



# ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE Vol. 5, No. 7



*Kisses*

Photo by Muffy Mathewson of Positive Images

# Staff Update

# Sixteen Hours

Through a job creation project with the Federal Government we have hired Sheila MacDonald for eight months. Sheila will be working in the office preparing materials from our files and other sources to produce issue kits for distribution through the office. The same project allows us to increase the hours of our bookkeeper, Sam Faichney until Christmas. She is trying to pull our books into shape to do some restructuring of the way we do our accounting, and to produce some helpful materials for women's groups around financial resources.

The Board, at its November meeting established a Hiring Committee for the opening on staff (Frances Adams is leaving us on December 14th. The position was advertised to members and readers in the last newsletter.) We decided again to use a group interview process because it has worked so well in the past.

The group interview works like this: the Board first reviews the job - what skills and directions are needed, and its advertised. Then the hiring committee calls the applicants and arranges for all the short listed candidates and hiring committee members to get together at the "interview" where everybody discussed the job, the movement, and anything else they think is relevant.

The group process allows the hiring committee to see how the applicant interacts with others, and gives applicants a chance to meet and get to know each other. We think that the process allows more self selection than traditional interviewing - they can discover how ASWAC works, and more about the job than otherwise. Then they can decide whether or not they are right for the job.

At the end, or during the course of the meeting, if candidates think they would rather not be considered for the position they can say so. The Hiring Committee will then review the meeting by themselves and phone everybody to let them know the decision.

This we are trying a new follow up. The Hiring Committee will ask to meet again with individual applicants to brief on the process and result. If you're involved in hiring staff and would like to know more about this way, give us a call.

Lisa Walter

- Round Table** At each meeting we usually begin with a round and each woman talks about what she has been doing since we last met which in this case was only two weeks previous at the Assembly in Calgary.
- Recording Meetings** We decided to continue the process of recording our meetings on tape but will attempt to keep more detailed notes of which discussion is where to make access easier. We will also continue with the 16 Hours at a Glance method of reporting in the newsletter. Particular pieces and issues will be accompanied by articles.
- Calgary Molestings** A fairly indepth look at the whole context of the judicial process and judgements handed down from the bench in relation to women. The focus was on a Nov. 9 case in which a judge called a sexual assault on a 13 year old girl by a 35 year old male to be "relatively minor" and sentenced the male to 15 days served on weekends. The board will do some research on judgements similar to this around the province and bring this information to the next board meeting on Jan 19/20. If you have information about cases, please let us know.
- Women's Music Productions** Julie talked about some women in Calgary who are seriously looking at a business to promote women performers.
- C.C.A.P.** The Calgary Coalition Against Pornography has been lobbying for a municipal by-laws to restrict the display and sale of pornography (see article).
- Issue Kits** We discussed the kits that Sheila MacDonald, a new ASWAC employee, is working on. We decided that, for the high schools, a general introduction to women's issues would be a good idea. Several kits will be produced on specific issues as well and we discussed those briefly. Lisa, Mair and Meaghan have agreed to work with Sheila on the content and distribution of these issue kits.
- Staff Reports** Mair and Frances have both been very busy and reported on their work preparing for the Assembly as well as their regular, ongoing work.
- The Hiring** A 4-member hiring committee was formed (Sally, Lisa, Marilyn and Suzn) and will be responsible for hiring a new office manager to replace Frances. We decided to delay the starting date for the new woman until January 14 to save money (see article on staff).
- Meeting Dates** We set the dates that we will meet over the next year (see article).
- Evaluation** Meagan Dean and Julie Anne Le Gras met with us to share their analysis of the evaluation process to date. A committee was formed to follow up on this process with the Secretary of State.
- Finances** We reviewed the budget report which shows that we are considerably over budget and will have to do some cost cutting over the last four months of this fiscal year.
- Budget** We decided to start our budget process prior to the January board meeting. Julie Anne Le Gras has volunteered to help facilitate this process.
- Our Work** The discussion about 'our work' over the next year went something like this: How do we define our work? What is Board work? What is membership work? How do projects happen? How do we make our work more visible? We work toward change and thus ASWAC changes as our work changes. Sally wants more feedback from the



# An Open Letter From Hecate's Players

Hecate's Players would like to express appreciation to the participants of the ASWAC Assembly for the opportunity to perform "Too Much For Any One Woman".

The aim of Hecate's Players is to tell women's stories in women's words, to provide a forum for all of us to discuss our lives and the choices we make in our lives. With the process of choosing material for our scripts we have the task of selecting works which represent women's reality. Our responsibility is to do this wisely without oversimplification or sensationalism. In putting together this script we lost sight of this goal.

"Too Much For Any One Woman" implied that the stories told applied to all women. We recognize that our selection oversimplified the choices made by individual women. We failed to present the lives of women whose choices were different.

We'd like to thank the women who had the courage to be candid and provided us with feedback after the performance. We are in the process of reworking "Too Much For Any One Woman" and would welcome any comments or suggestions.

Please write or call: 9759 66 Ave., Edmonton, 435-8848.

## Hello

Hello! I'm that new voice that a lot of you are hearing on ASWAC's phone. I've been hired on a Canada Works project that will last for 8 months.

For the past two weeks, since I started, I've been cleaning up the library and filing cabinets - oof! It's been a great way to familiarize myself with ASWAC's resources and some days it's seemed that I'm familiarized up to my eyeballs! There is an awful lot of interesting material here, so if any of you are looking for something in particular let me know and I'm sure I can help.

The second part of the project is what I'm really excited about. I'll be "building" issue kits to be made available and distributed to high schools, public libraries, women's groups and individuals. The kits will cover a lot of topics - an introduction to feminism, women and education, work, the churches and organizing for example.

Mair, Meaghan and Lisa will be a part of this by helping me to form my ideas as well as sharing their own. Any of you that have thoughts about the kits that you would like to share, just call me at the office.

Sheila MacDonald

## Goodbye

Well, this is my last Newsletter production. I said goodbye in "Stories of A Year" but I'll say it again. I'm going to miss this place very much I expect. I'm moving to On-tory-ory-o but I'm taking a six month trip back to Greece and other parts in the interim. Yes, I'm hooked on the place and no, ASWAC's financial situation is not due to my siphoning off funds!

