

# ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

November 1985

Vol. 6 No. 7



**The Tupperware Ladies**

photo by Sheila MacDonald

**Inside: Stories of the Year and  
Call to the Assembly**

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This is our version of the Final Report for the ASWAC year 1984/85. It will be used and reviewed at the Annual General Meeting at Westridge Lodge. It contains:	
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Past members of the 1984/85 ASWAC Board		
Lorna Gilchrist	Calgary	
Marilyn Guille	Whitecourt	
Mair Smith	Edmonton	
Sally Wisden	Alert Bay, BC (formerly of Edmonton)	

This is YOUR Newsletter!!  
Read it, share it, pass it on ...  
CONTRIBUTE to it - oh, what a good idea! We are always looking for women interested in helping work on the Newsletter - write an article, call in events happening in your community, come and help design and layout the next issue. No experience is necessary but imagination and stamina are. Check with the office for the production dates and deadline for the next issue.



# Eighteen Hours at a Glance

Present: Janet Beebe, Suzn Morgan, Brigitte Baradoy, Marty WhiteSun, Judy Moynihan, Frances Adams, Amanda Le Rougetel, Lisa Walter, and Louise Donovan (visitor)

## Facilities:

With virtually no pre-registrations in yet, we decided to commit ourselves to meals for 75 (tentative) with Westridge in Devon.

## Film Festival:

Ten video films will be available for unscheduled viewing (two are scheduled for Saturday night): These are the videos;

Plenty of Nothing (farm women)  
On Our Own (single, middle-aged women)  
Great Grandmother (herstory)  
Abortion Stories North and South  
Behind the Veil: Nuns  
Speaking Our Peace  
Killing us Softly (images of women in advertising)  
An Easy Pill to Swallow (drug abuse by women)  
Turn Around (a story about recovery from alcoholism)

## Workshop Leaders:

All Workshop facilitators have been confirmed. Most workshops are budgeted for \$50 to be split as facilitators see fit. Speakers on the Friday night panel also get \$50 (with the exception of Sheila Wynn from the Alberta Women's Secretariat). A second letter will go out to workshop facilitators asking for a short biography, a more detailed synopsis of the workshop planned and material needs. It will also include information on honoraria, fees and conference kits.

## Board Members:

Board member travel and Thursday night accommodation (only) will be paid by ASWAC. Board member registration fees have been waived. A pre-Assembly board meeting will be held at Westridge on November 28, with most board members staying through the next day (Friday) to prepare the Centre for the Assembly.

## Transportation:

A van will be rented for the Assembly weekend to carry equipment and provide Friday evening carpool transportation to Devon.

Eighteen Hours At A Glance is our version of traditional 'minutes' of the Board meetings. Board members take turns over the year keeping track of what happens at the meeting, what is discussed, who agrees to do what and so on.

## Subsidies:

Childcare subsidy was set at \$30/child for the weekend and travel at 17¢/km (or cost of fare by other means) to a maximum of \$75. Members are asked to claim expenses only as needed.

## Funding:

We still haven't received our grant for this year (which began in April!) We will each write to our local Member of Parliament to prompt an end to the delay, and we urge members to do the same. Our first application went in on February 15, was dealt with inadequately and we re-negotiated and submitted a second application which was sent to Ottawa July 19. That proposal was for \$146,000. We have received \$25,000, with the remainder of \$56,000 to come.

## Evaluation:

Meetings of the joint Secretary of State/ASWAC evaluation began again in early October, after a period of inactivity. The evaluation committee will be interviewing for the position of evaluator in early November. We decided to proceed with the evaluation despite delays and turnover on the committee. More information will be available at the assembly.

## Staff Reports:

Women's Building: a firm lease and tax exemption are still unsettled.

Building Staff: We agreed to spend \$680 to top up the wages (to \$5.30) on a PEP application we submitted to hire a woman to work on ASWAC's library and administration of the Women's Building we are a part of. The cost sharing on this project is as follows: \$3:80/hr. from PEP, \$1.00 from ASWAC, and 50¢/hr. from the other building collective members.

This reflects ability to pay, relative to share of building use, and our commitment to offer a more livable wage.

Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women: Frances Adams attended the October 6 meeting.

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Educational Kits: Frances is taking this project to completion. If necessary we will spend an additional \$250 to get it done before Assembly.

Childcare: (Edmonton After School Care subsidy cuts). Frances is our representative to the Edmonton Coalition protesting the city's decision to cease subsidizing parents. Frances will send an information kit to Board members, who will gather local information and share the information kit locally. We agreed to give \$100 to the Edmonton coalition. Lisa will write a brief to the provincial government on this issue, and a coalition of groups will meet with the Social Services caucus of the Legislature.

#### Lethbridge:

The Sexual Assault Centre in Lethbridge closed in mid-October. The provincial government fell through on expected funding, and the Centre's board decided to refuse to allow staff and volunteers to continue service on a volunteer basis. We will write the Social Services Minister (and ask our members to do the same). We'll also contact women's shelters in the province to ask for their support. In addition, Frances will travel to Lethbridge in the last week of October to offer support.

#### NAC:

The NAC mid-year meeting will be held in Winnipeg Nov. 21-24. NAC pays travel costs, and we'll pay registration (\$40) for Frances to attend for ASWAC.

#### Alberta Women's Newsmagazine:

Louise (circulation manager) came to apologize for the letter in their premiere issue slamming ASWAC. We discussed our mutual funding delays with Secretary of State. She and other Newsmagazine members may attend the Assembly. We'll meet again after the magazine collective holds a discussion on their direction and goals November 16. This meeting was a good start to a cooperative relationship.

#### Visitors:

Loretta Smith came to discuss discriminatory application of a policy of Alberta Social Services and Community Health, which prevented her as a mother of a single child from receiving long term assistance.

Louise Donovan spoke about women in non-traditional jobs, specifically the offshore oil industry in the North Sea and in Canada. Louise is visiting from Britain and asked for our support. She referred us to a document called: Women in the North Sea Oil Industry by Robert Moore and Peter Wybrow. It's published by the Equal Opportunities Commission of Britain and available from: Overseas House, Quay St., Manchester U.K. M3 3HN.

#### Board Outreach:

We spent \$100 to sponsor "Positive Images" and two film nights in Camrose in September. It was paid out of the Board member outreach fund.

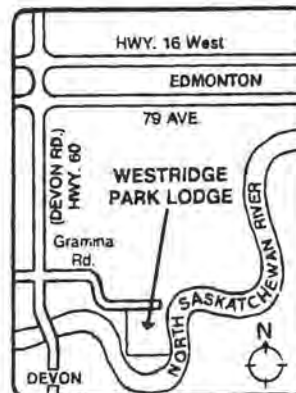
Lonely? Feeling depressed lately? Been rejected recently? Why not come to the ASWAC Assembly '85 for some fun, feminist networking and fabulous workshops!!

Have you registered yet? The Nov. 1 deadline is passed but there is still lots of room left, so send in your cheque and registration form TODAY!

The Nov 29 - Dec 1 weekend will see feminists from around Alberta gather for ASWAC's Annual General Meeting and Assembly. See you there!

Join us in assessing this year's work and planning next year's.

Westridge Lodge is a beautiful location for a feminist oriented weekend of fun and work.



## Donations

Since the last Newsletter we have received \$50.00 in donations. Many, many thanks to the following generous women: Jean McBean, Terry Shaw, Joan Hendrick, Violet Sykes and Shelagh Boutell.

## Volunteers

A number of Edmonton members help out in the office with various on-going tasks that keep ASWAC functioning:

Sheila Edington clips relevant articles from the Edmonton Journal and sends them to the office; Janis Kaleta orders and files the clippings; Sandi Kirby has helped keep the membership files up-to-date; Jane Wiley has come to help with the lay-out and design of the Newsletter . . .

# Assault Centre Closes

The Lethbridge Sexual Assault Centre closed in mid-October following lengthy funding negotiations with Alberta Social Services. The Centre, like most Centres and Shelters in the province, has faced repeated financial shortages. Over the past few months, the Centre put a great deal of energy into negotiations for \$40,000 (per year for 3 years) with Social Services. In October they were informed they would receive \$20,000 for this fiscal year only. By that time, the Centre was in a slight deficit position, could no longer pay staff or monthly expenses. The staff were laid off and, shortly thereafter, the entire operation, including the crisis line, was shut down.

The Lethbridge Centre has built good community support and several thousand dollars is received annually from various service groups. Secure, adequate funding has, however, been a constant problem. The United Way has not accepted proposals for new programs for 4-5 years and FCSS granted only \$7,000 to the S.A.C. this year with the requirement that the monies be used solely for education with city limits. Secretary of State, Women's Program monies have been obtainable only on a project basis.

According to Terri Ann Marco, who has been Director of the Centre, the rationale given by Social Services for not meeting the funding request is unjustified. The Department claims that the Centre is duplicating other services in the city, namely Alberta Mental Health and Lethbridge Family Services. The Lethbridge Regional Hospital Board has publicly supported the Centre's assertion that the service is unique and absolutely essential.

Crisis intervention and counselling for adult victims is apparently not enough according to Social Service officials who have said that the Centre is not providing an adequate program for children who have been sexually abused. The Centre does work in the area of child sexual abuse, but in order to provide professional therapy a great deal more money is required.

