the following through the ASWAC office:

T-Shirts	\$5.00
They're navy blue on white. State the size you need please.	
Buttons	1.00
Bumper Stickers	1.00

If you want copies of the pamphlets and/or wish to make a donation to the Manitoba Coalition For Reproductive Choice, the address is Box 51, Station 'L', Winnipeg R3H 0Z4.



ENTERTAINMENT OR ABUSE?

Unmasking pornography

The Every Woman's Place committee on pornography ("Entertainment or Abuse? Women Unmasking Pornography") hasn't been very visible yet but the group has been working and meeting regularly for several months. Great ambitions and a lack of members kept us in a rut for a while but we're pulling out of it. Six women may not be able to change the world but we can still do good work.

An excellent pamphlet is at the printers right now and will be available in the near future. Signs are being printed for stores to display that do not sell pornography. We had buttons made up that are for sale and two new designs (porNO and Woman Against Pornography) are being manufactured right now.

Maude Barlow, President of the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography, has agreed to come to Edmonton to speak late this year or in January 1984. Lynn McDonald,

Day of Action

October 1st has been designated by the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League as a national Day of Action for Choice on Abortion. Events are planned for Edmonton and Calgary to focus attention on our right to reproductive freedom.

Calgary

A march and rally are planned for Saturday to start at 1 p.m. at the main stage in Prince's Island Park. The parade route will be announced then. If you can make your own banners or placards, please do. For more information, call Kathy at 249-3346.

Edmonton

A film is planned for 3 p.m. at the Art Gallery Theatre which is at 2 Sir Winston Churchill Square. Admission is free and there will be time for discussion over refreshments following the film.

NDP Justice Critic and feminist has also been invited but has not yet responded.

We have an idea, a hope, to do a lot of community work. Utilizing the community associations and newspapers we would like to reach more Edmontonians. Through an education and action program that would entail films, information and action workshops, we hope to get more people involved and active in the fight against pornography at the community level. We aren't ready to start this project yet but we think its possible if we can generate more interest.

What do you do on Monday evenings? Would you like to get involved, express your feelings and thoughts about pornography? If you would, please call Every Woman's Place to find out when our next meeting is. If you would like information, articles or books to read on the subject, we can help you there as well. The number is 488-2748.

The Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women, Alberta branch, has instigated a research project. The purpose of the project is to determine current educational opportunities and participation, survey-funding and support services presently available to women, explore attitudes regarding women's goals, and develop recommendations to deal with barriers to education and training. Any formal or informal means through which women may develop personally, socially, economically or politically will be considered. Attention will be given to the impacts of micro-technology and the National Training Act on women.

The number of women in the paid labour force continues to grow. Alberta has the highest female participation rate in Canada, 58.2% in 1982 (443,000 women). In 1977, 35% of Alberta working women were single, widowed or divorced and therefore self-supporting. The number of single-parent families headed by women and the number of women living at or below the poverty level are increasing. There would be a 51% increase in the number of two spouse families in Canada living below the poverty line if the women were not also in the labor force.

The average annual income of Alberta women in 1981 was \$10,576 compared to \$21,673 for men. As well as low-paying, women's jobs are often characterized by lack of opportunity for advancement or training. Furthermore, women in

the clerical and service sectors are faced with the possibility of massive unemployment due to micro-technology.

Barriers to learning that prevent women from attaining equality in the labor force must be uncovered and understood. Women should be supported in seeking education and training that will give them opportunity equal to men's.

What kind of learning is easily available to women and to what women? What kind of learning is difficult for women to acquire? What are the blocks to that learning? Are the barriers related to the situation of the individual woman, to the policies of specific educational institutions or to the attitudes of the women?

Two research designs will run together through the project. The first will document numerically the participation of women in Alberta in formal educational settings. There will be constant comparison to men in Alberta, to men and women in Canada, and to men and women in selected other provinces. Added to this will be a description of women's involvement in the economy, including their unpaid service at home and in the community. Links between formal schooling and employment will be traced. Occupational categories, such as 'health care' will be examined to see what work women do within them.

The second research component makes this project special. It involves interviewing women and asking them



what they perceive to be the opportunities and barriers to learning, and about their own experiences. From these interviews, it may be possible to challenge the statistics generated in the first part of the research. Can "anyone" make more money, find "better" jobs and win promotions if "anyone" just takes the right schooling.