I am planning to write an article or two for the Newsletter while I'm travelling and I'll be searching Greece for feminist activity to write about and participate in so watch for this. Maybe I'll send pictures of myself lying on beaches, drinking in the sun (how's that for a 'positive image') for everyone to moan about.

Anyway, goodbye for now. I'll be in the office until December 14th and donations to the 'Globetrotter Fund' will be gladly accepted up to that date!

Frances Adams

## Assembly Motions

The business section of the Annual Assembly was called to order at 3:15pm on Saturday, Nov. 3rd.

### Item #1

(UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF ASWAC FINANCES)

After a brief explanation and discussion it was moved by Marilyn Assheton-Smith and seconded by Diana Chown to accept the statement as reported. Motion carried.

### Item #2

(BYLAWS, NEW AND OLD)

It was moved by Frances Adams and seconded by Jude Moonberry to adopt an extra-ordinary resolution to revoke the current set of bylaws and to accept the proposed set of changes. This motion was carried unanimously.

### Item #3

(SELECTION OF AUDITORS)

Julie Russell (Whitecourt) volunteered and was accepted as one of the two women to do this job. A second woman will be appointed by the Board and her name will be printed in the upcoming edition of the Newsletter.

### Item #4

(NEW BOARD MEMBER SELECTION)

The women interested in sitting on the Board (November '84-November '85) did a round table to introduce themselves to the Assembly and to discuss their ideas and goals for the coming year. It was an interesting and uplifting process - so many talented and enthusiastic and qualified women who want to put energy into ASWAC!

The results:

for a second term were  
Suzn Morgan - Calgary  
Marilyn Guille - Whitecourt  
Amanda LeRougetel - Edmonton  
Marty Whitesun - Hythe  
Jude Moonberry - Ft. MacMurray  
and for a first term  
Julie Walker - Calgary  
Lorna Gilchrist - Airdrie  
Brigitte Baradov - Calgary  
Janet Beebe - Camrose  
Lisa Walter - Edmonton  
Sally Wisden - Edmonton.

By the end of the round the 1984/85 Board had been selected. The Business section of the Assembly was thus completed.



# IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS

As a provincial organization, ASWAC is in a unique position to hear what's on the agenda of women's groups around the province. Through Board members, Mair, and readers of the Newsletter, ASWAC can also hear what's on the minds of women organizing across the province.

We talk about analysis as something that is involved in every bit of organizing we do. But some issues could use some thinking or talking before they're in a pamphlet or on a campaign.

Those of us with circles of feminist friends debate some of these when we find time. For those who are not part of a regular discussion circle, this regular feature of our Newsletter might be partial replacement. Please contribute. If there's an item you think needs discussing, write it up and send it in.

## Celebration and Work in Conflict?

This piece comes from thinking about the questions raised and from two comments I heard lately. The first was from a friend, who was pushing me on feminist contributions to the world of ideas in this decade. I argued to him that the women's movement has challenged thinkers in a new way around how it is that movements should work. The second was a comment at the ASWAC assembly. Marilyn Assheton-Smith told the assembly of her pride in being a member of an "intelligent movement". I think these two comments were both right. I only wonder if we talk about it enough.

I've written this piece three times and its not getting easier. The questions are these: how can the movement and the women in it do the work that needs doing (face the issues that are horrifying or angering and do the work which is necessarily subversive) without going crazy? How can we get the personal and collective support we need and not withdraw from the arena where our lives are being discussed and decided? How can we celebrate our movement and accomplishments and not alienate the sisters who work differently, support different goals or celebrate differently?

We recognize the need to work non-violently, to examine and reconstruct our organizations to reflect this. I am concerned and afraid that we are slacking the pace on issues, and turning our backs on women who are not comfortable with the changing. We are not responsible for the victims made daily in our world, but our work to change the system that victimizes cannot wait. Our work, endless and painful as it is, must be result oriented. But we must get the support, personally and commonly, to go on.

The world outside our movement,

and indeed other movements, rely on comfort and nurturance in the private lives of its activists to take care of this need. Except for a few acceptable times (the death of a leader, or a 25th birthday) emotional and informal support and appreciation is not an acceptable agenda item, purpose or task.

But our movement is different. Consciousness-raising groups, and traditional circles were able to develop both political awareness and support. Affinity groups were a new way to provide support for women who were already aware and active, but for many of us, another time commitment - to get/give support - was too much to schedule. Less organized ways of doing the same thing are part of every woman's group I know. We are famous for meeting over meals or beverages so socialising and supporting is built in to the gathering. Some groups do a round of "announcements" or personal comments at the beginning of each meeting. This sharing is important no matter what the format.

But for large groups, or groups where women don't know each other much, this task is difficult; it's time consuming, and sometimes not very comfortable. Even if we do know each other, sometimes we disagree and are not ready to suspend the antagonism so that sharing can

be real.

We can't organize without support, but can we organize support? How can we support each other personally if we don't support each other's goals?

The rhetoric claims that supporting each other lets us work better, more effectively, more productively. We say that process and results are not in conflict - its not an either/or, zero sum

game. In theory, we should get more done our way. Why am I not convinced? Why is this issue tinged with divisiveness - where's the unity? the massive campaigns?

There's a lot of talk of celebration and ritual in movement circles these days too. I'm afraid that this one might have a tremendous power either to unite or divide us; there's nothing more alienating than feeling like you are on the outside of a celebration.

We acknowledge that there are political differences both individually and between groups in the movement. This diversity, whether it be in priorities or principles, strategy or goals, is good. What it requires is that we choose our celebrations, and the rituals we use to mark them, with sensitivity to our sisters.

In both cases, first with support and second with celebration, I resort to sisterhood as the stuff that will lead us out of craziness and division (which is not a very startling conclusion at all). This confirms my sense that sisterhood really is the fuel that keeps us going when individually we're too hurt to say more, or when organizations come to loggerheads. Said another way, I guess, SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, and hard.