Community organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Optimists are rallying support for the Centre. The staff and volunteers are looking at various options and strategies. Terri Ann Marco has suggested that letters of support be sent to Deputy Minister of Social Services, Mr. M.J. Ozarkovitch, 10030 107 Street, Edmonton, T5J 3E4.

ASWAC has contacted the other Centres in Alberta as well as the Shelters to gather public support for the Centre's funding request. We will do as much as possible to help the Centre reopen. Please contact the office for ongoing information.

Frances Adams



## Reservation Expressed

The 3rd annual conference of the PCACWA (Provincial Committee for an Advisory Council on Women's Affairs) on October 5th saw dozens of women writing letters to their MLAs in which they supported the Committee's proposed structure for a Council. The Provincial Committee hopes it won't be meeting next year; it intends to disband when the Council is instated.

While the Committee has received Dick Johnston's assurance that the Council will be established forthwith, the struggle to ensure that the new body has adequate independence, financial resources, representation and integrity is still on-going. It is obviously preferable to have a strong Council from the outset than have to lobby for changes down the road.

I attended the conference on behalf of ASWAC and while I found it very worthwhile, there were a couple of concerns that arose for me. Firstly, the Committee stressed several times that the Advisory Council would not be a lobby group. How can a body that is mandated "to bring before the Government and public matters of concern to Alberta women" not be a lobby group? From my conversations I gathered that the Council wouldn't be a

lobby group like, say, ASWAC or other women's action groups. Ron Gitter, the only leadership contender in attendance, did nothing to assuage my discomfort when he stated that he didn't view the Council as a group of shrill activists, running crying to the media to get attention. So, my first concern was with the image of the Council and how that self-image might hinder its effectiveness in some ways.

Secondly, I was really put off by the introduction that was given for Mr. Gitter. He was described in just incredibly glowing terms regardless of the fact that the organizers knew his unequivocal opposition to affirmative action and equal pay for work of equal value beforehand. Fairly or unfairly, I equated that introduction with the style of the future Council and I wasn't impressed.

I had some difficulty deciding whether to include my criticisms in this article. Past reservations that ASWAC has expressed to the Committee have been taken as opposition to the Council. That is not ASWAC's intent and I, certainly, have only support and hope for a strong Advisory Council. The wait has been years too long already.

Frances Adams  
A Sometimes Shriill Activist

# City cuts after-school care

ASWAC recently joined an ad hoc coalition of groups in Edmonton working to prevent the termination of hundreds of city subsidized out-of-school care spaces. December 31 will see over 500 school age children without care before and after school and at lunch hour unless their parents are able to make alternative arrangements. For many parents, the alternative arrangement will mean leaving their jobs and applying for welfare. A single mother (which most of them are) in a typical low-paying job cannot afford the \$250 per month that the service costs per child.

The Alberta Government, which refuses to increase FCSS (Family and Community Social Services) funding from which out-of-school care is paid will have more people on provincial social assistance. It makes little sense although rumour has it that Neil Webber thinks many mothers will "find a solution somehow" rather than be forced on welfare. His sympathy is staggering.

While Edmonton city council's decision to put a ceiling on out-of-school care expenditures is hardly laudable, a look at the funding system throws a much harsher light on provincial social services. Every municipality has programs funded through FCSS. Edmonton receives \$10 per capita from the province which is to cover 80% of FCSS programs with the other 20% coming from the city's tax base. What has happened, however, is that provincial monies have been frozen for several years and Edmonton's share of the out-of-school care program, for example (other agencies such as Meals on Wheels and the Sexual Assault Centre receive funding from the same source), has risen from 20 to 45%.

While social services seems to support universal day care (but not necessarily quality), the same privilege for school-aged children is denied. The response of many Conservative MLA's to inquiries on this issue is that "these women should have thought about child care before they had babies!

What is at issue here is not only the children who will be dropped from the program in two

months but also all the others who need or will need (as they start school) care when school is not in session and their parents are working. Another major issue is the extremely low salaries for the (mostly) women who care for the children. If daycare is to be provided at all, it is apparently on the backs of undervalued women.

Many of you will have received a special mailing on this issue - a fact sheet and letter from ASWAC - asking for your support. If you haven't already done so, consider sending in those letters tomorrow.

Child care is an issue that ASWAC has worked on before and that we are now revisiting. One of the recommendations at this month's Assembly will be

that child care be considered a priority within a province-wide action on women's economic status. I hope to extend my understanding of the problems beyond the current situation in Edmonton to the provincial sphere of licensing standards and quality child care. I would appreciate any information you can get to me about your particular concerns and the state of child care in your community.

Frances Adams  
ASWAC Project Coordinator



## Stats you should know

53.5 % of Canadian Women over 15 are now participating in the labour force. In Alberta, the participation rate is 61.2%, the highest in the country.

the percentage of women in the Alberta labour force has increased from 25.0% in 1960 to 41.9% in 1984.

the occupations with the highest proportions of Alberta women are clerical (83.6%), the next highest is medicine and health (78.4%)

33.4% of all women in the Alberta labour force are employed in the clerical area, the highest rate in the country. 8.6% are in the administration or management area.

in 1982 in Alberta, families with the husband only as wage earner was 13.2% of all families, while families with husband and wife as wage earners were 52.1%. The average annual income for these family groups were \$27,909 and \$38,760 respectively

in 1982, a female's average income was 52.2% of male's. This is an increase from 42.8% in 1975 in Alberta.

in 1982 in Alberta, the average annual income for women was \$12,082--an increase from \$4,861 in 1975. This is below the average income for men of \$23,150 in 1982--up from \$11,362 in 1975.

in 1982, Alberta men's annual earnings were greater than Alberta women's earnings at all educational levels. The biggest discrepancy was in the group with university degrees: men averaged \$36,825 while women averaged \$25,395.

in 1984 in Alberta, women represented 71.8% of all part-time workers

in 1984, approximately 42,000 Alberta women employed part-time or full-time had their youngest child under 3 years of age. 30,000 have their youngest children between 3-5 years of age and 96,000 have their youngest child between 6-15 years of age.

(Statistics from Characteristics of Women in the Labor Force, May 1984)

# 'Dependent wives' speak out

If the military wives had realized the dire threat to national security, they would never have suggested a dental plan. The dental plan, daycare program and a request for a traffic light at a dangerous intersection are typical concerns of the Organizational Society of Spouses of Military Members (OSSOMM). The organization's right to meet and discuss these issues is considered subversive by military brass and the Dept. of National Defense.

Mary Anne Jablonski, Vice-President of OSSOMM, made a dynamite presentation to ASWAC members at the recent Tupperware Party. Excerpts from the presentation, which was also made to the federal 'Commission on Equality Rights' follows:

"We are OSSOMM...

1. We have been denied the right to associate in our own communities;
2. We have been denied the right to freedom of speech;
3. We have been denied the right to collectively lobby our elected representatives;
4. Our civil liberties are being violated because we are spouses of Canadian military members.

"In the beginning we wanted a dental plan, so a group of wives met to discuss this and other community issues. A newsletter was circulated in September 1984 announcing the organization of OSSOMM and calling a general meeting. On September 10th, 1984 and in October 1984, members of OSSOMM met with Penhold Officials. We were advised that our activity [meetings] was deemed political and thus...they were unable to permit such activity. We were told that Defense Trespass Regulations did not allow the circulation of an uncensored newsletter. We were threatened with arrest if we persisted. This is a denial of our freedom of speech.

"The [Penhold] Base Commander informed us in October 1984 that he could ask anyone to leave with 30 days notice. The fear aroused by this statement caused several of our members to leave active participation in OSSOMM for fear of losing their home or affecting their husbands' careers. Indeed, a representative

of the Adjutant General's office told our president's husband that if she persisted in these activities the possibility existed of banning her from the base and her home while allowing her family to stay. This is an example of how the military can use its administrative power to deny civil liberties within the military community.

"...Mr. Nielsen [Minister of National Defense], ... points out that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms does not of itself, guarantee any right to assembly or association in a particular place, such as DND establishments. Application of that statement appears to make a mockery of the Charter. These items together - denial of funds and denial of freedoms - could signal the end of our group and present a grave injustice to 40,000 citizens.

"We would like to inform the committee that a DND accredited political group of regular and ex-officers already exists. This political group...recently conducted a write-in campaign in support of our position in NATO and testing of the cruise missiles. They participate in public forums and intend to become involved in the debate over Star Wars. That the DND would allow this group to function and not OSSOMM is an inequality.

"Military traditions and attitudes have roots stretching far back in time... There is an old saying that goes like this:

"If the military had wanted you to have a wife, they'd have issued you one". However, they have made one available - this little sewing kit is called a "housewife". WE have been told several times that we are dependant wives [DW's] and that we "belong" to the military. Outdated military attitudes contribute to the lower status of women in the military community. The following are a few examples of this mentality.

- A spouse can pour tea for a charity bazaar but may not usually serve as mayor of the community.

-A spouse can sell hot dogs to raise funds for school activities but may not be appointed as trustee of the local school board.

-A spouse can be president of a church ladies' group under NPF regulations but may not be appointed to the committee that administers these funds.