These interviews will be juxtaposed to the institutional structures to see if policies stated by the institutions are meaningful to women. The stories of many women will be compared to each other to learn about social structure. The interview process makes it possible for women to discuss their own experiences, compare them, and see them as more than the outcome of good or bad personal decisions.

Such are the goals of the research. If you are interested in participating in an interview, call 488-4459 in Edmonton.

Jan Marshall & Marilyn Assheton-Smith

COMMON WOMAN BOOKS

CELEBRATES

OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, October 15, 1983

At Garneau Community League Hall

All our friends and supporters are invited to attend. Live music, singing, dancing and other debauchery. Support Alberta's only feminist bookstore. Tickets \$6.00 at Common Woman Books and at the door. Children free and welcome. Fun, food, music, entertainment. Maybe a skit about Common Woman Books from birth to present. Anybody who does not want to come is crazy!!!



DO YOU HAVE ONE HOUR TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS?

THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT IS STUDYING ATTITUDES AND BARRIERS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES.

PHONE 488-4459 FOR AN APPOINTMENT.

What you need to know about...

I AM A FEMINIST. I have a lot of work to do. I cannot and will not stop until there are NO MORE WOMEN ...

...beaten
raped
selling their bodies
economically dependent on men
sexually harassed at work
killing or maiming themselves with illegal abortions
addicted to prescription drugs
trapped in ghetto jobs
living in poverty because they are old
subjects of pornography
"disappearing" in 3rd world countries
keeping their sexual preference secret
educated in sexist schools
left out of history books
fired or not hired because of pregnancy
damaged by our "justice" system
crying
maimed in the name of medicine
forced to bear unwanted children
doing paid or unvalued housework
pictured in media as young, gorgeous, sexy
killing themselves with alcohol
just killing themselves
whistled at
laughed at
silenced
living by proxy through husbands or children
dying of oppression ...

or until I die, whichever comes first. I have a lot of work to do. Will you help me?

Marilyn Guille

...Regional conferences

ASWAC Provincial Assembly

New dimensions for ASWAC annual



What has been called our annual conference and Annual General Meeting in the past will take on new dimensions this year. With the regional components of our annual meeting now in the making, raising the concerns of women throughout Alberta, the main objects of this year's general meeting will be to draw these concerns together and plan for our future. Because of this change in format and focus we are calling this part of our annual meeting the ASWAC provincial assembly.

The ASWAC board has, for the past year, spent much time and energy on questions of how we do our work. Our concerns have ranged from structural control of meetings which make it impossible for us to identify and explore the work we need to do together, to understanding the consequences of actions we may take in attempting to change the world for women. From this board work arises our theme for this year's meeting, "from trying to excell in their world to beginning to understand our own".

We believe that concentrating on understanding our world, rather than meeting expectations placed on us by others, will make it possible for us to act more effectively in creating the feminist world we imagine.

The meeting structure will then emphasize our work - "thee and me" as we work individually and collectively in Alberta. It will provide a number of settings in which we can share our work, our anger, our hopes, and maybe even our laughter. Through this process we not only

reflect on that work but also identify other women who will in some sense work with each of us in our following year. We will open on Friday evening simply with "a party", a place where we begin our talk together and welcome each other to our meeting. The plan for the weekend will be available in written form, as will various reports to and from members. You may choose to simply visit, or you may begin your discussion about the rest of the meeting at that gathering.

Saturday will begin with a morning focus on where we have been working in the past year, and an afternoon shift to where and how we would like to work in the coming year. Elections of the ASWAC board will occur late in this afternoon, as we should know the women who have agreed to be nominated fairly well by then. The process of presenting the work done and the work planned will involve moving from full assembly to smaller groups and back to the full assembly again. The culmination of that day will be our banquet on Saturday evening, but the work of the meeting will continue on Sunday. That is, time and space will be arranged on Sunday for affinity groups, issue-groups, planning groups or other groups of women to meet and continue their work.

The old and new board will also meet on Sunday and the board members will be present at a final wrap-up early Sunday afternoon. Of course, the "wrap-ups" is only the end of one kind of our work, it will represent, also, a recognition that with our good-byes we simply move out of the meeting to carry on - stronger, more sure of our support, ready to continue that women's work which is truly never done.