Lisa Walter



# Maintenance Enforcement

Enforcement of maintenance orders has been a priority on ASWAC's agenda for the past few months. We have been writing letters to Neil Crawford, Attorney General, John Crosbie, Federal Minister of Justice and many other government representatives. We have supplied information and support women and women's groups throughout Alberta to aid in our campaign for an effective enforcement system in

this province. In Calgary a Coalition on Maintenance Enforcement has formed and in Edmonton we have a Maintenance Action Group. On the 5th of December, a group of us from across the province will be meeting with Mr. Crawford and with John Baisey, Head of the Family and Youth Division of the A.G.'s department to urge the Alberta Government to implement a 'Manitoba-style' system of enforcement.

Below is a letter written by a member of the ASWAC Maintenance Action Group as well as the content of a recent media release. We encourage our members to take part in this campaign and to copy correspondence to the ASWAC office. Please call me if you need additional background information on this issue or would like to join with other women who have been working on this issue in your area.

Frances Adams

## Letter

I am writing this letter to you to state my concerns about maintenance recovery in Alberta.

I have been a single parent for five years now. I have lived in Alberta for twenty-seven years. I have one daughter, age five. I have been legally divorced for two and a half years and have slowly become bitterly angry at the system the Alberta Government chooses to follow as far as arrears in maintenance is concerned.

I resent the fact that every single action must be left to the spouse. Not only must we deal with the battle of running a household, holding down a job, providing for our children, and trying to set a good example, but we must also be at the beck and call of any government agency disguising themselves as a helping hand, when in fact an actions instigated we are wholly responsible for. As of yet there are no laws that help us acquire any arrears.

Family Court plainly tells us there is nothing, legally, they can do. Any actions must be started, followed through, and finished by us. We can barely keep up with game called life, let alone try fighting the courts alone. Not to mention the cost? In my opinion, the real winners are the lawyers, the real losers are the children. All this talk of our children being our heritage shall all just be dust in the wind if this problem is ignored.

There is a large part of the population that this issue concerns. In 1981, there were 68,000 divorces in Canada, according to Stats Canada. That was the year of my divorce. The questions to be asked are how many of those marriages involved children? How many of those children are being

supported by both parents? How many children are being supported by welfare? How long will this be allowed to continue?

The situation is a very sad one. A large percentage of the women supporting families will not pursue the failure of their ex-husbands to meet their responsibilities because of fear. Fear of encountering a bad situation, again. Fear of losing their jobs for taking time off to pursue these matters through what little legal channels are available. Fear of trauma, mental or possibly physical abuse for themselves and their children.



I am in favour of creating a General Registry in Alberta, the same system that is in effect today in Manitoba. This recovery system has an 85% success figure in that province and not only is it very successful it has also made \$175,000.00 in one year. I am also very much in favour of a Federal Registry which would eliminate men skipping from province to province to shirk their responsibilities. I believe that we who solely support children are a rapidly growing minority who are openly being discriminated against by our own government because of the insensitivity to this problem.

I am hoping for a positive reply from you for the beginning of a possible solution.

I feel I have struggled with this problem on my own for long enough and I am asking for your help in bringing about the change that is so desperately needed, for our children's sake. Alberta is blessed with having the most divorces in Canada and the worst record for maintenance recovery and arrears. I am now ready to help to do whatever it takes to start the wheels in motion. Your speedy reply on your thoughts on this issue would be appreciated.

Monica McKenzie  
Edmonton

## Media Release

Thousands of Alberta women and children live in poverty as a result of marriage breakdown, in spite of the fact that the fathers are financially able to pay maintenance. In Alberta, 75% of all maintenance orders are in default according to the Alberta Institute of Law Research and Reform.

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee has called on the Alberta Government to remedy this situation by instituting a system of maintenance enforcement similar to that of Manitoba.

In Manitoba, the default rate is 15%. A staggering 85% of all fathers actually pay their court-ordered maintenance, according to figures from the Manitoba Department of the Attorney General.

The difference between Alberta and Manitoba lies not in the law as such, but in the system of enforcement. In Manitoba, the government takes an active role in systematically enforcing maintenance orders through a computerized registry. In Alberta, it is up to



## Write For Rights - GALA

This summer the Alberta Human Rights Commission recommended to the Alberta Government that sexual preference or orientation be included in the Individual Rights Protection Act. The "Write for Rights" campaign organised by GALA (Gay and Lesbian Awareness) began in September with letters to members of the legislature. The campaign message is clear: discrimination in housing and employment on the basis of sexual orientation is not justified.

The campaign is doing well - hundreds of letters have been sent, but the responses have been vague, no commitments made. GALA requested a meeting with the Government caucus in December. A petition is being circulated as well. And finally, a letter for heterosexual people indicating their support is printed and available.

GALA can be contacted at Box 53, Edmonton T5J 2G9, telephone 424-8361.

## Release cont'd

the individual woman to enforce her and her children's right to maintenance. For many women, this is practically speaking impossible, and they become dependent on the welfare system.

As a result, the actual cost to the government is high. However, under the Manitoba system, the government actually saves money. In 1983 alone, the Manitoba government realized a net profit of \$250,000 that would otherwise have been paid out in welfare benefits.

For these reasons, the women at the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee's annual assembly, held in Calgary, Nov. 2-4, unanimously voted for a resolution in favour of instituting a Manitoba-style of maintenance enforcement in Alberta. Plans are currently under way to develop a coalition of individuals and groups interested in maintenance enforcement reform. Everyone is invited to contact ASWAC, P.O. Box 1573, Edmonton T5J 2N7, for further information.

# International Peace Conference

Women all over the world are concerned about peace and human survival. We worry about the failure of disarmament talks, the growth of the arms race, its effects on development, and the basic needs of people everywhere and we fear nuclear war.

Acknowledging the economic and psychological burden of the arms race and that existence itself is threatened, 55 women from 26 national women's organizations met at York University in Toronto June 1st, 1984, to make plans for an International Conference: THE URGENCY FOR TRUE SECURITY; WOMEN'S ALTERNATIVES FOR NEGOTIATING PEACE. Intelligent, passionate women committed to non-violence are virtually absent from all major international negotiations for disarmament. This Conference is planned to highlight women skilled in negotiation, so that the ideas and alternatives offered by women to the present balance of terror will be heard.

The International Conference will invite 50 women from Canada and 50 women from abroad; another 200 women will have the opportunity to be involved in some capacity with these women and the negotiating process.