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IT'S ANOTHER TRADITIONAL WOMAN'S JOB... I ANSWER THE PHONE, TAKE NOTES, GET COFFEE, AND SOMETIMES THEY LET ME SIT IN ON MEETINGS...

ARE YOU A SECRETARY?

NO!! VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!!

By Mike Peters for the Dayton Daily News

-Spouses cannot meet with their MP on DND property but the base commander may entertain the same MP at official base functions.

"As you can see the DND controls all aspects of family life as well as the work environment. Spouses are thus susceptible to intimidation by the implied or actual threat of damaging her husband's career, losing her home, or causing an unwanted transfer.

"OSSOMM represents a group of responsible spouses who care about their families and life style. But, we are also Canadian citizens who refuse to be intimidated any longer. We refuse to give up our rights and freedoms without a fight unless the possession of these guarantees were actually a threat to the security of Canada. There is a difference, even in the military, between peace or times of war or crisis. We can distinguish between regulations necessary in extreme times as opposed to those in ordinary times.



Vice-President Maryann Jablonski

photo by Sheila MacDonald



ASWAC recently hosted a 'tupperware party' to highlight the oppression of the military wives and raise money for OSSOMM's court challenge. The event was attended by seven OSSOMM members, about twenty-five members of ASWAC and several media people.

The tupperware party was organized in response to Associate Minister of Defense, Harvie Andre's comment in the House of Commons that it was okay with him if the military wives held tupperware parties. Holding meetings and distributing News-

letters is a "threat to national security and political neutrality" but tupperware parties are okay is what the government, in effect, has said. I guess he didn't know that "resealable plastic kitchenware is useful in a wide range of feminist terrorist activities"!

Memberships in the "Tupperware Party of Canada, Edmonton Chapter" were sold and are still available. Please help OSSOMM's court challenge by joining the newest political party in Canada!

Frances Adams

## Tupperware Party Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Don't Call me, I'll Call You Member! \$1-10

Never Enough Tupperware Member! \$20 or more  
(circle one + attach payment)

## Tupperware Party

1985-86

### Membership

I hereby pledge my lady-like support to the  
TUPPERWARE PARTY OF CANADA,  
Edmonton chapter.



Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Stories of the Year

The sight of women talking  
together has always made men  
uneasy; nowadays it means  
rank subversion

—Germaine Greer, 1971.

...ce-  
pay-  
to his  
... a pretty  
... work  
... ear. A  
... ending last  
... Calgary got  
... ad hoc committee  
... news release on the  
... ad hoc committee  
... into the Maintenance  
... Action Committee  
... with Neil Crawford,  
... ey General; Jack Basey,  
... ctor of Family and Youth  
... sion of the A.G. Department;  
... nd the Health and Social Service  
Caucus of the provincial  
government.

# Projects, projects, projects

## Student fills research gap

During this past Board year we have had the opportunity to act as Practicum Placement agency for two University of Calgary Social Work graduate students. November/December 1984 saw the conclusion of Leslie Holloway's participation on the Maintenance Enforcement issue.

Our second practicum student, Kim Service, worked with us from January through May 1985, on the research for a brief to the Canadian Sentencing Commission on sexual assault. Kim spent many hours talking with women from around

Alberta and many hours in the intimidating Law Library in order to create a brief that would be able to speak to both the Judges on the Commission and the women in the community who would also make use of this work.

Acting as Practicum Supervisor for both these women has been one of the highlights of this past Board year for me. These projects were both well worth the hundreds of woman hours that went into them. With ASWAC unable to hire a researcher, working with practicum students is one way for

us to fill the research-information gap.

I recommend working with students as a way to really get involved with shaping the services that all too many of us end up using. There are now two more Social Work practitioners in Alberta who can look at the clients whom they serve with a greater understanding of the social and cultural pressures that have an impact on their lives.

Suzn Morgan

## Board Member Reaches Out

During the past year, I have endeavoured to make contact with ASWAC members in the central region of Alberta, between Edmonton and Olds. There are 35 members living in 18 communities in this area.

The three members in Camrose (Joan White Calf, Barb Benyon and myself) have begun to work together recently. Our first project was to bring the "Positive Images" photo exhibit to Camrose in September, along with the films "Abortion: Stories from North and South" and "Plenty of Nothing". We have also organized the first of two regional meetings, set for November 2 in Wetaskiwin, and hope to see some valuable networking result.

Distance between communities makes it hard to be there physically for one another, but keeping in touch will help to lessen feelings of isolation, and help us be more effective in the actions we do undertake. Speaking for myself, I find it difficult to "organize" on my own, and am glad of the support and friendship of other feminists. I am in favour of a regional system within AWWAC, and look forward to a year of more concerted feminist activity.

Serving on the ASWAC board has been a valuable experience, hard work in many ways but worth it. I hope my contributions to the board were equally valuable. feminists. I am in favour of a regional system within AWWAC, and

-Janet Beebe  
Camrose

## More Student Research

ASWAC was approached by a graduate student at the University of Alberta to participate in his Ph. D. research on structural contexts in which social/political interaction takes place. Rene Gadacz, the Ph. D. student, is looking at how the structure and mandate of ASWAC shape our participation in rights-claiming and rights-promoting activities.

So far, ASWAC's participation in his research has been limited to two Board members (Edmonton based) being interviewed by him for a number of hours on topics as diverse as 'what is feminism', 'how did you get involved in ASWAC and why', 'what do you perceive as being a right as opposed to a privilege', 'are rights given by the government or are they innate to human beings'.

## Submissions in brief

Over the last year, we have made a number of submissions in the form of briefs to various commissions and committees.

Edmonton Child Care Review Committee:

Edmonton member, Susan Craigie, wrote a brief and presented it on behalf of ASWAC; she addressed the need for accessible, quality child care making the point that adequate funding is essential and must come from government - what level of government this funding comes from is not the issue.

Health and Social Services Caucus, Provincial Gov't:

The Maintenance Enforcement Action Committee submitted a position paper on this issue; the paper outlines various points the committee felt the new legislation should address (should be an 'opt-out' system, not an 'opt-in' system, the need for improved garnisheeing methods etc.).

The Canadian Sentencing Commission:

Kim Service, practicum student, submitted a brief entitled "Issues in Sentencing: Gratuitous Comment from the Bench" in which she details sentences handed down by Judges to people who have committed violent crimes against women; the brief examines the kind of language used by the Judges when passing sentence and analyses the attitudes their language represents.

Committee on Equality Rights, Federal Department of Justice:

Edmonton Board member, Lisa Walter, wrote a brief which Amanda Le Rougetel presented to the committee; the topics covered in the brief include native women, affirmative action, sexual orientation; the committee was established to hear submissions from Canadians on what topics should be included in the Charter of Rights, Section 15 as prohibited grounds for discrimination.

# Projects, projects, projects

## Lobbying Effort a Success?

The issue of Maintenance Enforcement (court-ordered support payments by [usually] a man to his ex-spouse) has maintained a pretty high profile in ASWAC's work throughout the last year. A number of women attending last year's Assembly in Calgary got together in an ad hoc committee and issued a news release on the topic; this ad hoc committee developed into the Maintenance Enforcement Action Committee which met with Neil Crawford, Attorney General; Jack Basey, Director of Family and Youth Division of the A.G. Department; and the Health and Social Service Caucus of the provincial government.

The committee organized a letter writing campaign aimed at Neil Crawford, gave numerous interviews to the press and general media, held a news conference when the new legislation regarding Maintenance Enforcement was introduced and held information seminars in Edmonton for women interested in learning about the system of Maintenance Enforcement.

Apart from the day-to-day and more short-term work that ASWAC has undertaken over the last year, the organization has also been involved with a number of larger, more long-term projects. What follows is a brief re-cap of these projects (detailed accounts have been written up in the Newsletter on an on-going basis).

We were generally pleased with the new legislation although we were (and remain) disappointed that it will not come fully into effect until January 1, 1987. The government's reason for this delay is that it will take time for them to set up the new, computer-based system of enforcement.

Things seem to be progressing slowly but surely over in the Attorney General's department and they are now advertising a newly established information hot-line number for people with questions and concerns to call:

1 - 800 - 642 - 3803

So, we now have new, better legislation governing enforcement of maintenance orders but . . .

. . . the sad truth of the matter

is that this legislation will only ever be as effective as those judges who pass down court orders for maintenance. If the judges continue to award unrealistically small support payments to the

(usually female) ex-spouse, then, no matter how effective the enforcement of that order is, the parent and children will continue to bear the burden of an unjust and ineffective system.

Both of these projects on which we have focussed our energies this year have been mainly Edmonton-based in terms of initiating action and following through with on-going work.

The provincial aspect of our work is at once essential and difficult to maintain. We are forced to rely on volunteer labour for much of what we do -- can you imagine how wonderful it would be if we had 4 staff people in the Edmonton office with a handful more scatt-

ered around the province in branch-offices!! It seems that vision is to remain little more than a pipe-dream given current funding realities.

This is obviously where the Board members and the proposed Regional Representatives come in - if we increase our network of women around the province who are prepared to commit their energies to ASWAC for the coming year, then we can be more effective and productive in the work we undertake.