Time and space details? We begin at 7:30 on Friday, November 25 in the Lister Hall banquet room and foyer. Our entry process into the meeting will include the usual membership, picture wall, and financial contribution to the cost of the meeting (likely \$20; more or less if your financial circumstances permit/require it). If you miss that on Friday, we will repeat it on Saturday morning in the same place, beginning at 8:00 a.m. The assem-

bly will start at 9:00 a.m. That day is full, although lunch and refreshment breaks will lighten it. It will end when the banquet/celebration ends, likely at 10 or 11 p.m. Sunday will begin about 9:30 in Lister Hall (where space will be available for working groups); the "wind-ups" will be in the banquet room about 2 p.m. It should be over by 3 p.m. or so.

Give us a call if you want to help, comment, or even do some pre-planning for a Sunday working group at the conference. Phone numbers are Marilyn at 433-9938; Shelagh and Mair at 424-3073, and Meaghan at 479-0623.

What's in a name?

The ASWAC board's decision to go with naming this year's annual get-together an "assembly" rather than an "annual general meeting" is not simply an irrelevant stab at semantic reshuffling. Rather, it is a conscious and essential move to communicate the true nature of ASWAC's work and aims as they have developed since the 1982 AGM.

We have become increasingly sensitized to the fact that a name is not just a bunch of letters lumped together that can be replaced by another bunch of letters and mean exactly the same thing to us. The names we use not only identify, they trigger strong associations, expectations and memories that can dictate how we choose to think and act in a particular situation.

For us, "assembly" made for associations and expectations more in keeping with the exploratory and thoughtful type of work we've been doing this year. Compared to an
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You'll need to know more than just where

You are going to need to know more than just the time, place and over all theme of the 1983 ASWAC assembly in November. That you also get a feel for the 1983 assembly, its aims and how it was created is essential to making the process work for all of us who will be there.

A vital part of your preparation will include the current and next issues of the ASWAC newsletter. They will contain not only basic information, such as time and place, but articles updating you on the planning as it develops, why the planning emerged as it has and news and views from the regions which are going to be an integral part of the assembly, so, be sure to get your newsletters and start getting into the annual assembly now.

The other important preparation is to start thinking now about what use you want to make of the space and time provided by the assembly. What's been happening for you since the last ASWAC annual and where do you want to go from here with your concerns? Start thinking about the structure and procedures you've been using in your work for women and analyzing whether they are a help or a hindrance to what we women really want.

Assembly name

cont'd

"annual general meeting", an "assembly" leads us to expect less rigidity of structure and procedure, decentralization of responsibility and work and creates a much-needed different environment in which to share and explore the quite different emphasis of ASWAC's recent activities.

Perhaps most importantly, the change helps us to create expectations of the meeting that honestly convey the fact and spirit of where ASWAC is at. It also greatly improves the chances of creating a meeting space in which more women can participate directly and fully if they choose.

Meaghan Dean

BOARD CANDIDATES

More than speeches this year



The election of a 1983-84 board is one of the activities to happen at the November assembly. This year there will be no speeches from those running for the board. Instead, they will be participating in the smaller group discussions and be available for you to talk with before you cast your ballot. The idea is to allow the board candidates to talk with you instead of at you. We are operating on

the assumption that you need more than a two-minute speech to get the information you need to vote for the people you want on the ASWAC board.

So, be prepared to watch for the board candidates during the assembly and to take some time to talk with them. Also, listening to them as they participate in the smaller group discussions will give you a pretty good indication of "where they're coming from".

While we're on the subject of elections, have you thought much lately about:

- why you choose to elect women to a board?
- what individual responsibility, if any, do you give up concerning working in the women's movement when you vote women onto a board for a year?
- what work do you expect of those women you elect?
- are you satisfied with the amount of control and information usually available to you as a voter in a one-day election process? If not, why? What would you like to do differently?
- Taking into consideration that your aim as a feminist includes change and taking more control of your life, are you concerned about the patriarchal based election procedures of wider society becoming part of how we work in the movement?

Meaghan Dean

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next ASWAC board meeting will be on October 22 and 23 at Corbett Hall, Univ. of Alberta. This will be the last official. This will be the last of this board, we think. The next newsletter will follow shortly after.