The goals of the conference have been set. There continues to be consultation throughout the provinces about the content and structure of the conference. Some individuals believe that the participation of women will naturally help to bring world conditions into balance. Others suggest that women negotiating isn't necessarily our only goal; that we need to question the whole process of negotiation as it exists today.

Women are joining together June 5-9, 1985, to envision what is necessary for the abolition of war. Gathering the experiences of women as traditional peace makers and peace keepers of our homes and communities, we hope to bring insights into international relations.

There has been tremendous response to this conference from all across Canada. Thirty women's groups were invited to the original planning meeting, 26 groups sent representatives. Since then, other major organizations have expressed

their interest, and we welcome all women's groups to offer their suggestions and ideas on what is essential for the negotiation of lasting peace.

To find out more about the conference, to donate money for travel and organizing costs or to help organize a regional or local conference, write to:

Coalition of Canadian Women's Groups  
International Peace Conference  
Room 9-10, Seton Annex,  
166 Bedford Hwy.  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3M 2J6



## Group Legal Structures

Women's organizations are forming all across the province for a whole variety of purposes - to force social change, to educate the general public and women themselves, to further women's art, theatre, etc. These groups have taken on a whole variety of structures such as charitable organizations, societies, cooperatives, business - or they have remained "unincorporated associations", ie. they have not gone through any legal procedure to be registered in the province or in Canada.

So, with this in mind, Kris Farkas, with the Summer School Collective, prepared a publication to briefly explain the legal structures available to women's groups, to describe the advantages and disadvantages of each structure and to talk a bit about fundraising through government and private sources. Also included is information on where to go for further information and advice.

To obtain a copy for your group, write: Summer School Collective, 10112 88 Street, Edmonton, T5H 1P1.

# Film Festival

Common Woman Books is organizing a film festival for the new year. The festival, called "Women: Reflections on Ourselves", will run one day a month from January to April and will revolve around the following themes: Control of Our Minds and Bodies, Violence Against Women, Women Relating to Women and Women Through the Arts.

Location: National Film Board Distribution Office, 10031 103 Avenue, Edmonton.

## January 20 - Control of Our Minds and Our Bodies

1:00 This Isn't Wonderland - A film about women and depression. Discussion Facilitator: Rosemary Liburd, psychologist, counsellor for Student Services, University of Alberta. Course leader for Women's Program, Faculty of Extension.

2:45 Doctor Knows Best - A short on visiting the gynecologist.

3:00 Diet Unto Death - An exploration of Anorexia Nervosa. Discussion Facilitator: Cheryl Malmo, psychologist, workshop leader "Woman's Compulsive Eating and Body Image", Women's Program, U. of A. Extension, writing a course for Athabasca University on Counselling Girls and Women.

7:00 Abortion: Stories From North and South - A moving view of the choice and practice of abortion around the world. Discussion Facilitator: Jeni Ellman, Planned Parenthood.

## February 17 - Violence Against Women

Loved, Honoured and Bruised (Discussion by Halyna Freeland, lawyer), Hookers on Davie (Discussion by Lynn Fraser and Cheryl Kehoe, who work on Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes in Calgary), Night Without Fear (Discussion by Mair Smith, ASWAC).

## March 10 - Women Relating to Women

Daughter Rite (Discussion leader, Ardelle Dudley, psychologist), On Guard, Lost Love, Chris and Bernie (Discussion leader, Pauline Belanger, nurse and single mom) In the Best Interests of Children (Discussion leader, Lynn Fraser and Cheryl

Kehoe on rights for Lesbian mothers).

## April 14 - Women Through The Arts

Thriller, Gold Diggers (by Sally

Potter - experimental feature), Kate and Anna McGarrigle.

Keep posted with the ASWAC newsletter for film times and write-ups!

Sara Berger



## ABORTION STORIES

### Film Gives Voice to Women

I attended the screening of this film on Oct. 17, and would like to share my comments with other ASWAC members.

As a feminist and Roman Catholic, the issue of abortion has always been a difficult one for me. This film began with the statement that it was neither 'for' or 'against' abortion... (I truly think that we women divided by this for/against issue are falling prey to the political system that stimulates this division.) The issue brought out, I think, is SURVIVAL...our survival as women.

I very much appreciated the film because it gave a VOICE to women facing the difficult decision of abortion. I could empathize with my sisters in the very difficult choice they had to make. The film brought out well the guilt experienced by these women (because of political-legal sanctions), and the deep personal trauma experienced (this was less clear in the Canadian situation) because abortion seemed the only solution to the predicament they were in - poverty, abuse, unemployment, etc.

Two points in the film stick with me... In talking about the Vatican, the point was clearly made that in Church history women were never

consulted on issues that directly pertained to them-NO VOICE. In another part of the film, an interview with a woman in Peru, we see how ill-informed she is about her own body, and medical procedures done to it-again NO VOICE. This film clearly brought out for me, the need for women to penetrate patriarchal structures like the Church and State to be heard, and the need to educate themselves about their bodies, and to learn to love their bodies.

Loving one's body (and therefore oneself) is so important. A woman willingly gets pregnant to always give birth, the most profound CREATE-IVE act of the human person; a woman never willingly gets pregnant to have an abortion, a violent act to our body in it's very innate creative capacities. The women in this film clearly did not willingly get pregnant; the film also clearly brought out the fact that if the women in our world had the economic, intellectual, political, medical, social, religious freedoms that we deserve, abortion would cease to be a problem, because survival would no longer be a problem.

Abortion should not BE; however it IS, because of our situation as WOMEN in a PATRIARCHAL world.

Anita Allsopp



# Poor Ann Ography

Poor Ann Ography  
She's always in the news  
Poor Ann Ography  
Everyone has views  
It was never her intention  
To humiliate and shame  
Don't scream and shout  
But hear me out  
Before you lay the blame

Poor Ann Ography was soft  
She was just a tease  
She posed in filmy negligee's  
Showing off her knees  
Erotic and enticing  
Enjoyed by lovers all  
She graced a lot of bedrooms  
Before her curtain call

The years they took their toll on  
her

Making her Hard Core  
She found herself in bondage  
By those who wanted more  
They sold her into slavery

## Calgary

### Studying Porn

The City of Calgary, at the request (and pressure) of women's groups, is reviewing the sale and distribution of pornography within the city. The City has established a Calgary Sub-Committee to Review Pornography. This committee invites public submissions dealing with your concerns about:

1. What constitutes pornography?
2. The display and sale of porn.
3. Rental and sale of pornographic videotapes.
4. Performance of live "adult entertainment".