## Making Pensions an Issue

A number of individuals got together in Edmonton in April to address the discriminatory nature of the Alberta Widow's Pension Act. This is a piece of legislation which offers financial assistance to people between the ages of 55 - 64 . . . the catch is that to qualify you must be either a widow or a widower.

Out of this initial meeting a core group of 4 individuals developed who have continued work on this issue. We undertook a massive mail-out of information packages to women's groups, senior's groups and media around the province. We were hoping to be able to tap into some of the energy that organized the defeat of the federal government's proposal to de-index senior citizens' pensions. We thought our timing was good, however it turned out not to be so good!

The media seemed not to be at all interested, women's groups did not pick up the ball and run with it as hoped; the best response was received from the seniors' organizations. A number of them reprinted the informational articles included in the package and, while response over the summer months was slow,

letters continue to come in to the office from seniors all around the province.

We are continuing to focus our energies on disseminating information at the grass roots level; a meeting with Dick Johnston, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, is in the works for mid-November; and we are continuing to seek advice from legal experts on the viability of launching a Charter based case of discrimination on the basis of marital status. Attempts were made to draw the attention of the PC leadership candidates to this issue - response from them was minimal.

We are intending to continue our work with the intention of making the Alberta Widow's Pension Act and its discriminatory nature an election issue in the up-coming provincial election.



# A few days in the office

Arrive in the office, see there are 12 messages on the machine and go and make coffee. Take the messages off the machine - 7 busy signals, 5 people to call back: the Edmonton Journal wants a comment on equal pay for work of equal value; a woman wants info on the Assembly; Pat phoned with child care info for Frances; the photocopy guy wants to discuss leasing terms and a Grant McEwan student wants help with a paper he's writing on the Women's Movement.

Return the calls in between answering the telephone, opening and sorting the mail and updating the Newsletter mailing labels - remember I should call the printer and check on when the Newsletter will be ready.

By now it's 11:30 and half the day is already over. I put in an order with Johnson Stationery supplies and write a couple of letters to new members. I put together the info a woman requested yesterday on violence against women - she'll be in at 2pm to pick it up. The land lord calls to say there is a utility bill to pay which reminds me I have to get the deposit ready for the Credit Union tomorrow.

A woman comes in off the street wanting some advice about collecting her maintenance payments - Frances talks to her. Joan comes in for the violence against women info and I spend some time talking with her.

Sandi calls to say hello; I send off some letters requesting publications from various federal agencies, zip off to the Post Office and mail off a pile of stuff. Stop by the old Collective Building to say hello to everyone there and pick up our mail and then head home.

## Day 2

Newsletter was delivered to my house last night, lug it into the office and do the mailing with Jane, Meaghan and Frances. Take the Newsletters to the old Collective Building, run them through the postage metre and drop them at the Post Office.

Arrive back at the office, sort the mail, answer some letters, write up my speech on "Social Action: Does It Have a Future?" for presentation at the Social Planning Council tomorrow, talk to a woman from an agency interested in using

ASWAC as a Placement Host for their contract with the federal government's Job Re-Entry program, spend some time figuring out lease terms with the photocopy guy, give the Edmonton Journal a comment on reproductive rights, put together an agenda for the Collective meeting tonight and go home for supper.

This gives a rough idea of life in the office - some days the phone never stops ringing, other days it is really quiet making it easier to catch up on paperwork. The diversity of requests for information and action is truly amazing: some people call with specific needs, others want general information on anything from stats on women in the work force to the new employment equity bill to the name of the women's shelter in Grande Prairie. Often we can help them, sometimes we refer them to other organizations or agencies that can better serve their needs.

We are often called upon to lend our support to an event - by endorsing the action, by contributing financially, by sending a rep. to a meeting or by putting something in the Newsletter.

Some of the events and organizations we have supported over the last year are:  
GALA newsconference on recommendations by the Alta. Human Rights Commission to include sexual orientation in the Individual Rights Protection Act as prohibited grounds for discrimination;

International Women's Day organizing committees in Edmonton and Calgary;  
May Day picnic in Edmonton;  
Every Woman's Place, Edm.  
Lethbridge Sexual Assault Ctre.  
the AMAC (Adults Molested as Children) research project by two Edmonton members;  
the Provincial Committee for an Advisory Council on Women's Affairs;  
Canadian Abortion Rights Action League;  
Abortion By Choice, Edm.;  
Take Back the Night walks in Edmonton and Calgary;  
the National Action Committee on the Status of Women;  
the Alberta Native Women's Assoc.  
Alternative Voices Convention co-alition;  
the Edmonton Learner Centre  
We have done lots of good work this past year; we have covered a myriad of issues in one way or another; we have been in contact with a diverse range of groups and organizations. However, too much of what we have undertaken has been reactive - something happens and we react with some appropriate action or response. I am hoping that the coming year will see ASWAC take more initiative on things and start the ball rolling rather than hopping on a ball already in motion. ASWAC is an agent of social change and we, the staff, the Board and the members, must ensure that action and education, organizing and informing are given equal voice in our daily work.

## Letting them know what we think

TO: Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee urges you and your government to guarantee full indexation of family allowances. Innumerable women count on their family allowances to make ends meet. It is unacceptable that women and children be asked to shoulder the burden of decreasing the country's deficit.

TO: Lynn Kaye, Southern Ontario representative to the N.A.C. executive

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee and the women of Alberta strongly support the National Action Committee and the co-alition in their efforts to ensure full indexation of family allowances. In sisterhood,  
A.S.W.A.C.

TO: Harvie Andre, Associate Defense Minister

At the moment, the Tupperware Party is favoured over the Progressive Conservative Party among Alberta women. Your apology and quick action to guarantee equality to military spouses is demanded.

--- this telegram was sent in response to Harvie Andre's by-now infamous comment about tupperware parties and military wives' right to organize

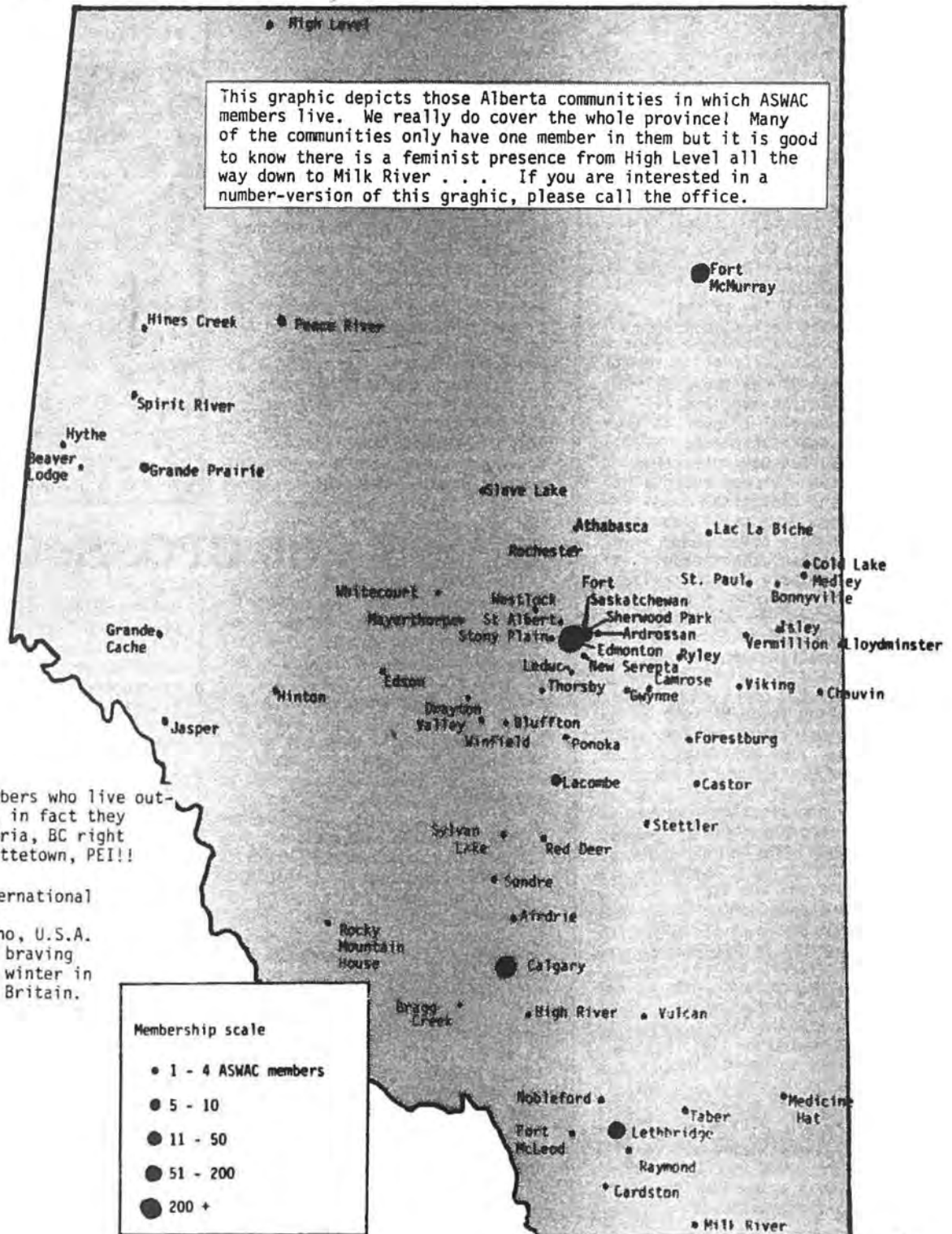
# ASWAC really looks like this...