Next Webspinner workshop - October 7th to 11th in Edmonton with a public 'feedback' meeting to follow on October 27th.
If you want to be part of the workshop, call Meaghan at 479-0623 or Hair at 424-3073 for more details.

Where to go:

What to do:

Who to ask

This section of the newsletter is devoted to Provincial Development Project news and plans for conferences, gatherings and the ASWAC assembly.

If you've been following the progress of the Provincial Development project in the past three newsletters, you'll have realised by now that it's starting to look really different than what was originally envisioned. This is really no surprise; we know that Alberta is a very varied province and that our women's work reflects this variety. Also, the women who are working on the project are themselves a varied bunch; different styles, energy levels and methods of working - which again will reflect differences in the net results of their work. It feels good and right at this stage

to have allowed this to happen; not to have imposed a rigid structure at the beginning.

First, staff changes. Our only loss so far has been our coordinator, Susan Thompson. Susan left us at the end of July and for most of the month of August we operated without a coordinator - other than a somewhat disgruntled Mair who kept trying to get away on holiday. Susan has now been replaced by Shelagh Parsons, who is working hard on coordinating the project workers, and developing the Assembly as well as assisting with work on the Central Regional Conference.

Also in Edmonton is Lois Willetts, who is working on the Central Regional Conference, and also taking care of the project's book-keeping. There were no plans to

hire a regional worker in the Central Region originally, but as we were not able to hire in Lethbridge for the first two months we had some work weeks in hand and chose to use them in this way. Shelagh and Lois both use the ASWAC office as their base.

And the good news from the South East is: Carol Burnett in Lethbridge and Dora Marlow in Cardston. Carol and Dora are concentrating on networking in the South eastern corner of the province.

The events which have been planned are summarized on this page and discussed in more detail on the following pages. Thereafter, getting involved in your local ASWAC event is up to you.

Project staff update

Co-ordinator

Shelagh Parsons ASWAC office, Edmonton 424-3073

Central

Lois Willetts ASWAC office, Edmonton 424-3073

North-West

Marilyn Guille Box 1941, Whitecourt TOE 2L0 778-3669

Marlene (Marty) Whitesun Box 418, Hythe TOH OCO 356-3797

North-East

Barbara J. Hill Box 301, Vermilion TOB 4M0 853-2180

Chris Bennet-Clark Box 301, Vermilion TOB 4M0 853-2768

Deanna Klychak 7307 Bulyea Av. Ft McMurray 743-2890

Judy Moynihan 190 Highland Cl. Ft McMurray 791-4395

Calgary

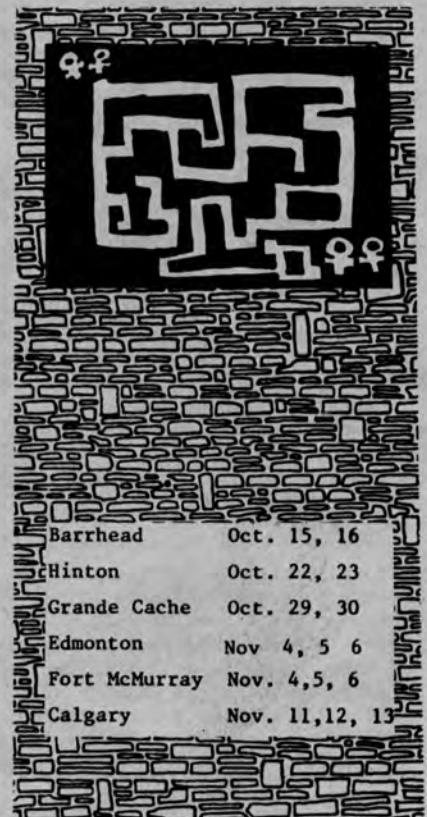
Jennifer Berezan 544 Crescent Rd NW, Calgary 282-6709

Suzn Morgan 6423 Laurentian Way SW, Calgary 246-8755

South-East

Carol Burnett 914 7 St. S., Lethbridge 320-1206

Dora Marlow Box 1573, Cardston TOK OKO 653-3596



Barrhead	Oct. 15, 16
Hinton	Oct. 22, 23
Grande Cache	Oct. 29, 30
Edmonton	Nov 4, 5 6
Fort McMurray	Nov. 4,5, 6
Calgary	Nov. 11,12, 13