A presentation, in person, can be made to the committee on January 12 by notifying Calgary City Hall at least 5 days in advance. Contact Charles G. Smith. Written submissions may be sent to City Clerk, P.O. Box 2100, Calgary T2P 2M5.

## Porn Booklet

"While tolerance is a positive quality, when human rights are being systematically violated remaining silent becomes an act of grave irresponsibility."

This statement is an apt introduction to the best booklet on combating pornography that I have ever come across. At a time when we badly need to inform and educate ourselves on pornography, this Montreal Council of Women

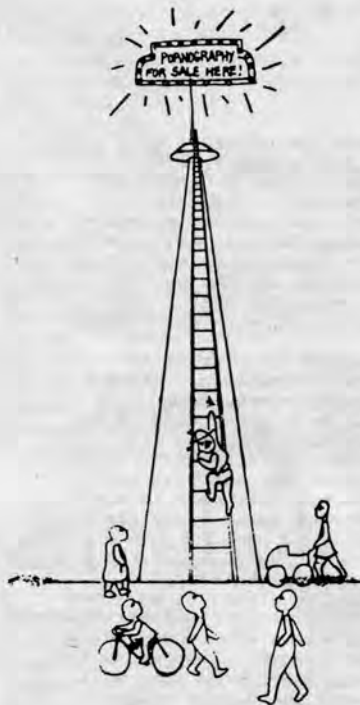
While laughing at her fears  
They used her and abused her  
The business profiteers

They whipped her and they chained  
her

Till passion turned to pain  
And then they took her children  
And made them play the game  
She could not bear to witness it  
And so for death she cried  
They gave her what she wanted  
But filmed her, as she died

So when you march in protest  
Remember who's to blame  
It isn't Poor Ann Ography  
That is just a name  
For a Billion Dollar Business  
Where profit rules supreme  
And each CONSUMER plays a part  
In their sadistic dream

June Wilson  
Penticton, B.C.  
from Tapestry



publication has been available. This informative piece of analysis clearly outlines porn as a human rights issue and extends it into 'What You Can Do'. It includes sample letters that really got results, an informative list of where to write, and an excellent bibliography. For your own copy write to the Montreal Council of Women, 1195 Sherbrooke St. W. Montreal H3C 3P3. Send \$1 to cover postage.

## Kingston Women Against Porn

The Pornography Project Collective in Kingston, Ontario, has been working throughout the summer months to produce a series of educational videotapes about pornography and the workings of the pornography industry in Canada. Material for the tapes is being edited from the videotaped proceedings of the Conference on Pornography held in Kingston last winter at Queen's University. The women involved in planning the conference, and now producing the video series, include members of the Queen's University Women's Centre and the Kingston Action Group Against Pornography.

Production of the educational series is now underway, with the long woman-hours of research backed by grants from the Secretary of State and the Canada Council Explorations Programme. The series will draw upon the audio-visual presentations and discussions led by the variety of guest speakers from the conference. The women of the project hope to extend the dynamic woman-identified energy of the conference through a general one hour videotape which will include sections on the problems of defining pornography within the interlocking systems of patriarchy and capitalism; the use of pornography as propaganda and commodity; the effect of pornography on how men see women, and how we see ourselves. Further tapes will be devoted to discussions of strategies for change: going the legal route, and/or direction action through education, feminist and alternative media, lobbying and non-violent political protest.

The educational series will also include more recent information pertaining to the CRTC's response (?) to Rock Videos and Cableporn, and current discussion about the

Dworkin-MacKinnon Minneapolis Ordinance.

The educational series will be ready for distribution in January 1985, at which time the videotapes and supplementary literature will be made available on an ability-to-pay basis. For further information please contact: Jennifer Stephen or Angela Smiles c/o Pornography Project Collective, 51 Queen's Crescent, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6, phone (613) 547-6970.

# Reviewing Penthouse

We have chosen to reprint Dick Johnston's (Minister Responsible for the Status of Women) letter to Bob Guccione regarding the December issue of Penthouse. ASWAC supports and welcomes the strong stance that Mr. Johnston has taken in this matter. In particular we are pleased with his reference to hate propoganda and his statement that such material will not be distributed in Alberta.

We need to state, however, that ASWAC would not agree to review pornography in order to recommend against distribution. We do not believe that Mr. Johnston was referring to ASWAC but other media, specifically the Edmonton Journal, have made this claim. We don't believe that reviewing pornography is our job nor would we wish to subject ourselves to it.

Frances Adams

MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Office of the Minister

127 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2B6 403/427-2291

November 16, 1984

Mr. Bob Guccione  
Editor and Publisher  
Penthouse Magazine  
Penthouse International Ltd.  
1965 Broadway  
New York, N.Y.  
10023  
U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Guccione:

This is to advise you that the contents of Penthouse Magazine, in particular the December, 1984, issue, have been brought to my attention by a number of women and women's groups in the Province of Alberta. It is their contention that certain of the features presented in the December issue represent behaviour that is degrading and abusive to one or more of the participants, and depict violence including submission, coercion and the general debasement of women. It has been requested that I take action against the future distribution of such material.

I am offering my full support to prevent the December and future issues of Penthouse magazine, where they are perceived to similarly debase women, from circulation in Alberta and Canada. As a first step, I am recommending that Customs Canada carefully screen all future issues and that status of women directorates be provided with an opportunity to review the material and to recommend against distribution where the contents are in contravention of the human rights of women or of the Criminal Code of Canada.

I am further submitting to the Ministers of Justice my recommendation that priority attention be given to the issue of pornography, its manufacture and distribution, at the upcoming meeting of Canadian Ministers of Justice. In particular, I am requesting that specific changes to the Criminal Code and the Customs Act be considered that will ensure that women are protected under the Hate Propaganda Section of the Criminal Code and that the Customs Act make explicit reference to pornographic material.