We have a total of 529 individual members and 20 group members.

Edmonton and Calgary are the two main centres in the province in which our members live. There are 277 members in Edmonton and 82 members in Calgary.

The current membership year, 1984/85, runs out with our Assembly and all memberships will be up for renewal at that time. Memberships run from Assembly to Assembly, with a grace period starting in September (which means that if you bought or renewed your

membership on or after Sep. 1st of this year, it is current until next year's Assembly). If you're now thoroughly confused, check out the status of your membership with the registration desk at the Assembly.



We also have members who live outside of Alberta, in fact they reach from Victoria, BC right across to Charlottetown, PEI!!

We even have international members! One lives in Idaho, U.S.A. and the other is braving the cold English winter in Cambridge, Great Britain.

# Friday night with the Stoard

Half-way through the year the stoard decided to set aside the occasional Friday evening before the stoard meeting to discuss issues that had repeatedly been brought up by one means or another and needed more discussion time than could be allowed for at any given stoard meeting. These issues were of a complex nature that constantly demanded further exploration and analysis. One evening, for example, we talked about the questions raised in the book, Not an Easy Choice, A Feminist Re-Examines Abortion, by Kathleen McDonnell. Another evening the discussion centered around sexuality. We also spent evenings examining the extent of board responsibility and discussing our membership. All were stimulating and valuable discussions but shared here are two of the more relevant topics, abortion and sexuality.

Many aspects of the abortion issue were discussed, right from the personal to political. Personal sentiments being expressed were a feeling of being torn between being a feminist and seeing the need for abortion, and still not liking the idea of it. Some women feel unsafe when they express to others the contradictions inherent in the issue for them. Are they still considered a feminist? Does being a feminist mean you are pro-abortion?

This question leads us into the political aspect of our discussion, i.e. What does pro-choice mean? The right wing general public thinks it means "pro-abortion". We think it means reproductive freedom. How can we educate them to understand our definition? The discussion continued onto the "Propaganda War". Is the pro-choice movement beginning to use similar tactics as the pro-life movement. Are we being misrepresentative, inflammatory and guilt-trippers? How do we fight the pro-life movement? The questions go on and on, with no concrete answers available, only many suggestions, opinions and strategies.

The same held true with the sexuality discussion. It

started with one board member feeling she would sometimes be silent about her sexuality because she was heterosexual and in the women's movement where men are 'the enemy'. The she thought that everyone is probably silent about their sexuality because it isn't something society allows us to discuss. We talked about the limitations of being labelled as homo, hetero or bi-sexual. Many women expressed the desire to be considered multi-sexual, i.e., being whatever way you want to be, if at all, at any given time without ever having to declare yourself as being one way or another! This leaves room for women to love other women, politically and/or physically, and for women to love men, and no one feeling threatened or uncomfortable. It was pointed out that a common ground between lesbians and non-lesbians is their confinement of sexual expression. This confinement is due at least in part to the labels society imposes upon us. We felt it was important

politically support each others sexually orientation, as well as personally support it being comfortable and non-judgemental.

These are just two of many sensitive and complex topics that need on-going exploration and analysis. To continue such discussions on the Friday evening before that stoard meeting would be a beneficial practice indeed.



## Lines get crossed

Although ASWAC is a provincial organization her connections with the women south of Calgary have been limited. This has always bothered her, been a minor source of anxiety even, but a way of changing it could not be seen--until very early in the New Year when it looked like the situation would indeed change after all.

A very energetic woman from Lethbridge contacted the ASWAC office and said she was interested in opening a branch in Lethbridge. Her first project was to start an "action line" that women could call to get and give information, support and the like. We met with her at the next board meeting, talked at great length, and agreed to grant her a small amount of money to get the Action Line started (which by that time, was actually already well under way). We were all hopeful that ASWAC would finally have a 'direct line' to the south.

Unfortunately, for all the enthusiasm that pervaded, things did not work out as anticipated. ASWAC attempts to represent all women of Alberta, regardless of their race, color or class. It appeared to us that our friend in Lethbridge did not share, or perhaps, did not understand this desire. She had planned further projects that we felt would have alienated many women, particularly of the lower/working class, and we could not allow those projects to happen under the name of ASWAC lacked support for the Lethbridge group in every way, only that their goals were not similar enough to ASWAC's to call her a branch office.

Although contact with the Southern regions of Alberta have become tenuous once again we hope that in the future an "ASWAC-Southern Branch" will formulate so we may become, more completely, a provincial organization.

# Evaluating ASWAC

by Lisa Walter

This task was left to us by last year's board. By way of a short history, the Evaluation project was initiated by Secretary of State personnel in the spring of 1984. For the rest of 1985 and up to February 1985, discussions of how, what and why the evaluation was to be took place. The result was a set of terms agreeable to both parties. It established the parameters of the study, a steering committee of six (2 Sec State, 2 ASWAC and 2 community representatives) and a financial allocation of 20,000 of their dollars.

Selection of the steering committee followed by April, with Shirley Passmore (Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton) and Sylvia McKinley (Women's Institutes of Alberta) accepted as community members. At this time, the \$20,000 was put into an account for ASWAC to administer for the evaluation.

By May, 1985 we had convened the steering committee and begun the work of selecting an evaluator. At this time, Secretary of State responded to our grant request by cutting our funding in half. One of the reasons given (by then Acting Regional Manager, Patricia Hawkins from Calgary) was that the recommended funding level was tied to the evaluation. This directly violated a term of the Evaluation negotiations secured from Marc Arnal in February. ASWAC decided to withdraw from the evaluation until Sec State demonstrated "good faith bargaining" by a revised recommendation.

By September 1985, we were told that the revised recommendation for ASWAC funding was "on the Minister's desk for signing" with no further delays anticipated. On the strength of this promise we resumed meeting

By this time, Shirley Passmore and Mair Smith were no longer able to participate. They were replaced and selection of the evaluator resumed. The parameters were reaffirmed: we will look at the last three board years, the activities of our board and staff and their (Sec State) staff, and the effectiveness of both in meeting the needs of the community.

As of October 20th, 1985 we expect to have an evaluator in place by the Assembly, and a complete report by April '86. In the course of the year that I have worked on this for ASWAC I have found it difficult and frustrating. I expect field staff of Secretary of State would say the same thing. It is my belief that the original motivations of Secretary of State was to discontinue fund-

ing ASWAC due to frustrations and misrepresentation of ASWAC's structural metamorphosis. That sentiment is no longer in play and we are hoping instead to examine the three year transformation of ASWAC in a way that also examines the current situation. We intend, also, to use this opportunity to examine the delays and restraints posed by Sec State's funding methods.

## Report on Conference

by Lisa Walter

I was sent as one of two ASWAC subsidized representatives to the NAC conference, May 10-13, in Ottawa. The conference title and theme was "the Canadian Women's Economic Summit" following on the European and Canada/U.S. Summits of springtime. The conference was well attended, very informative and generally, and important link to the national movement.

The lobby of the three national parties that is always a part of the conference went well with questions on native women's rights, employment equity/affirmative action, the Equality Task Force, universality guarantees on cost-shared federal-provincial social programs, reproductive and preference rights, star wars and occupational health issues. (A complete transcript of the lobby was published in the last NAC Memo, July issue.)

Conference workshops on a host of work, federal budget, social programs (childcare, education and welfare), and occupational work hazards were offered with good quality presenters. The examination of the triple day facing women was raised in a number of workshops: it seems to be a new analytical framework used by movement thinkers. The high level of briefing on the federal budget was very useful and motivated considerable response to the budget by groups across the country in late May.

Resolutions passed at plenary sessions of the conference endorsed compensation for women whose reproductive health is threatened in the workplace, personally launched suits against sexual harassment and approved

an enhanced national childcare policy. The plenary condemned star wars, cutbacks in cost-shared social programs and Air Canada's proposals to the ticket agents (almost all women) who were on strike.

NAC had a very good year, with a surge of memberships (now 370 groups nationally, and 27 in Alberta), the leaders' debate in September '84 and all their work around the federal budget. However, NAC's financial situation was considerably weakened by expenses incurred with the debate, leaving them in a deficit position at the close of their fiscal year. Lobbying is the renewed focus of the organization.

Elections held during the conference returned Executive members Chaviva Hosek, Doris Anderson, Louise Dulude and Jon Leah Hopkins, and added Marjorie Cohen, Ann Wood and Ellie Silverman. Alberta's regional rep, Trudy Richardson, was returned to office. Ellie Silverman, elected to Secretary on the Executive, is from Calgary so the province's representation increased 100% but is still only 2 of 22.

Generally, the conference was well organized and presented a strong national sense of the movement. Past criticisms of the organization as predominately middle class are fading as caucused for lesbians, shelters/transition houses and other groups of women with particular interests emerge. The Alberta caucus was small - nine women representing groups from Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray, but prospects for future involvement are promising.