More stories from our project workers



"IN THE
WOMEN'S MOVEMENT
EVERYTHING IS
POLITICAL AND
NOTHING IS PETTY"

The project came along at a time in my life when the last thing I wanted or needed was another commitment. And I couldn't stay away from it! An opportunity to get paid (not to get rich - just paid!) for doing what I like to do, and being given the mandate to do that. After the first three weeks of the project, attending the summer school (my first women's conference!), starting to talk to women in McMurray about getting involved (and everyone saying "yes"! I left on a month's holiday. My acceptance and realization of my commitment to the project came together with much pain and joy.

And now - two months down the road, the project has taken on a life all her own. She is growing and enveloping more and more women all the time. Women are coming into this project from all angles and for many reasons. "Women of the North" Conference will be the culmination of all our visions and, I hope, the start of whatever the next stage will be for the women of the (north) north-east region. Already, the process has met many of our goals - women meeting and supporting women, discovering that we really can pull together this conference despite obstacles we've met and that we are!

This must be an annual event. We will do what we must do to continue the process. And, despite what my intellectual and rational being tells me, I'll be there.

Judy Moynihan

My past is full of images of western Canada, where I grew up. With images of women's strifes against a backdrop of patriarchal bullshit and an unforgiving landscape. Lethbridge was home for my teen years, years that had both the start and end of my first marriage and the birth of two children. I moved to Calgary and progressed through high school and two years of college. Again, another marriage, and the kids started school. Another move and three years spent in small town Alberta engulfed by the oil and gas industry. Financial windfalls led to an idyllic year in Victoria, B.C., and the experience of a dream, starting a self-defense studio. Back to Calgary, into a year of retail management. Suddenly the death of my husband brought about a new life opening up for me. I started volunteer work at the Y.W.C.A. Women's Resource Centre and, within months, began to feel an understanding of the women's movement in Alberta and then a quantum leap as I saw myself within that framework. I began to become involved with women's organizations and during the last year even helped to create some new support networks. I got wind of the ASWAC outreach jobs and was amazed at feelings of destiny I felt pulling at me. And so it is that I am here writing this.

Suzn Morgan

...And even more from the regions



Carol Burnett

Southeast

After a few problems and setbacks in the South East, things are finally moving! Dora and I are running around (and around) meeting with all kinds of women in our region. We're promoting the Calgary conference plus I've started a women's study group in Lethbridge and am planning films and small workshops. Sometimes I get a little discouraged here in the banana belt but meetings like this (with all of the project workers) really get me going again. Dora's not feeling well right now and is really sorry she could not meet the other women. More later!

Carol Burnett



Dora Marlow



North Northwest

In preparing to write this, I looked up the article I had written for the newsletter when the project began. I wanted to see how my hopes and visions at that time compared with what is now happening.

My goal then was "to be a tool for touching into and beyond women's isolation, and for nurturing the growth of women's self-power both individually and collectively". The goal remains unaltered; however the image of how it was to be accomplished has developed into a somewhat different reality over the past few months.

I have let go of the idea of a conference (a large structural event involving lots of women) and have moved with a growing shared concern around the future direction of medicare. The Save Medicare Action Committee (or SMAC) has been formed and is working in the Peace area to raise awareness, concern and response to the policies of our provincial government toward medicare. About 10 to 12 women have come together to form the core group and are reaching out to others through actions and the sharing of information.

- To date, SMAC has been involved in:
- a) circulating and collecting signatures on a petition initiated by Friends of Medicare (Edmonton),
 - b) making a statement to the Hon. Dave Russell by means of a protest when he attended the opening of the new Hythe Hospital and Nursing Home,
 - c) a letter writing campaign directed at officials in both the federal and provincial governments, and
 - c) response through the media

SMAC is currently working on putting together an information package that will be presented to hospital board members and shared with concerned community groups and individuals. A part of the package will be a paper we are preparing which may also be submitted to our provincial government. A survey is being considered as a means of collecting information on persons' experiences with extra-billing and suspension of insured medical coverage, and to identify myths or misinformation about medicare. Also, we want to hold some form of public gathering to discuss the seriousness and implications of the medicare debate.