In closing, please let me assure you that magazines and literature such as the December issue of Penthouse, that so graphically degrade women, will not be distributed in Alberta.

Yours truly,



Dick Johnston  
Minister Responsible for  
the Status of Women

## Positive Images: Women By Women

Last summer there was talk about doing a project which would produce healing, positive images of women to counteract all the negative, narrow and pornographic images we see around us. Well, since then a group of 10 women, most of whom are photographers has formed, with the goal of taking and exhibiting photographs of women of all ages, sizes, shapes, colours - for the rest of womankind to relate to. A display of 50 photos has been seen already - at the Mid-Life Wellness for Women workshops in Edmonton in October and at the ASWAC Assembly in November, in Calgary. Feedback was positive and makes us want to keep going, and get bigger and more visible.

Our two main goals for the new year are: to become more visible and to triple the size of our portfolio. Grant applications to help us do this have been submitted to the Secretary of State and the Canada Council. We look forward eagerly to hearing the results. Meanwhile, if you want the exhibition at your event, please contact Positive Images: Women by Women either through the ASWAC office, or through Linda Nicholls, 10825 125 St., 451-2424 and we'll see what we can do. If you live in Edmonton and want to work with the group, contact us in the same way; if you live in Calgary and want to see something similar happening, give Suzn Morgan or Julie Walker a call (see list of board members in this publication); if you live anywhere else - well, talk your ideas up with other women and see if anyone's interested. I'd love to talk about the Positive Images experience and help you organize!

Mair



# Alberta's Charter Audit

When the Canadian Constitution was adopted by Parliament and signed by the Queen, the provincial and federal governments were given until April, 1985 to "clean up their Acts". To bring their statutes into line with new rights guaranteed each provincial government took on responsibility to audit their legislation and amend them to conform.

The result of this audit in Alberta is Bill 95: The Charter Omnibus Act, to be passed in the spring sitting of the Legislature. Of the 34 items to be amended four are aimed to provide compliance with Section 28, the equal rights for men and women.

One of the amendments changes the Land Titles Act by removing a section that allows a Judge or Court to appoint or remove a married woman's "next friend". Another eliminates the entire Seduction Act.

Of the four, two are inclusive language changes; in the Income Tax Act, "widow" is replaced with "surviving spouse". And in the Reciprocal Enforcement Act, "wife" is replaced with "spouse".

These isolated cases of inclusive language pale in the face of all the "he's", "his's", and "him's" that were not touched, and still apply to all of us. The Nursing Professions Act refers to "she" throughout, reflecting traditional role assignments. It is the exception that proves the rule!

Bill 95 (the list of changes) is available from your MLA or the Queen's Printer, 11510 - Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton.

A "shadow" audit of Alberta Statutes has been done by the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre in Calgary. It promises to be a more careful look through the books, and is available from Anne Jayne, at 283-3643.



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## Letter From a Sister

Dear ASWAC Members -

This past Annual Assembly in Calgary I was given the opportunity to sit the next year as a member of the stoard. I am very excited and also nervous about fulfilling this position so I thought I would begin my work by introducing myself to you.

It's hard to know exactly what to say or even how to say it; funny because usually I'm my favourite topic of discussion! As a new member of the stoard who is unknown to most ASWAC members, I should probably begin by promising to never refer to you as "girls" or even "ladies".

I am a woman positive woman, I suppose you could say "a feminist" although I find the use of that word sometimes leads to difficult-

ies. My feminism has evolved over a number of years and continues to change and grow. I am learning how to put words to my woman positive feelings and in this way I am slowly being able to describe myself in non-patriarchal terms. This process is slow and painful but even the beginning results are cause to celebrate. I feel the need for this type of change very strongly on both an individual and global level, and view ASWAC as being an excellent medium in Alberta.

Hopefully over the next year I will have an opportunity to meet many ASWAC members from across the province and will be able to talk to you. I am very interested in hearing womyn's herstories and in sharing my own. Until we meet ...

Sally Wisden

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## Violence Clearinghouse Threatened

Barbara Hill from Vermilion has informed us that the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence has suffered from cuts in operating funds and personnel and that, in the current political climate, is threatened with possible elimination altogether. Barbara has sent a letter to Jake Epp, the Minister of Health & Welfare Canada that we have printed here. She is certain that Mr. Epp would love to receive more mail on the subject!

"Dear Mr. Epp:

I'm writing you to let you know

how important the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence has been in my work. Rural Alberta many times seems so isolated from the rest of the world. Having access to the information accumulated by the Clearinghouse, having staff there available to give me contact names and numbers doing work I need to know about throughout North America is very important to me and the women I work with.

Many of the women I work with within my community and through our local Crisis Line believe battering is their fault, they're