# Tales of frustration and woe

This year's negotiations with Secretary of State Women's Program have been difficult and frustrating. The process began in January and (at least at the time of writing this) is not over yet. What follows in this report is an account of: the two submissions made by the Board, Sec. State's response, and dollar figures for program activity, at each stage. In past years ASWAC has received \$50,000 approximately to operate on an April 1-March 30 fiscal year. The activity tied to the grant was understood to be normal operations including political, educational and networking/organizing work. We reported our activities of expenditures at the end of six months and again at the end of the year.

During the last Board year (1983-84) ASWAC researched the methodology used by Sec. State program staff and discovered the Regional Office's intent to tie dollars to approved activities in the 84-85 application. To meet this requirement, ASWAC began work on our first submission in January. We decided on a series of projects that fell within the specific objectives the Board established for the year. We submitted these projects, each with its own budget, to Sec. State's Regional Manager, Marc Arnal in February. That first application asked for funding for the following projects:

## first application

Office.....	23,785.00
Newsletter.....	29,946.00
Fieldworker.....	27,350.00
Board Meetings.....	20,731.00
Workshops.....	1,464.00
Board Member Outreach.....	4,320.00
Outreach Worker-South.....	26,270.00
Central Region Meetings.....	1,560.00
Conference.....	10,455.00
Practicum Student Report...	4,456.00
N.E. Health Conference.....	3,435.00
Lethbridge Office.....	5,410.00
Women's Centre Conference..	8,900.00
Research Project.....	11,777.60
Summer Float.....	5,715.00
Total.....	\$185,574.60

The total requested was \$184,000.

The next step for our application was a 'regional recommendation' from Sec. State staff in Edmonton. During the months of February, March and April, staffing at the Sec. State office was in flux. The Regional Manager with whom we had been negotiating went on a series of leaves and his duties were assumed by a variety of people. The Women's Program officer position was vacant or shared with the Youth Program officer position for most of this time. As a result of this chaos, our proposal received no attention. Finally, Sec. State Acting Regional Manager Patricia Hawkins decided to recommend \$25,515.00 for a six month grant. The amount was broken down by activity as follows:

## six-month recommendation

Board Meetings.....	29,292.90
Board Member Outreach.....	6,194.16
Assembly.....	8,647.92
Central Region Meetings....	2,204.30
Workshops.....	2,430.36
N.E. Health Workshop.....	4,853.65
Research Project.....	2,294.75
Total.....	\$55,828.04

What the grant indicated was that no money was available for staff, office and newsletter to name only a few of the cuts. The recommendation would have reduced ASWAC to a volunteer organization with no resources to reach out to the province.

At the April meeting the Board decided to call political and media attention to the abysmal handling of, and recommendations on our request. We shared our dissatisfaction and plans with Sec. State and asked if they wanted to re-negotiate. The Edmonton office manager, the Regional Manager and the newly appointed Women's Program Officer attended that meeting and plans were made to begin re-negotiation.

Those negotiations involved their staff and ASWAC representatives over the months of May and June and covered discussions of each activity and budget. The resulting recommendation was made for \$81,000, broken down by activity as follows:

## latest recommendation

Board Meetings.....	13,351.00
Central Regional Meetings..	1,560.00
Info-Resource office.....	27,770.00
Assembly.....	7,935.00
Board Outreach.....	4,320.00
Workshops.....	1,720.00
Health Conference.....	3,436.00
Research Project.....	1,524.00
Practicum Students.....	1,256.00
Newsletter.....	9,303.00
Women's Centre Conference..	8,825.00

Total.....\$81,000.00

We were told that the recommendation was forwarded to Ottawa in July. We have yet to receive word from Ottawa of its decision despite calls to the regional staff weekly. The 'reasons' we are given include the change in ministers (from Maclean to Bouchard), backlog, "its on the minister's desk", and no reason at all. This charade has been happening for four and a half months!

We no longer have faith that there is no problem with the regionally recommended amount. At the beginning of our eighth month of the fiscal year we have received \$25,515 on a \$81,000/12 month budget. Obviously, its very difficult to operate as we had planned—we cannot afford to tackle the activities we budgeted without any financial resources. We have contacted Members of Parliament from across the province to alert them to this crippling situation. We have also begun negotiations with Sec. State to change our fiscal year.

ASWAC is not alone in the dismal situation. We are aware of other groups who are similarly stymied by Sec. State's 'methods'. We hope to engage in a coalition action that will produce new 'methods'. Until then we wait...



# Alberta Status of Women Action Committee Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and Membership Equity 01.04.84 - 31.03.85

In March of this year, I was contracted by the Association to complete their year end financial statements and to handle the monthly bookkeeping needs, and to supply the Board with accurate monthly financial statements. After several meetings with Amanda and many hours, the year end financial statements were finally completed. We are now on stream with monthly financial statements ready for each Board meeting.

At October 31st, 1985, we have the following monies on hand:

Evaluation funds	\$20,000.00
Cash on hand for expenses	\$13,000.00

We have received \$25,515.00 of our Secretary of State grant. This is approximately 23% of the total monies we asked for and 30% of the total monies that have been recommended by Secretary of State at the regional (Edmonton) level. No information at this time is available as to when we will receive the balance of our funding.

We have also received \$4500.00 from the Provincial Government to run our Assembly. As this is insufficient to run the Assembly, the difference will be picked up in registration fees, donations and monies from the Secretary of State grant.

We have also received \$20,000.00 for a process evaluation of ASWAC and Secretary of State. At present, no monies have been disbursed as the evaluation has not progressed thus far.

We have received the following monies in memberships and donations as follows:

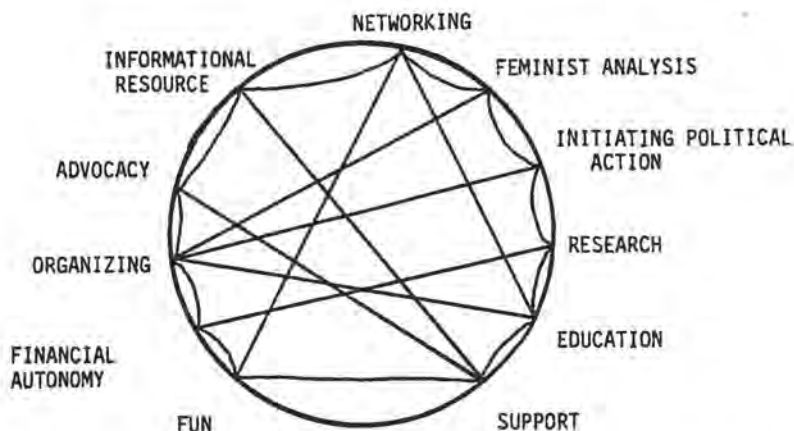
Memberships	\$ 1,372.00
Donations	\$ 897.81

Judy Elliot,  
bookkeeper

RECEIPTS			
Secretary of State grant	\$50,000.00	Printing	2,464.76
Sales	---	Office Expense	1,147.84
Memberships	3,917.00	Rent	1,953.00
Donations and Miscellaneous	---	Photocopying	1,488.67
Conference Evaluation	---	Insurance/Repairs & Maintenance	110.00
Interest	643.00	Researcher Consulting fees	---
		Dues, Fees, Subscriptions	557.39
		Bank Charges	112.02
		Accounting	540.00
		Miscellaneous	---
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$54,560.30</b>		
		<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$65,888.33</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>		<b>DEFICIT</b>	<b>\$11,328.03</b>
Salaries and Benefits	\$39,523.02	Memoers Equity, beginning of period	\$20,176.15
Travel, Accom. and Meals	11,339.64		
Postage	4,310.38	<b>MEMBERS EQUITY, END OF PERIOD</b>	<b>\$ 8,848.12</b>
Telephone and Telegraph	2,341.61		

# Objectives of ASWAC

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee is a provincial organization dedicated to political and social change and empowering women individually and collectively through the following means:



Given that the methods by which we work to reach our objectives are varied and changing, and given that our resources are limited, we make the following recommendations for the 1985-86 year:

## Structure

We recommend the following structural changes --

- 1) to create Board member "portfolios" as required to perform liaison functions;
- 2) to institute a system of regional representatives (distinct from Board members) to better represent all parts of the province;
- 3) to seek funding to hire a Newsletter coordinator and allow for expansion of the Newsletter to 24 pages;
- 4) to change ASWAC's fiscal year from April 1 - March 31 to November - October 31 to better coincide with our Board year;
- 5) with regard to ASWAC's Newsletter, that each issue have a theme, and that one or two Board members take on thematic responsibility.

## Political

We recommend that a province-wide campaign with regard to the economic status of women be conducted by ASWAC in the coming year. Under this umbrella issue, we would like the Assembly to designate two issues as high priority.

Economic issues include: childcare  
pensions  
maintenance enforcement  
equal pay for work of equal value  
part-time work  
benefits for part-time workers  
retraining and job strategy.

## Service

In addition to our normal activities, we recommend that --

- 1) ASWAC facilitate a provincial Women's Centres conference during this fiscal year; and
- 2) a committee be established to organize and coordinate ASWAC's tenth anniversary celebrations coming up in 1986.