Medicare has become the avenue, and SMAC the vehicle, for moving

toward my ultimate goal. It's an exciting trip and I extend an invitation to all women, but especially women of the Peace area, to join us.

For more information, please contact me at Box 418, Hythe, Alberta, TOH 2C0 or phone 356-3797.

Marlene (Marty) Whitesun



South Northeast

We're busy compiling a resource information directory for women and women with children living in our communities and especially for those moving in.

We're talking with women, listening to what needs they have upon arriving in a new community. We're writing letters to the editor of local newspapers. In these letters we're asking women's groups, services, agencies and groups involving

Cont'd p. 13

Action

Action

Action

Whitecourt Region a.k.a. The-South-Portion-of-the-North-West Region!

Here's the conference(s) lined up for us, folks!

BARRHEAD - Oct. 15th and 16th at the Barrhead Inn. "From Sun to Sun: Women's Days" is the theme of the conference. For information, contact:

- . in Barrhead, Susan 674-3011
Karen 674-8239
- . in Westlock, Colleen 349-4398
- . in Swan Hills, Christie 333-4398

HINTON - Oct. 22 and 23rd at the Green Tree Motor Lodge. "Women Changing the World" is the theme. For information, contact:

- . in Jasper, Peg 852-4235 or 852-4905
- . in Hinton, Mariette 865-4905
- . in Edson, Wendy 723-6318

GRAND CACHE - Oct. 29 and 30th at the Villager. "The Invisible Woman" is the theme. For information, contact:

- . in Grand Cache, Peggy 827-2599

or contact Marilyn Guille about all three conferences at Box 1941, Whitecourt, 778-3669 or 778-6209.

"For Our Own Good - A Women's Health Conference" will be held in Calgary on November 11th and 12th.

Our conference planning committee is operating at prime efficiency. An exciting project and an exciting conference! Our keynote speaker is Barbara Ehrenreich, a feminist author on health issues. She will open the conference Friday evening with a keynote address. Tickets are available separately for this event so women who can't attend the whole conference can share in hearing this dynamic speaker. A wine and cheese party for participants will follow.

Saturday will start with an opening talk by Barbara followed by workshops. Some workshop titles are: Holistic Health, Mack Health Collective, Feminist Therapy, Menses to Menopause - Health Hazards, Body Image, Women and Addictions etc. A final plenary session will be followed by a dance.

The location is Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Centre and day care is offered. Advance registration is a must as we have limited space. Please call Suzn at 246-8755.

Suzn Morgan

The "Women of the North" Conference will be November 4, 5 and 6 at Keyano College in McMurray.

Friday Night - Wine & Cheese
-Historical perspective on women locally and provincially-local women
-old times stories and two films, "Doctor Woman" and "Great Grand Mothers"

Saturday Workshops
-Women and the Law
-Women and the Family
-Women organizing
-Women and personal growth
-Women and trades

Saturday Night
-happy hour
-Buffalo stew dinner
-Heather Bishop concert

Sunday
A.M. - Workshops in same areas
P.M. - Networking - a tool to end our isolation

Film Festival all day Saturday and Sunday morning. People who attend must have fun.

More south northeast

children to identify themselves and become included in our resource information directory. To date the communities of Lloydminster, Vermilion, Vegreville, Wainwright, St. Paul and Bonnyville are our target.

Remember how you felt the last time you moved into a new community? We asked some friends to recall their "moving experiences".

Jean had moved from a large, urban area to a small rural community of 3,000 people. She had gone to join her lover on the farm, carrying with her all kinds of high flown notions of pastoral bliss. Unfortunately, she found this bliss a lot shorter lived than anticipated. She was bored! Without transportation, the wide open spaces can become, she found, a stifling reminder of dependence. Dependence on other people, and on nature's whims. Jean also remembers missing her friends and involvements; she

was lonely and depressed. She suggested a directory welcoming her, a newcomer, to the community with information about women's groups and resources available within the area. She envisioned it as a first step towards breaking out of such isolation.

Ann, moving into a larger city, from a prairie village, found it difficult to combine her emotional needs with those of her husband and three children. Having tried initially to find a sense of belonging through her husband's colleague's wives, it was ultimately within a women's studies course that she discovered the greater bond of a universal sisterhood. Ann's suggestion that the inclusion of women's studies courses in the resource directory forms a natural link with the need for information on child care within the community.