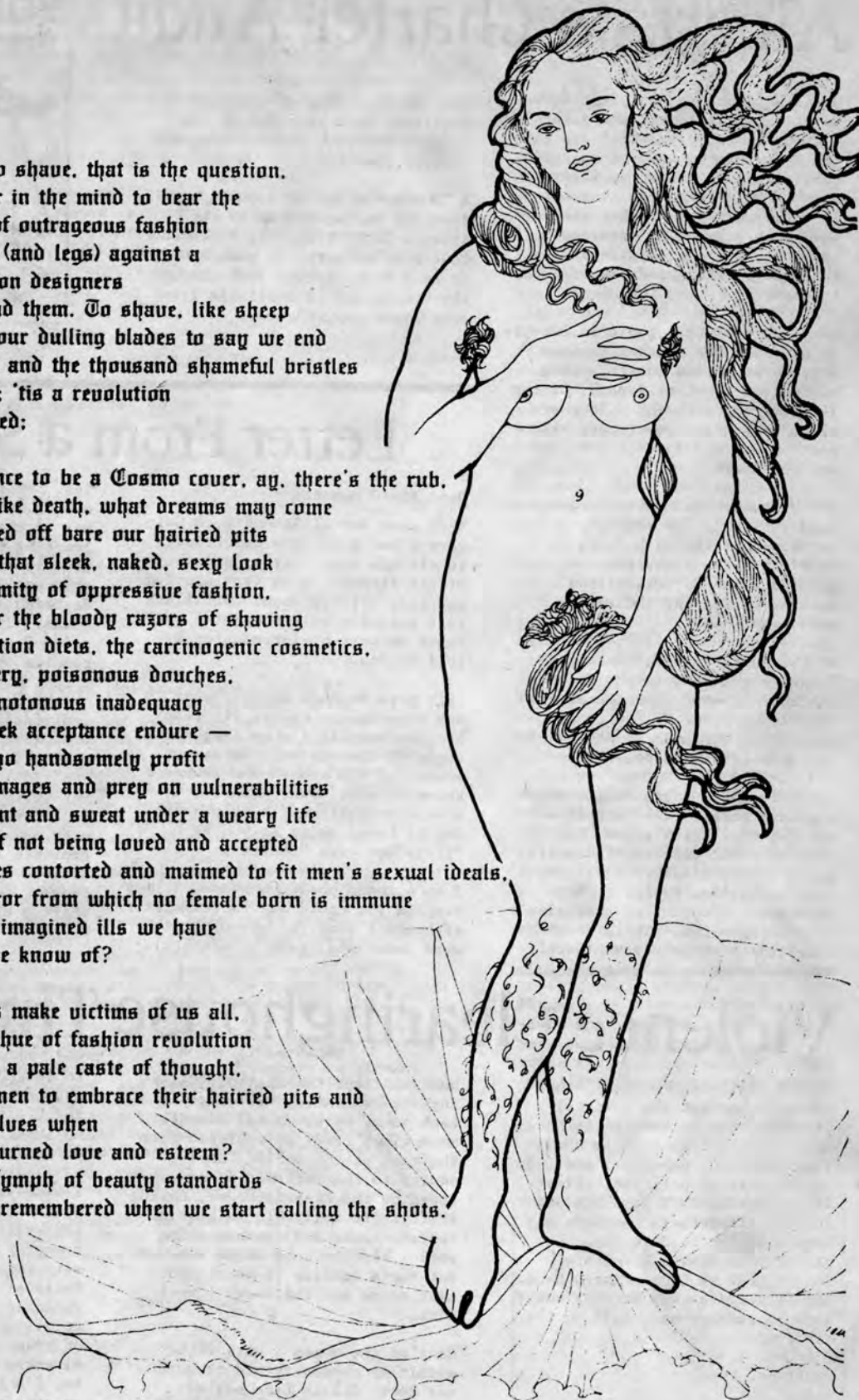
so ashamed and alone. Personal support and information such as the Clearinghouse's newsletter are so important, the knowledge that we're not alone in our work.

I wish you every success in your work as the new minister of Health and Welfare and I hope you'll remember my words about the necessity for programs such as the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence. If at any time you want to discuss further the importance of programs - specifically those directed at women - please contact me, I'd be delighted to expand on my concerns."

To shave or not to shave, that is the question,  
 Whether it be nobler in the mind to bear the  
 Nicks and scrapes of outrageous fashion  
 Or to take up arms (and legs) against a  
 Conspiracy of fashion designers  
 And by ignoring, end them. To shave, like sheep  
 No more, and with our dulling blades to say we end  
 The embarrassment, and the thousand shameful bristles  
 Our flesh is heir to: 'tis a revolution  
 Devoutly to be wished:

To shave, per chance to be a Cosmo cover, ay, there's the rub,  
 For in that shave, like death, what dreams may come  
 When we have shaved off bare our hairied pits  
 Must praise us for that sleek, naked, sexy look  
 That makes the calamity of oppressive fashion,  
 For who would bear the bloody razors of shaving  
 Let alone the starvation diets, the carcinogenic cosmetics,  
 Reconstructive surgery, poisonous douches,  
 The insolence of monotonous inadequacy  
 That women who seek acceptance endure —  
 Nay, not the men who handsomely profit  
 From bare bodkin images and prey on vulnerabilities  
 Of women, who grunt and sweat under a weary life  
 But that the dread of not being loved and accepted  
 And having ourselves contorted and maimed to fit men's sexual ideals,  
 A dreamland of horror from which no female born is immune  
 That makes us bear imagined ills we have  
 Is the only choice we know of?

Thus, fashion does make victims of us all,  
 And thus the native hue of fashion revolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with a pale caste of thought,  
 Yet dare we ask women to embrace their hairied pits and  
 Sexuality for themselves when  
 We can't promise returned love and esteem?  
 The fair Ophelia—Nymph of beauty standards  
 —Be all men's sins remembered when we start calling the shots.



Reprinted from HERIZONS - 1983

# Employment Equity

The Commission on Equality in Employment, headed by Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella recently reported to Parliament. The following is a brief excerpt from the General Summary.

"The Commission concluded, based on its investigation of the employment practices of the 11 crown and government-owned corporations, that the rate of improvement for women, the only group for which these corporations had data, had been minimal over the five-year period studied. Women remain overwhelmingly concentrated in the lowest paid occupations in every corporation. They hold few managerial or supervisory positions.

"Only in those corporations where measures have been implemented to eliminate discriminatory barriers in employment, such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, have opportunities for women genuinely improved. All 11 corporations agreed that without legislation and a reporting requirement substantial change was unlikely.

"The Commission has concluded that voluntary measures are an unsatisfactory response to the pervasiveness of systemic discrimination in Canadian workplaces and has therefore recommended that all federally regulated employers be required by legislation to implement employment equity.

"The statutory requirement to implement employment equity in Canada would oblige employers to develop and maintain practices designed to eliminate discriminatory barriers in the workplace. Imposed quotas are not being recommended.

"Although it is unnecessary to list in employment equity legislation all the areas in which employers and unions would be expected, where necessary, to adjust their practices, the main ones should be itemized. These areas include recruitment and hiring practices; promotion practices; equal pay for work of equal value; pension and benefit plans; reasonable accommodation and workplace accessibility; occupational testing and evaluation; occupational qualifications and requirements; parental leave provisions;

and opportunities for education and training leaves.

"To ensure freedom from discrimination requires government intervention through law. It is not a question of whether we need regulation in this area, but of where and how to apply it.

"What is needed to achieve equality in employment is a massive policy response to systemic discrimination. This requires taking steps to bring each group to a point of fair competition. It means making the workplace respond by eliminating barriers that interfere unreasonably with employment options.