# Staff profile over the year

The current Board year started off with Frances Adams as the Office Manager/Community Organizer, Mair Smith as the Field-worker, Sam Faichney as the part-time bookkeeper and Sheila MacDonald on a Canada Works Project.

Frances left ASWAC in December to spend an extended sojourn in Greece - we wished her well in her travels knowing that the organization would sorely miss her energy and commitment. Amanda Le Rougetel was hired to replace Frances - she started in mid-January, nervous about her ability to follow in Frances' very competent shoes. Within weeks, however, she felt at home in the busy office and was handling media calls and requests for information with confidence.

Mair left her position with ASWAC at the end of February to broaden her horizons and take on new challenges in the Women's Movement. Our financial situation made it impossible to hire someone immediately to replace her, so

the position remained vacant for a good number of months.

Sam left at the beginning of March because she was having a hard time keeping her time commitments to ASWAC.

With Sam's departure, ASWAC's finances were left in the highly unqualified hands of Amanda and Sheila - we managed for the few weeks before Judy Elliot was hired as bookkeeper. With Judy as our bookkeeper, ASWAC's money is in good hands!

Sheila's project came to an end in mid-June. The Resource Kits she put together were a mammoth undertaking which she pursued with enthusiasm and conscientiousness.

The summer saw the ASWAC office move from King's College to the new Edmonton Women's Collective Building downtown. At first, Amanda rattled around in it by herself, then, as more groups started using the space, the new work surroundings became more and more comfortable. A major

portion of Amanda's time was spent pulling the Building into shape - negotiating with the landlords, cleaning the place up and showing potential tenants around the Building. It has developed into a wonderful, woman-run collective which has a long life ahead of it!

Frances was hired back in mid-September, this time as Project Co-ordinator. Recently back from Greece with a brief stop in her home town of Guelph, Ontario to complete her Bachelor's degree, Frances is full of energy and ideas for the coming year.

While the staff of this organization has changed often over the last year, the one constant has been the commitment and energy the women have put into their jobs. The work we do is hard, there's always more to do and concrete results are often few and far between - what keeps us going is our conviction of the rightness of our cause and the knowledge that you, the members, support us in our work.

## Feminists sought to sit on board

ASWAC Board members are selected annually in November at the Assembly. Together with staff members they form the Board for the next twelve months. The optimum number of members is between 12 - 15.

The Board meets approximately every 6 weeks with at least one meeting taking place in each of the regions of the province. When selecting the Board an attempt is made to have representation from each of the regions and to include both urban and rural women. One of the primary commitments of a Board member is to attend these Board meetings. As the Board is the decision making body that enables ASWAC to function as a provincial organization, having the Board members attend these meetings is essential. Because the Board is ultimately responsible to the membership, Board members must be prepared to answer to the members for their absence at a Board meeting. To facilitate maximum attendance at meetings, one of the first tasks the new Board undertakes in November is to schedule the meeting dates for the coming Board year.

And what, you may ask, does a Board meeting look and feel like? The meetings are generally 2½ days long beginning Friday evening (8-11pm) with a discussion time (when time allows depending on travel arrangements); Saturdays tend to run from 9am - 6pm and Sundays go from 9am - 5pm, again depending on travel arrangements. With that length of meeting time, comfortable clothes are advised. Accommodation is provided by billeting, usually by the home Board member(s). Meals/groceries are purchased by ASWAC and travel expenses are reimbursed to out-of-town Board members; childcare expenses are also reimbursed. The 2½ day meeting is a fairly intense time of discussion, analysis, information sharing, debate, planning, decision-making and learning.

The agenda for each meeting is "built" at the beginning of Saturday morning with input from the Board members. The group collectively decides on the order in which the items will be discussed. Then, each member is responsible for the scope and shape of the meeting. Each Board member must prepare a written report for distribution at the meeting detailing her ASWAC related work

In order for a Board member to be actively involved between Board meetings she must be prepared to organize educational and action-oriented events that fall within the mandate developed at the Assembly by the whole membership. It is through this kind of work "in the field", co-ordinated by Board members and regional reps., that ASWAC is able to maintain and broaden her provincial base and perspective.

If the membership accepts the recommendations of the current Board and implements the system of regional representatives, the Board members will work closely with the regional rep. These women (Board members and regional reps) will contact women and women's groups in their area and facilitate an exchange of information and networking and will act as main links in any given provincial chain of action.

If you are considering coming on (the) Board for ASWAC and would like more information, call Amanda or Frances at the office (424-3073) or any of the Board members listed on the inside front pages of this Newsletter.

# An Idea is born

ASWAC's current "official" structure includes only Board members and staff. No matter how committed and dynamic these women are the workload they undertake on behalf of ASWAC is enormous. A major commitment of Board and staff members is attendance at Board meetings - a full 2½ days out of every six weeks. It takes time to gear up for the meeting, oodles of energy to participate in the meeting and then more time to do the work laid out at the meeting.

Thus the idea of REGIONAL REPS was born. We see this position as being ideal for a woman who wants to have a formal or structured connection with the provincial women's organization in Alberta but who does not want to commit herself to attending the Board meetings.

The most effective thing for ASWAC would be to have both a Board member and a regional rep in each of the regions of the

province. This would allow for a sharing of the workload plus it would provide for a built-in network of support for the women in the area.

Because regional reps will not be required to attend Board meetings, they will be asked to submit a monthly written report to the office for potential publication in the Newsletter.

The purpose of this report is to communicate events and activities happening in the regional reps' area to the general membership of the organization.

Also, the regional rep would be a co-ordinator of specific ASWAC related work in the area: she would be responsible for implementing and reporting on activities in her region that are part of any provincial campaign(s) mandated by the membership at the Assembly.

Of course, the Board member in the region will be asked to report verbally on joint activities at the Board meetings.

# Board Member Selection Procedure

Board member selection at the Sunday afternoon session of the Assembly will be structured as follows:

An outside facilitator will explain the rules of selection and moderate the session. Nominees to the Board will introduce themselves, followed by a general discussion incorporating questions and indications of support or concern. After the discussion, there will be an opportunity for candidates to opt out of the selection process (to step down, as it were).

ASWAC members will select women to the Board by filling in a yes/no ballot listing all remaining nominees. A 51% majority will be required for a woman to be named to the Board and a maximum of 15 women shall be so named. Results of the balloting will be available to any member upon request.

## What is a regional representative?

A REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE is a contact-woman for ASWAC in a given region of the province. She is responsible for similar kinds of work "in the field" as a Board member is (see article on Board Member Responsibility) but she is not required to attend Board meetings.

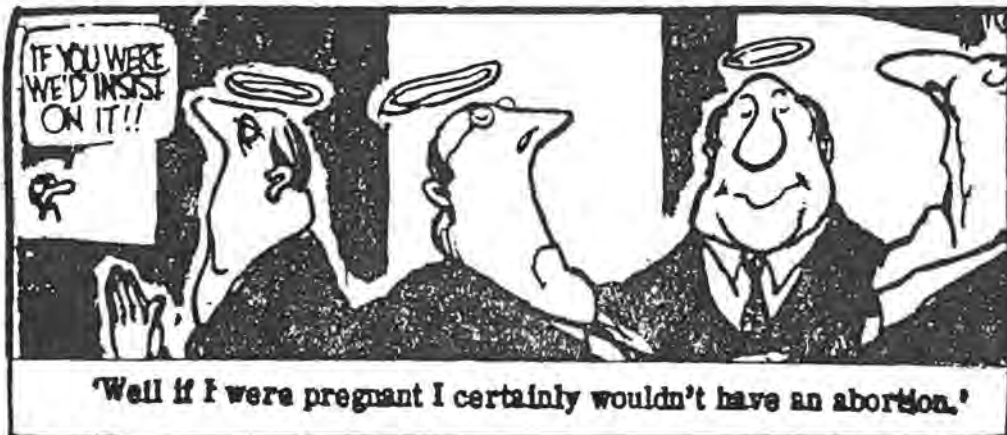
## How are these reps selected?

First, the idea of incorporating regional reps into ASWAC's structure must be discussed and decided on by the membership at the Assembly. As yet, no formal division of the province into regions has been done and until this piece of work is completed it is hard to know how selection of regional reps will be undertaken. If the idea of regional reps is favoured, we hope women will come forward to fill the positions.

## Fine tuning the good idea

The logical time and place to fine-tune the notion of regional reps seems to be at the Assembly when it will be easy to get feed-back from a large number of members.

Those women who are interested in the idea of regional reps could maybe strike an ad hoc committee for the duration of the Assembly to discuss and develop the details. Watch the bulletin boards for details!