As you're reading this, remember your last "moving experience". Remember your feelings, and how you tried to find a place in your new community.

If there was a resource information directory available to you as a newcomer, what information would you look for? We want to include your suggestions as we believe these needs are common to us as women. So, please send us your thoughts on this as soon as possible.

Your resource information directory needs you! Contact Barbara Hill and Christine Bennet-Clark at Box 301 Vermilion TOB 4M0 or call 853-2180 or 853-2848.

Please call if you want to go to the "Women of the North" conference in Fort McMurray. We'll coordinate car pooling.

Barbara J. Hill
Christine Bennet-Clark

Central Regional Gathering

grows out of our feminist work

The planning group for the Central region conference started meeting with a wish to allow the theme and format to emerge naturally, and in its own time. We talked about our own goals and needs and realities, knowing from these would grow an event which would be part of the flow of our work rather than a hiatus.

We talked about our feminist work, and how, for many of us, it is the central element of our lives. We talked about the joys of breaking through to new levels of awareness and understanding and about the pain which always accompanies the joy. The contradictions between the world we live in and the world we are building get sharper as we progress, and affect us increasingly in our daily and personal lives. Questions arise constantly; what does power mean to us now - what role does leadership play, how do we choose where to put our energies, how do we live with the reality of rapidly changing relationships, how do we balance the need to grow with the wish to do no harm - and many more.

We realized as we talked that we were no longer talking about the conference but that we were already there, involved in the theme that was clearly emerging. Knowing that many of you are facing the same questions and contradictions in your feminist work we realised that what we wanted to do was set up a simple structure within which we could all work intensively on the



Lois Willetts

matters which most deeply affect us, without the distraction of many of the features of the more traditional conference. We saw women coming together in a safe place, bringing with them their experience and questions, setting their own goals for the weekend and choosing and building their own paths toward them.

We want to extend an invitation to all interested women to start becoming involved in the process before the weekend of the gathering - in any way they wish. You can call members of the planning group for more discussion. You may also want to begin thinking about your goals for the weekend - what work you want to do, how, and with whom. You may find that you want to bring something to help you work - a book, a film, an article, another woman whose ideas you value, and you will need to gather these resources ahead of time.

You don't need to register, and you don't have to send any money! Meals during the weekend will be your responsibility - to take when, where and with whom you wish. The only exception will be the opportunity for all who wish to eat together on Saturday evening - for that we will need to make an advance booking.

If this kind of event interests you and at the same time scares you - you have company! All the

members of the planning group are feeling the same way and have done some talking about commitment to the risk we're all taking, and about the fact that what we are doing is extending, to you, an invitation to risk.

Mair

Planning Group

Ardelle Dudley	998-1740
Donna Anthony	428-0547
Liz Lunney	437-0872
Anne Runyan	428-1906
Meaghan Dean	479-0623
Shelagh Parsons	424-3073
Lois Willetts	424-3073
Mair Smith	424-3073



Shelagh Parsons



I think that women working together collectively get a sense of what they're capable of. I can't see how that would not spill over and make changes in other parts of their lives

Government shaft for shelters

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter is in a financial crisis, a forerunner to the situation that all Alberta shelters will face.

On September 10, the provincial government reneged on a five percent increase that it had promised. Apparently shelters are the only agencies to receive this cut-back. The government has proudly opened several new shelters this year but its commitment to the service that these shelters provide is questionable.

The five percent cut, coupled with a fundraising shortfall, leaves the Calgary Shelter faced with laying off five counsellors and reducing the housekeeper and volunteer co-ordinator positions to part-time. In addition, the shelter will have to make cuts in food, transportation to bring women and children to the shelter and staff training.

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter is ten years old; the oldest in the province it has, over the years, developed special programs (such as groups) for the women and children. There are more special programs and more counsellors at this shelter than at any other in the province. The system of funding that the government has announced threatens the special programs that the Calgary Shelter has provided and may prevent the initiation and growth of these programs at the other shelters.

The CWES fears that the government plans to turn the shelters into "hostels without services", "run by volunteers". Supplying battered women with a bed and food is not enough. Competent counselling, available on a 24-hour basis is essential to helping the women understand the situation in which they have been living. Once their initial crisis is over they need the advocacy and referral services that counsellors can offer to make their way through the maze of social, legal and medical services they may require.