"It is not that individuals in the designated groups are inherently unable to achieve equality on their own, it is that the obstacles in their way are so formidable and self-perpetuating that they cannot be overcome without intervention. It is both intolerable and insensitive if we simply wait and hope that the barriers will disappear with time. Equality in employment will not happen unless we make it happen.



Illustration by Heather Graham

## W.I.N. Stats

JANUARY 1 - JUNE 30, 1984

Women Assisted	249
Children Assisted	471
Families Refused Due to Lack of Space	85
Re-admissions	46
Total No. of Families	
Discharged	256
Return to Spouse	69
Independent Living	135
Other (relative, other shelter, etc.)	42
Unknown	10
Average Length of Stay (days)	9.66
Employment Status of Women	
Employed	53
Unemployed	193
Attending School	3
Reasons for Admission	
Physical Abuse	21
Mental Abuse	38
Physical and Mental Abuse	171
Threats of Violence	11
Other (child abuse, incest)	10
Average No. of Families/mo.	42
Average No. of Children/mo.	118
(from WIN House News, August 1984)	



## Donations

Dear ASWAC,

A year ago at this time I was applying for U.I., and my husband was unemployed. With three children to support, I could not have even considered making a donation to ASWAC or anywhere else.

This year my husband has an excellent full-time job, I have a steady part-time income, and possible full-time employment starting in January. For this reason, and to back up my commitment to ASWAC and autonomy, while I am able, I have made a decision to donate \$10 a month to ASWAC indefinitely. Enclosed are 12 post-dated cheques for \$10 each, dated for family allowance day!

I have a hunch I am not the only one who is in a position to do this. ASWAC needs money like any organization, and it is a concrete way that those of us who can, can show our concrete support for the work that gets done.

Just think - if 10 women sent \$10 a month, that's \$100 monthly or \$1200 a year. If 100 women sent \$10 a month, that would be \$12,000 a year - about one-fifth of our current operating budget! How about you?

Marilyn Guille



## Survey Participants Needed ...

Women between the ages of 40 and 55 years of age are wanted to participate in a survey being conducted by Olga Wiskel, a M.Ed. candidate at the University of Alberta, and supervised by Dr. R. Frender, a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta.

This survey involves some issues and concerns of women in this age

# Subscription Offer

Dear Members

You'll see that we're trying something new this year - subscriptions to the newsletter. We think its important that we try to share some of the discussion that led to this momentous decision.

Well, first, admittedly, it was money we talked about. Our money situation is tight (surprise!) and we talked about both cutting expenses and raising more funds. Some of the talk centred on the newsletter, and how people often ask for a 'subscription' to it - for which the answer has been - we don't offer subscriptions but if you become a member, you'll receive the newsletter automatically.

We believe that there are people who want the newsletter who don't wish to become members, and we also recognised that we, and maybe also you, might like to give a gift subscription but would hesitate to give a gift membership. Membership implies some things which may or may not be real - membership implies a kind of ideological or political alignment, and membership also implies two-way communication and a commitment to 'be involved'.

The discussion then took a new turn. If 'members' are those who choose to be in some way aligned with ASWAC, and to enter into a somewhat active relationship with other ASWAC members, and 'subscribers' are those who do not, then, a 'subscription' should cost more than a membership, in recognition of the fact that members are doing some of the 'work' of the organization and subscribers are not.

So, you get to choose which you are, based on your degree of comfort with the general trends of

period. The results of this study will contribute to our understanding of this period of human development. The survey takes approximately 30 minutes and replies will be anonymous.

If you might be interested in participating in this study, please contact Olga Wiskel at 466-9972 or write to O.A. Wiskel, Graduate Student, Dept. of Educational Psychology, U. of A., Edmonton T6G 2G5.

ASWAC and your degree of commitment to doing some 'work', defined by you, with and for Alberta women. Now the two women who

wrote to us last year, saying 'please don't send me the newsletter anymore - I feel guilty because I'm not doing anything' and others like them will be able to be called subscribers, get the information and support the newsletters brings, and not feel guilty. You can change your status from member to subscriber and vice versa anytime.

Some more differences - members who cannot afford to pay \$10 will, as always, be accepted as members for whatever they can afford; a subscription is a flat \$12 for everyone. A membership lasts a year, technically, but we keep sending the newsletter to last year's members as a reminder to renew; subscribers will get one reminder and then no more issues.

And some more 'sames'. Whoever you are, you are invited to write for the newsletter, take part in any actions described therein, attend the annual assembly, and other functions, call the office or board members for info/support/resources. Those functions of ASWAC are for any woman, not just members.

And another 'same'. Donations of any size are always acceptable, as we continue on the rocky path toward financial autonomy in hard times. So, if you like what we're doing, in general or particular, please help us do it.



## Ditto

I wish to interview couples about their experience of having a very low birthweight (3.3 lbs or less) premature baby. This study is the basis of my master's thesis and I am interviewing couples November through January. For more information, please call me, Brenda Manasse, at home - 429-3567 - evenings, weekends or before 9 a.m. weekdays.

# Feeling FESTIVE?



*give her  
a  
sisterly feeling  
of  
sharing!*

A one year Subscription of the ASWAC Newsletter for \$12<sup>00</sup>



*Send a gift subscription  
and we'll forward  
a feminist spirit card  
to announce your gift!*

To: Name of new Subscriber .....

Address .....

Postal Code .....

From: Name .....

Address .....

Mail Gift Card:

- directly to new subscriber  
 to me to pass on

To: Name of new Subscriber .....

Address .....

Postal Code .....

From: Name .....

Address .....

Mail Gift Card:

- directly to new subscriber  
 to me to pass on



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

This means that if you bought or renewed your membership before September 1, 1984, you are on our records as needing to renew your membership and you will see a green star on your mailing label. An insert is included in this Newsletter to those members who have not renewed their membership since 1983. This will be our last mailing to those members.

We continue to send the Newsletter to members who are only one year in arrears. We do this generous act because we know that many people forget to renew their membership and we don't want to lose contact with old friends. But it would be a great help to us if everyone renewed promptly. The membership fee is not exorbitant and your financial support is greatly needed.



### 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**