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# Come to the Assembly

Saturday Workshops  
November 30, 1985

9:00 - 10:20 am

The Charter and Alberta Women  
with HELEN GREAVES

Work - for wages, love and the Cause  
with LISA WALTER

Launching A New Service

with JANIS KALETA and SYLVIA KENNEDY

Living Non-Violently

with JULIETTE TRUDEAU

10:40 - 12 noon

Health Concerns

with the EDMONTON WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

Reproductive Technology and Women's Lives

with SHIRLEY BIRSTALL

Getting the Message Into Mainstream Media

with JUDY MOYNIHAN

Why Feminist Theatre is Important

with ROSEMARY TAYLOR and SUSAN ANDERSON

1:30 - 2:50pm

Older Women's Issues

with GERRY BAILEY and MERLE WRAITH (maybe)

Building Bridges

with HALYNA FREELAND, HELGA ROMERO and HALYCEE  
ANDERSON

Organizing Small Communities

with JANET BEEBE and MARILYN GUILLE

Poster Art

with SUZAN MORGAN and RAVIDA DIN

3:10 - 4:30pm

Legislated Poverty

with JOANNA MIAZGA and MARIE GORDON

Lesbian Feminism: Fighting for Visibility

with JEAN NOBLE and JEANNE RIOUX

Funding For That Project

with LISA WALTER, VANESSA de SA and JANINA  
VANDERPOST

Songwriting/Jam Session

with MUSICAL WOMEN FROM CALGARY AND YOU!!

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Keynote speaks on Nairobi will start on Friday evening at 8:00pm followed by a no-host(ess) bar and mingling.

Sunday will be devoted to the business portion of the Assembly with the session starting at 10am, breaking for lunch at 11:45am, continuing from 12:45pm to 2:30pm. This session will include a report from the current Board, a financial report from the bookkeeper, discussion and decision around mandate for the upcoming year and the Board selection process.

A detailed agenda for the whole Assembly will be included in the conference kits which you will receive at the registration table when you arrive at Westridge Lodge.

We will do our very, very best to meet everyone's accommodation choices. However, because there are limited rooms available, please understand if your request cannot be met. Refunds will be made if you have paid for more luxurious 'room-mate arrangements' than you end up getting.

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## Now is the time to renew your membership

Current memberships run out at the Assembly —  
so renew now and avoid long line-ups at Westridge.

**Suggested fee is \$10**

*Donations received with yelps of joy!*

# Announcements

## Tools for Peace campaign ★★★★★★★★★★

The national Tools for Peace Organization is running a campaign to collect notebooks, blankets, batteries and candles. Over the last 6 years the people of Nicaragua have worked hard to build a new society from the ground up. However, due to the U.S. backed contra war, there is a tremendous shortage of necessary materials.

The war against Nicaragua has displaced over 180,000 people from their homes, mainly poor farming families. The U.S. trade embargo has made it virtually impossible to get candles and batteries. Illiteracy has been reduced from 50% to 13% and free education expanded,

despite the lack of basic supplies.

Canada's national Tools for Peace campaign wants to provide vital assistance. The goals are to send 50,000 pencils and notebooks, 10,000 blankets, 50,000 candles and 20,000 batteries. YOU CAN HELP by giving these items or by making a donation. Deadline for such items collected is NOVEMBER 24, 1985, a Sunday.

Contact the Tools for Peace warehouse in Edmonton at Jasper Ave and 92 Street, 421-1495 or send your contributions to Tools for Peace campaign, 10765-98 St., Edmonton, T5H 2P2.

HELP FILL A SHIP FOR NICARAGUA!



Pat Cooper

## ★ New Vice-President is from Calgary

We send our hearty congratulations to Pat Cooper of Calgary who was recently appointed Vice-President (Western) of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Pat served as southern Alberta rep on the CACSW for several years and has been very active in the Alberta women's community. She is a founding member of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) and a board member of the Calgary Coalition Against Pornography.

As of November 14, the western office of CACSW will open on the 8th floor of Calgary's Federal Building at 220 4th Avenue. Judy McGugan is working with her and a media relations/speech writer will also be hired. ASWAC looks forward to having an enhanced CACSW presence in Alberta.

## Wondering about a 'wonder' drug

"D.E.S.: An Uncertain Legacy" will be shown in Edmonton at the Centennial Library Theatre on Thursday Nov. 21, 1985 at 8:00pm; admission is free.

Diethylstilbestrol was initially hailed as a miracle but has recently been renamed 'the wonder drug you should wonder about'. It was given to pregnant women between 1941-71 to prevent miscarriage. Tragic "side-effects" of DES have since been documented: reproductive and genital abnormalities, possible infertility and cancer amongst DES daughters and sons.

A discussion with health professionals will follow the showing.

## Le Théâtre Parminou plays

This fall, from mid-October to mid-December, Le Theatre Parminou, a professional theatre company from Quebec will be taking four shows from their current repertoire on a major tour through Ontario and Western Canada. Featured on the tour will be the English and French versions of "Peacing it Together", a play about peace and disarmament.

This will be Le Theatre Parminou's largest tour to date, west of Ottawa. They will be performing over 50 shows in both French and English, in more than 30 com-

munities, large and small, across the country.

The Alberta leg of the tour opens in St-Paul on November 17. The company then moves on to Calgary and Red Deer, with the last Alberta stop in Edmonton on November 24.

The Edmonton showing is being sponsored by, Arts for Peace and the Voice of Women. For more information contact Denise Roy at 426-5840. For information on the other showings in Alberta contact the ASWAC office at 424-3070.

**Elizabeth MASSIAH, M.S.W.**  
FEMINIST THERAPIST



**Edmonton**

**(res.) 481-5973**

## Farm Women Network for Action ★★★★★★

Over 300 farm women from across Canada will be meeting in Charlottetown, November 21-23, for the Second National Farm Women's Conference. The first such event was staged in Ottawa in 1980. The Theme is "Farm Women Networking for Action". Some of the issues to be discussed are consumer trends, the needs of farm women, the current economic crisis in agriculture, stress, family violence and the need for child care in rural areas.

P.E.I. is a very long way to go for most Alberta women but perhaps an effort could be made to get details on the conference and perhaps conference proceedings; it would probably be very interesting information. Also, it might be the right time to start lobbying for the next conference to be held in Alberta! The information address is: Anne Boswall, P.O. Box 984, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7M4. Phone 892-1027.

## Extravaganza ★★★★★

The Tools for Peace EXTRAVAGANZA is planned for Saturday, Nov. 30 at the Croation Catholic Church hall, 10560-98 St, beginning at 8:00pm.

The money raised is for this year's Tools for Peace campaign. There will be a raffle, beer, wine and food plus two great bands to dance and listen to.

WHAT A DEAL!! \$9.00 per employed person, \$6.00 for the unemployed. Come and show your support for the Nicaraguan people and meet a lot of great people.



## Group Seeks New Members

The Alliance Against Sexual Harassment invites any interested women to join. We are an independent, volunteer group who provide support, advocacy, information/referral and social action.

Anyone interested in learning more about the issue and working with us please phone:

Mary-433-9274  
Joanne-424-7430  
Monika-423-6990

## Film Theatre Features Women

- schedule of films of interest to women, showing at the NFTheatre, Ziedler Hall, Citadel Theatre, 9828 - 101 A Avenue, Edmonton:

The series currently showing is entitled CANADIAN WOMEN DIRECTORS and consists of the following films --

The Handyman  
Nov 6 - 7:15 pm  
Nov 7 - 9:15 pm

La Femme de l'hotel  
Nov 13- 9:15 pm  
Nov 14- 7:15 pm

A War Story  
Nov 20- 7:15 pm

P4W Prison for Women  
Nov 27- 9:30 pm

For information about film content and admission costs, please call Jim Sinclair at 426-4811.

## Workshop: Beyond War

The Edmonton branch of the NDP Women's Section is hosting a workshop on peace and the peace movement on Nov.22 at 7:30 p.m. at 4515-38 B Ave.

The workshop is titled "Beyond War" and will be led by Irene Clay a local activist. For more information please call 461-6749.



## "Looking Forward, Reaching Back" Women's Archives In Canada Project

The Canadian Women's Movement Archives has been collecting material on the women's movement in Canada since 1977. The bulk of archival material, though is being saved by individuals and women's groups across the country.

During the next year, the CWMA will be researching and compiling a directory of Women's Archival Collections in Canada. A collective member will be travelling across the country to meet with individuals and women's groups,

If you or your organization have any material on the women's movement in Canada, please contact the CWMA. Help ensure that our history is saved.

Canadian Women's Movement Archives  
P.O. Box 928, Stn P, Toronto, Ont. M4T 2P1 (416) 597-8865

## STAR ON YOUR LABEL?

## READ ON!

ASWAC's membership year runs from conference to conference, November to November.

This means that if you bought your membership BEFORE November of 1984, it is now out of date and you need to renew for the 1984/85 year (the current membership year). The 1984/85 membership year will then "run out" at our next conference in November of 1985 (this November) at which time it will be necessary for all members to renew for the 1985/86 membership year.

We continue to send the Newsletter to members who are only one year behind in their membership dues because we know how difficult it is for some people to keep track of their many and varied memberships and the renewal dates for each and every one. Besides, we don't want to lose track of old and valued friends simply because of an oversight!

So . . . if you have a star on your label, please take a minute to send in your renewal to the office or, if you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter, simply forward a note to the office, to that effect.

We suggest \$10.00 per year for a membership but will, of course, accept less from those who cannot afford the fee. (Donations are received with yelps of joy!!)



### Alberta Status of Women Action Committee Supportive Membership/Donation

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DONATION

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (office)

\_\_\_\_\_ (home)

Please make the cheque payable to:

Alberta Status of Women  
Action C'ttee.

PO Box 1573, EDMONTON, Alta  
T5J 2N7

telephone: 424-3073

\*We suggest \$10.00/year membership fee.