The CWES sees a possible solution to underfunding. They would like the shelters to be designated as "special needs" programs, a social services budget category that includes group homes, residential care programs for geriatrics, the handicapped and alcoholics, for example.

In the short term, the CWES is desperately trying to raise the funds needed to keep their staff and services. If you can make a donation or can lend some assistance in this area, please contact the Shelter at 245-5901 or write to CWES at 938 15 Ave. SW, Calgary T2R 0S3.

The situation of our shelters is deserving of more study and analysis than time has afforded for this newsletter. Some of the



LNS/cpf

questions that should be addressed are:

- What is going on within the shelters?
- What kind of counselling are the women getting?
- Are some of the shelters sending women back to their homes in the name of the 'family'?
- How has government funding affected the philosophy of the shelters?
- Why do some members of the Alberta Council on Women's Shelters want to administer the funding to shelters? What are the likely results?
- Why are feminists being kicked out of shelters?
- What are the shelters' responses to the government plan to turn shelters into hostels or 'safe houses'?
- If the government won't increase the block funding to the shelters, should we be building more shelters?
- If we are successful in getting funding through the "special

needs" classification, do you feel that battered women being included among geriatrics, handicapped and alcoholics would reinforce the myth that the woman has the problem and is responsible for her condition rather than the batterer?

-There is a catch 22 situation with government funding. Is there a way out of it?

These are only some of the questions we need to consider. If you can make a contribution to this discussion, please write your thoughts down and send them in for the next newsletter or, if possible, the next Webspinner issue. Many people read or hear about the new shelters being built and think that the needs of battered women will be met or are being met. The women involved in the shelters know that this is not true. So, let's get the truth out!

Frances Adams

Weekend retreat

A weekend retreat for women is being held at Bates Bar J Ranch near Cochrane on November 4, 5 and 6.

Liz Massiah from Camrose is organizing the weekend to bring women together in a relaxing environment. While the retreat will be unstructured (ie. no formal workshops), women can teach each other skills, bring their guitars and entertain each other - do their own thing. The ranch offers horseback riding, hiking, fishing (bring your own gear), and a fire pit.

There is room for 90 women but there may be as few as 30 which is the minimum. The cost is \$43 which covers accommodation for 2 nights as well as 6 meals. Women may come for only part of the weekend at a reduced rate.

If you are interested, please contact Liz at 672-1444 or 4608 48 Street, Camrose T4V 1L1 by October 31 at the VERY LATEST. A \$20, non-refundable deposit is requested and cheques should be made out to Bates Bar J Ranch and sent to Liz.

Sounds like fun!

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Is Your Membership Due?

ASWAC's membership year runs from conference to conference, with a grace period running from September 1 for new memberships.

This means that if you bought or renewed your membership before September 1 1982 you are on our records as needing to renew your membership, and will see the dreaded RED DOT on your mailing label.

Our policy is to send newsletters to current members, and to members as far back as 2 years. Therefore we are still mailing to those who took out a 1980/81 membership. We do this generous act because we know that many people find it very hard to remember to renew, and we don't want to lose touch with old friends, and active members who just haven't got around to it yet. But, it would be a great help to the office staff if you would either renew, or let us know if you no longer wish to receive mailings.

This year at the AGM a resolution was passed effectively raising the suggested membership fee from \$5.00. to \$10.00. We still greatly welcome donations, and will still accept less from people who cannot pay as much.

Oh no! How could it be?
 Why, I.....
 -wrote out a cheque last week
 and left it on the fridge
 -renewed at least a year and
 a half ago
 -told my friend I was going to
 -called the ASWAC office just
 the other day
 -got the last newsletter.
 Doesn't that mean I'm fully
 paid up?
 BUT I REALLY DO CARE ABOUT
 THE STATUS OF ALBERTA WOMEN!



SUPPORTIVE MEMBERSHIP/DONATION*

Name

Membership

Address

Donation

Apt. No.

Street

City

Postal Code

Phone

Home

Office

Make cheque payable to Alberta Status of Women Action Committee, P.O. Box 1573, Edmonton, T5J 2N7 Telephone 424-3073

* We suggest \$10.00 membership per year.

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE