

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

October 1986

Vol. 7 No. 8



**Inside this newsletter:
Stories of the Year — a report on our
year's activities, and
recommendations for next year**

ASWAC is

Over 500 members across the province!

1985/86 Board members

Frances Adams (staff member) c/o ASWAC

Luanne Armstrong (staff member) c/O ASWAC

Cathy Bray #706-10135 Sask. Dr. Edmonton
T6E 4Y9 433-2682

Lavera Creasy Box 1740, Hanna TOJ 1P0 854-3216

Terri-Ann Marco 44 Columbia Bay West
Lethbridge, T1K 5A7

Lorraine Mitchell (staff member) c/o ASWAC

Suzn Morgan 6423 Laurentian Way, SW Calgary
T3E 5N2 246-8755

Eunice Olsen Box 124 Innisfail, TOM 1A0
227-1970

Aura Rose 9941- 81 Ave, Edmonton T6E 1W5
433-0349

Marty White Sun Box 418, Hythe TOH OH1
356-3797

Jane Wiley (staff member) c/o ASWAC

1985/86 Regional reps

Gerry Bailey RR1 Westrose, TOC 2V0
(WestCentral) 586-2983

Irene McRae 10928-115 St, Edmonton
T5H 3L4 (Edmonton) 428-1280

Joan White Calf 5603 50 Ave, Camrose
T4V 0T6 (East Central) 672-2210

If you have any articles, comments, artwork or features you would like to see in the ASWAC Newsletter, send them in! Letters should be marked, NOT FOR REPRINT, if you don't want them in the Newsletter.

ASWAC's mailing address is Box 1573, Edmonton, AB, T5J 2N7. Telephone 424-3073.

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Upcoming Board meeting

The next board meeting will be held after the Assembly in Lethbridge. December 5 and 6 were the dates chosen, to coincide with the Grande Opening of the Lethbridge ASWAC Resource Room. Be there!

Donations

Donations have been most gratefully received from Linda Slattery, Christine Conley, Dr. P Browne, Mary McNamee, Aura Rose. Thanks so very much!!!

A fundraising effort has begun to get the ASWAC office a computer. Persons interested in contributing to the fund or wishing to help do research on the best and most effective computer for the office can phone Diana Chown at 433-1525 or Dr. Pat Eglinski at 483-9294 or 483-0218.

P.S. If there are any Luddites out there, Jane at the office would like to talk to you!

Our board meeting minutes

Eighteen hours at a glance

The following is our record of the board meeting held October 18 and 19 in Edmonton at the Women's Building.

Present Jane, Terri-Ann, Luanne, Lavera, Suzn, Frances, Lorraine, Aura, Cathy (board members), Gerry, Irene (regional reps), and, visitors, Deborah Perret, Karin Goldberg, Anna Mioduchowski, Darlene Abreu Fereria, Vanessa De Sa, Star Curry and Margaret Leahey.
Access TV filmed the first part of our round for the 13th show of their series, "About Women" to be aired in December.

Regional Reps Gerry Bailey provided a report and recommendations for next year. We decided to allocate specific money for reg rep meetings when we revise our budget so that these women can share their ideas and experiences and get the support that they need. Specific recommendations, some of which fall under the membership development category, will be made in the business section of the assembly.

Women's Centres Conference Suzn reported on the work that she has been doing with the Bow Valley Women's Centre in regard to the 1987 women's centres conference. We will clarify our role as a co-sponsor.

Depo Provera Lorraine reported that more women are calling in with personal accounts of their experience with this drug (see last Newsletter). We have rec'd a letter from Dr. Ringrose indicating that he still supports depo provera.

Child Care Frances is now on the Board of the Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care. She has written MPs in the Edmonton area in support of a daycare in the new Canada Place. She also gave a brief report on the province's recall of operating and subsidy advances to centres which, for some, is disastrous.

Assembly

We did a complete review of the agenda which took several hours. We spent some time discussing attendance by men as well as their membership status within ASWAC. We decided that, as advertised, the assembly is for women, but that men will not be refused admittance. Rates for partial attendance will be fixed ahead of time (ie. \$15 for Sat. banquet and evening). A couple of requests for on-site child care led to a full discussion of exclusion of mothers who could not find alternate care for their children. We will attempt to find family day homes in Innsfail for women who indicate their need. We will attempt to accommodate children as much as possible; babies are welcome. Suzn will look after the display tables. Due to limited space, we are restricted to ten tables.

Advisory Council

Margaret Leahey, chairperson of the Advisory Council on Women's Issues, visited us at lunchtime. She stressed that her council will operate in a collective structure and that she wants a close relationship with ASWAC.

Boards Mgmt.

We decided to sponsor Suzn for the partial costs (\$150) of a weekend boards management conference in Banff which is for non-profit organizations. She will concentrate on the fundraising sessions.

Staff Benefits

New part-time staff will have half of their medicare paid for and three quarters of their blue cross; they will receive half the holidays that full-time staff have. Luanne will have family coverage for blue cross.

Women's Program, Sec State

Vanessa gave us an update on the internal structure and personnel changes in the Women's Program. We discussed planning priorities for the region and will participate in this process as much as possible. We discussed our concerns in regard to community

The Good news and bad news

Women's Building sold



... and you think you have troubles...

Aaahh, the Women's Building has been sold!! ASWAC and the Women's Building Collective has to move by February 1. A lot of energy was put into moving in here just 16 months ago and providing a space where women could come to find resources and support. Many groups have used the building for meetings, forums and socials; it has become increasingly vital to women in the Edmonton area. What a drag! Our real estate agent is looking around for us and we hope to find something that will give us an option to purchase. The Collective has not yet saved enough money to make a downpayment on something as large and central as this place, but, if we can find reasonable rent, it is possible that we could buy our own building in a couple of years. Stay tuned. We're going to need lots of bodies and vehicles for the move.

And, as if that wasn't enough, ASWAC has received a claim for damages from Professor R. Grinnell of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Welfare. He claims that an article written about him in the June 1986 Newsletter was "falsely and maliciously" written. The same claim has been made against ASWAC member Deborah Perret. Grinnell is seeking a minimum of \$150,000 in general and punitive damages from both ASWAC and Deborah. The lawsuit is in a

preliminary stage at present. The ASWAC Board, at our last meeting, decided that we would take responsibility for Deborah's costs as well. Both "defendants" (we'll all be talking legalese before we're done) are now saving our pennies. Stay tuned on this one too; we may need a lot of serious assistance.

Pro-choice victory

ASWAC sends our hearty congratulations and appreciation to Judy Moynihan, McMurray CARAL members and pro-choice supporters in Fort McMurray. On October 20, voters elected to establish a Therapeutic Abortion Committee at the Fort McMurray Regional Hospital. The tally was 4,673 for to 3,555 against. This is a major victory for the pro-choice move-

ment in Canada. Judy, who helped establish the CARAL (Canadian Abortion Rights Action League) chapter last spring, was also elected to the hospital board which will be responsible for setting up the TAC. Judy is a former ASWAC Board member and will be speaking at the workshop on abortion rights at the ASWAC Assembly. You DID it, hooray!

more board meeting minutes ... whew!

consultations, with the potential it has to pit groups against each other. We discussed the possibility of this being struck altogether or of groups being able to give references.

Staff Devel. Staff have booked a day to discuss work priorities, working collectively, job description 'shuffling' etc. A facilitator is being sought.

New Board Cathy and Frances will put together a package of information and herstory of ASWAC for new board members and regional reps.

New Democrats ASWAC has been invited to a consultation with the ND's caucus to discuss women's issues. This is at the end of November in

Other

Edmonton. Star Curry came in briefly and discussed the ND's pro-choice policy in relation to Jim Gurnett's being the next Party President (he is not pro-choice). Star's feeling is that he will not impede ND work on this issue.

We had an excellent but long meeting and were unable to complete our agenda. Other items were disenfranchised women, outreach strategies and a larger discussion of the abortion issue particularly the emergency that we're having now that doctors cannot extra-bill.

Next Meeting

We plan the next meeting for December 6 & 7 in Lethbridge to coincide with the official opening of the ASWAC Lethbridge Women's Centre (hooray!!!).

Stories of the Year.

Our Stories of the Year is published every October before the annual assembly. It is our record of activities, developments, and changes within ASWAC and the women involved with her. Some of the reports are personal accounts of the year in the life of feminists, and others summarize the year's accomplishments.

Energy and vision

by Lavera Creasy

Deep in thought I contemplate a year in the life of a rural Alberta feminist. Last summer at a session of our Evolution '86 group I drew a picture of myself very small on a wide screen under a single tree on the great flat Alberta plain. And how would I change that? I drew my truck - my gypsy wagon - wheels! There has been loneliness and movement.

My personal portfolio this year has been so extensive that I presently bill myself as a full-time volunteer. When will I become professional?

I joined the board of ASWAC for three main reasons. I thought it was important to be in touch with feminist politics and thought. My political activities to date had been main-

stream. As politics had been largely a men's pursuit, I had learned their topics of concern. I had not had ample opportunity to converse with feminists.

My second was that I wanted the personal and emotional support I had re-discovered in June of 1984. I knew the coming provincial election would tax my personal resources so I came to be energized.

My third reason was I had wanted to bring the rural perspective to ASWAC and I wished to take ASWAC ideas, information and know-how to rural women.

I really feel that I must credit ASWAC and Evolution '86 and the tremendous energy of sisters here and around the world for visioning some of the successes this year has seen.

Integrating the whole

by Cathy Bray

The majority of my paid and unpaid labour this year has involved working with women. In my report as an ASWAC board member, I would like to describe this privileged and fulfilling situation which has allowed me to feel integrated and productive.

My paid labour, teaching women's studies at Athabasca University and the University of Alberta, taught me about the concerns of women who are new to feminism. A few of the students who I tutored through the A.U. distance education program pointed out their isolation as mothers who worked solely in the home. This realization provoked me to author a short piece for the ASWAC newsletter about the importance of mothering to feminists, and the efforts made by the women's movement to help the parents in the home.

The newsletter became my special portfolio at our initial board meeting. At first I spent a fair amount of time typing and writing, and even tried to do some layout. But my layout phobia and production naivete were never resolved, and I moved on to other activities. Working for ASWAC allows this sort of flexibility, and in fact requires that we respond to issues as they arise.

One issue which necessitated immediate response was the establishment of the provincial Women's Advisory committee and the appointment of its chair. Amanda organized a Saturday meeting of interested members and we discussed possible responses and identified needs for further

information. This meeting revealed a difference between Edmonton and non-Edmonton ASWAC members, in that Edmontonians can "drop-in" to the office on short notice. The problems of distance, and the potential of diversity help us to delimit the freedoms and constraints within which we must work.

Thinking about rural and urban differences and ways to bridge any distances and benefit from the perspectives which they provide underlay the research which students in A.U. Women Studies 267 course and I completed over the winter. We tried to compare the delivery of a women's studies course through home study (correspondence) to traditional methods of class room delivery. Though there are many drawbacks to home study delivery, we found that the advantage of being able to learn about women in a university course for credit regardless of where one lived outweighed any disadvantages. The same principle might be applied to a provincial umbrella organization i.e. the needs that we meet outweigh the difficulties that we encounter.

Working on the A.U. research project also helped me to understand the collective process better. One of the issues which has formed a subtheme for our board meetings (and probably for board meetings for a decade) was "process". Early on we discussed the differences which might create separation and conflict amongst us, concluding that, as ever, we must be aware of the potential for conflict and resolution. As time went on, we focussed on the staff versus non-staff difference. I did a good deal of thinking about this before and during the hiring of our child-

care brief writer, our researcher and our publications person. It was important during these hiring decisions to consider the need for unity among staff and among the total board while still maintaining diversity, in order to reflect the make-up of the Albertan women's population. The discussion about staff and non-staff relations will continue.

This consideration of paid versus unpaid work in the women's movement, along with my entire ASWAC experience, has assisted me in taking my next major life's step. As of November first, I will be starting a full-time paid occupation working for women, as the director of the Women's Program and Resource Center, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta. Thus my direct responsibility for ASWAC work will be curtailed. But my experience this year has shown me how the women's movement really is a web, allowing change to take place in many different directions with diverse groups of women, yet as part of an integrated whole, centred on the needs and dreams of women.

Halifax Report

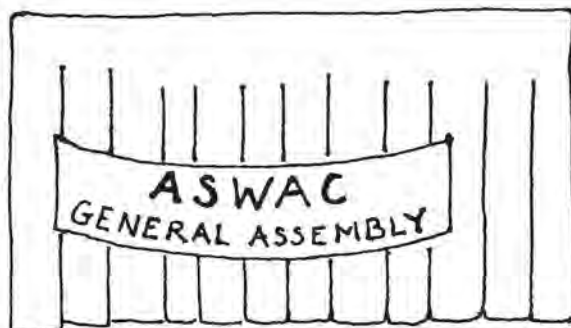
by Amanda Le Rougetel

Greetings Sisters, from Halifax! At the time of writing I have been here for just over six weeks and am beginning to settle in very nicely. Nova Scotia is a beautiful province, the people are very friendly and believe me, there is a lot of work to be done here! Not only have I travelled thousands of miles east of Edmonton to get here, I feel like I have travelled thousands of miles backwards through time, political time that is... I feel like the conservatism in this province goes deeper still than that evident in Alberta. For instance:

-while Nova Scotia has had a Women's Advisory Council since 1977, it is perceived generally by the women's community as having been less than forceful in its support of women's rights.

-abortion is an almost taboo subject here -- very little information is available to the public about the process and procedure of abortion despite valiant efforts by the Halifax C.A.R.A.L.; no help is forthcoming from the local or provincial Planned Parenthood organizations; being United Way funding recipients, these groups refuse to so much as carry literature in their resource libraries that mentions the word abortion.

-lesbians are very visible in the women's community here but the enormous fear they have about living openly lesbian lives is (understandable but) disheartening: the same fears of eviction, dismissal and general harassment exist in abundance; support and activist groups for lesbians exist but their public profile is low.



Nova Scotia is a small province and, while Halifax probably has the largest number of active feminists grouped closely together, women are in contact with each other around the province and help and support each other. What is sorely lacking however, is a provincially based, multi-issue oriented feminist organization... like ASWAC! How many times in my short time here, have I wished there were a central place to call for information, a place from which to disseminate information and a central place from which to plan generally.

There is a recently-born Women's Community Resource Centre in Halifax called Patchwork. Patchwork in Halifax will not solve the isolation felt by women in the Pictou County and Colchester County Women's Centres, it won't be overly helpful in pulling in the lone feminists who live in Wolfville, Yarmouth and Lunenburg... a provincial feminist organization, however, would.

All this is a roundabout way of saying that, by her absence from my life, I am coming to fully understand the importance of ASWAC's existence and work. Based in Edmonton, she has developed solid, local support with which she can reach out around the province and do the work that needs to be done. ASWAC speaks equally for the women of Fort McMurray as she does for the women of Alberta as a whole.

In this coming year, I urge my ASWAC sisters to build on, and consolidate the strengths that currently exist in the Alberta women's community.. I shall be with you in the spirit of sisterhood.

I'd rather be here

by Luanne Armstrong

One of the reactions I get when I tell people here that I have recently moved from BC to Alberta, is one of surprise. And sometimes, I'm surprised myself. After all, I left what was basically a secure and healthy life in a rural area, a dream life, almost, a log home in the mountains, garden, animals, fruit trees, friends, family, to come here and work as hard as I can for ASWAC. And much as I loved my mountain home, and much as I mourn for it, I know that I'd much rather be here, doing what I'm doing.

Rural life is wonderful, healthy and beautiful. It is also isolating, lonely, and difficult. Being a part of a supportive, loving and active community of women is essential for many women in their work as feminists. As the economic recession continues in Canada, women and in particular, rural women, get hit hard, by depression, lack of employment, lack of opportunities to feel effective in their lives, even when they are often more effective than they realize. I am pleased at the outreach ASWAC has been doing for rural women, and will be looking, in the next few months, for ways to extend that outreach.

Although I despair, at times, as we all do, I also feel very much a part of a huge network,

Only feminists can work so hard

by Suzn Morgan

Well I must say that in spite of taking three months off, this has certainly been one of my fullest years yet (since becoming a feminist). I think that it's been one of the full-fillingest years too. Developing a more intimate relationship with the Goddess has certainly opened me to a lot in my life. I've never had so many wonderful events unfold for me and I've seldom met such fine people as I have this year. And that says a lot as I already know scads of the most wonderful women in Alberta.

The winter of 85/86 held much excitement for me as I came on the ASWAC board for my third term. Building friendships with the new board members was easily done. ASWAC had a regional representative here in Calgary, Rosemary Taylor, and she and I met many times and organized a local ASWAC information meeting and two very successful pot lucks. I worked too on the local International Women's Day Committee and walked a UNA picket line as an ASWAC rep. BRRRRR was it cold!!! In late January I organized ASWAC's first pay equity



At last year's assembly

a tribe of women, working together in different ways but for common goals. It is vast and huge, this work we are doing, changing the world, and changing ourselves along with it.

For this reason, I think the title we have chosen for the Assembly this year is particularly appropriate... "Changing Ways to Change the World". Certainly, ASWAC has changed in many ways throughout the last ten years, and will continue to do so, as we build upon the work that has already been done. And in doing so, we change ourselves, and each other.

workshop in conjunction with the Women's Resource Centre at the Y. February came in with its usual bitter cold and I hopped a plane to Victoria, BC for three months on my long-planned and saved for retreat!

Ahhh Victoria, what a beautiful spring awaited me and it stayed lovely until I returned home in early May. The weather alone provided a lot of healing. I began a serious attempt at a book I've been waiting to write. Much unfolded for me as I sat in my beautiful, tiny but sunny apartment with no furniture but a desk, chair, typewriter and foamie. I loved it! I felt so free and unencumbered. It was a very spiritual time for me. After being there awhile, I made contact with the local SWAC group and attended a number of local events and met some fine women. I was right at home. My three months whizzed by and I returned to Calgary's spring refreshed and full of health.

May saw the ASWAC board come to Calgary and I got right back into the swing of things. My work with Calgary SWAC got well under way too.

The Women of Colour: Racism and Sexism Series was in the planning stages and much organizing was required. We also did a lot of internal introspection about our own deeply ingrained but hidden racism.

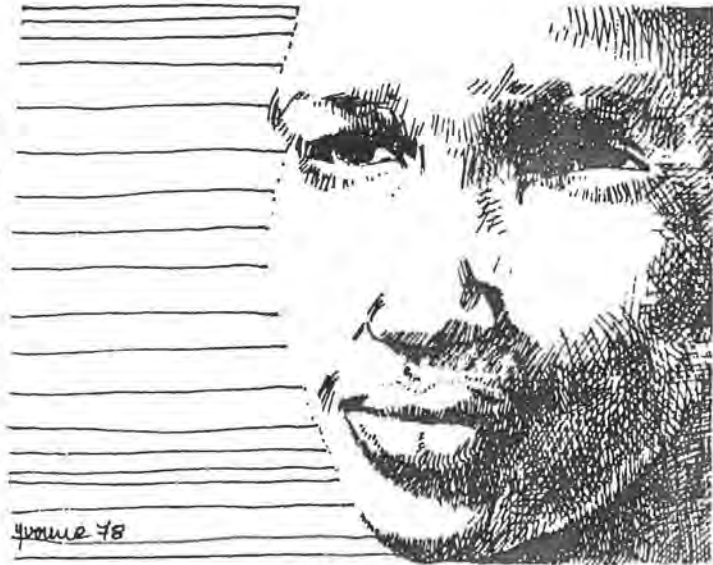
Some local ASWAC and SWAC women met with the newly elected Dennis Anderson who was given the portfolio of responsibility for the Status of Women. (shit, I've been wondering for years who was responsible for the present status of women in our society and now I finally know..Dennis.)

In early June I attended a week long workshop called Exploring Women's Mysteries by STARHAWK that was absolutely the icing on the cake. I came back flying high and began facilitating the unfolding of a Women's Ritual and Healing Group. This group in conjunction with some other people also led to the formation of a street grassroots Earth Healing Ritual Theatre Group and I've loved my involvement in the street theatre that we've done. I mean, I never thought I could be in a theatre group because only actresses can be in plays... right? So another preconceived boundary knocked over. June also saw me purchase my first SLR camera and I've been snap-happy ever since.

The summer held much personal and political work too. I worked with some other women as a support for a woman who had been sexually harrassed and I continued to try to get some energy moving in the ASWAC 10th Anniversary Committee. Alas it soon became apparent that a provincial committee was not about to coalesce. Many of the great ideas generated were then taken on by the board as a whole. I also made some trips to Lethbridge to offer support for the new ASWAC group there. I learned to canoe and kayak on the placid waters of Glenmore Dam. Summer held much FUN. O yah, I also scooted out to the coast for a week and caught the Vancouver Folk Festival. Great women performers - Heather Bishop, Tracy Riley, Chris Williamson etc. Heavenly!!

In August I began to work with the Bow Valley Women's Resource Centre women to put together the 1987 Women's Centres conference. ASWAC sponsored the first one and made a commitment to support any centre sponsoring the conference.

We have been meeting every two weeks and the going is slow but exciting. In September I sat on the ASWAC hiring committee in Edmonton and enjoyed all I learned from the experience. I enjoyed meeting the fine women who applied for the position. I worked on the Calgary Take Back the Night organizing committee and though we ran into hassles with city hall, we had a wonderful high energy time.



Later the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women held its first Western Canadian meeting in Calgary a workshop on Bill C-31. It was an exciting opportunity to meet with the CACSW representatives from across Canada.

Throughout the year, I have also been the southern Alberta representative for the NEWS-MAGAZINE by Alberta Women and have recently even begun to write again after writer's burn out in the spring...October and November have seen me busy pulling together my first concert promotion for social issues singer Moon Joyce Nov. 28 in Calgary. There has certainly been a lot to learn and again I've pushed through a few of my own boundaries. I mean only concert promoters can produce concerts...right? I called my one woman production company SHE WHO Productions after a Judy Grahn poem She Who that has a line "She Who makes her own difference". I like it!

Anyways, fall is full enough as it is with my ASWAC work, the SWAC series, the Women's Centre Conference committee, ritual group, photography courses and a few other things no doubt... Whew...anyways thats it.. a year in the life of a feminist! And I love it!

P.S. I'm taking a major break in December and January to gather my energies for the spring round up of local conferences; The Women's Center's, The Calgary IWD; Dialogue Towards a Multi Racial Women's Movement, and a Provincial Lesbian Conference. ahhh, here I am thinking of spring again already!

First Lethbridge then ... the world!

by Terri Ann Marco

Somehow it is almost the end of the year... In trying to summarize my experience, I cannot help but recall this time last year - the closure of Sexual Assault Centre in Lethbridge and the accompanying political and personal turmoil for me - if not for my wonderful and caring Edmonton friends, I would have been home staring at my bedroom walls, instead of sharing in the energy and sisterhood of last year's conference.

I had time on my hands, and somewhere inside me a deep burning to see something strong, visible, and active for Lethbridge women. I needed and wanted to be active and working with/for women. With support and encouragement from the women I knew, I came home a member of the ASWAC Board.

The first meetings were energizing, exciting, and personally terrifying - I felt shy, inexperienced, "unsophisticated", unskilled, "unlearned"...

Board meetings have been a very unique and positive series of events for me. On the other hand, those weekends were hard work as well.

I was getting to know this group of (I think) incredibly wonderful (and skilled) women - it was exhilarating to be part of this working team. Also, the support and friendship was, for several months, truly an emotional lifeline from me. My feeling then, and now, is that I was able to learn far, far more than I was able to put back. Board meetings have been a very unique and positive series of events for me. On the other hand, those weekends were hard work as well. I feel this year has seen a lot of results because of the group's commitment to work hard.

If going to those first meetings was a scary thing for me, being home was more so! My personal goal when I volunteered for the Board was to try and provide some kind of focal point in Lethbridge for women to organize with. I planned, stalled, re-planned, and stalled. Women have made so many creative beginnings here, and I really wanted to do their efforts justice by continuing good work.

Finally, I did an interview for the Lethbridge Herald about feminism and ASWAC, put on a pot of coffee and spread an open invitation to meet to as many women as I could. Women came - a few I knew, and many I didn't. We decided to meet regularly, every two weeks. We have twenty-nine women on our phone list. ASWAC has twenty-eight Lethbridge/Medicine Hat members now. We have been quite happily busy since our first meeting.

Our group co-sponsored International Women's Day with the World Citizens Centre in March, and organized an equally exciting and successful women's issues forum for the May provincial election. We have had some social events, some of our group has been meeting regularly to discuss feminist books, and the big news is that we have applied and, so far, have been approved for a Sec State Women's Program grant to open a Resource Room this fall.

We are planning a film series, next year's I.W.D., and we are committed to some serious networking with other women's groups in Lethbridge. We are planning a "grand opening" party for the 5th of December, open to anyone from anywhere (hint, hint). Our group has decided that provincial solidarity is important to us, and that is one of the main reasons we have chosen to continue as a "branch" or "root" of ASWAC.

Back to a personal note, I have struggled with dividing my energy between local ASWAC work and provincial ASWAC work. The Board has been supportive and as excited as I have been about the Lethbridge group. My provincial work has included: a field trip to Medicine Hat and Blaimore with Frances; I worked with Suzn and Debra Carnat to prepare for our Calgary meeting with Dennis Anderson; I took part in the challenging task of interviewing for the office coordinator position and dipped into women's spirituality and native women issues.

I still feel that many things, like local work on our pay equity and child care campaigns, were not adequately covered. The good news, however, is that next year there will probably be more Lethbridge women on the ASWAC Board, namely Erin Graham and possibly another woman named Shelly. Though I am working at a full-time paid job now which I love, and which cuts down on my free time, I would like to hang in on the Board for another year. Between more of us, I'm sure we can accomplish much. This year, Lethbridge... southern Alberta...and then, perhaps, we'll annex B.C.

Still ain't satisfied: a year of lobbying



by Aura Rose

ASWAC has been very politically (in the lobbying sense) active in the last year. Our involvement began with the crisis over federal funding of the women's programme, continued with the announcement of the Women's Advisory Council, the 1986 Provincial Budget and the election campaign and later found us meeting with politicians and the Human Rights Commission.

In March ASWAC called on all her members to fight the potential cutback in federal funding. We worked with the 59c Day Committee and won the battle - for now.

We expressed concern publicly over the Advisory Council legislation and appointments. We kept in close contact with the Provincial Committee for an Advisory Council on Women's Affairs, encouraged our members to write their MLA's and spoke with Dennis Anderson to explain our concerns. The results have been positive - new legislation was introduced that established a

separate Act for the council (it was originally included in the Women's Secretariat Act) which will consist of 15 members reporting directly to the Minister. Concern remains, however, over whether the council will make strong, independent recommendations, the inability of the Council to compile and publish independent research and the lack of the Council's access to other Ministers.

The Budget raised other concerns for ASWAC - the small allocations for the Advisory Council and Women's Secretariat, the increase in funding to Women's Shelters falling short of the "Core Funding Model" (a model developed by the shelters asking for provincial budget allocations that would cover the costs of core services: staff, facilities and supplies) and an increase in the use of temporary staffing measures rather than full-time positions. We put out a news release outlining our concerns, and received good press coverage for our efforts.

ASWAC took an active role during the provincial election campaign holding an "All Candidates Forum on Women's Issues" sponsored by our Lethbridge group. It was a grand success and well situated as Dick Johnston (at the time the Minister responsible for the Status of Women) is the MLA for Lethbridge East. A mailout to our members outlining the parties' positions on childcare, pay equity, and the Advisory Council and an article in the April Newsletter encouraging our members to get actively involved in the campaign provided us with coverage in the mainstream media, allowing an expansion of our reach during the election.

Our latest activity has been introducing ourselves to and meeting with the newly elected MLA's. We interviewed three women politicians for the Newsletter (part Two of that series in this issue), have met with members of the New Democrat caucus and have plans to meet again with Dennis Anderson.

We encourage all our members to lobby their MP's and MLA's. Write letters, make phone calls and ask to meet with them personally. As a member of the electorate and a constituent you have a right to voice your opinion. By educating elected representatives, constantly expressing our views publicly and insisting that our voices be heard we can speed the process of change in this province. LET'S DO IT!!

activities of the year

Action and Outreach:

During the past year, ASWAC has been involved with the following activities, either by co-sponsoring an event or just supporting another group sponsor their event.

59¢ Day Committee: This group was struck to protest cutbacks and delays in funding from Secretary of State. The group facilitated a more organized and collective response to the delays.

The Alberta Women's Newsmagazine: Due to a funding crisis, the magazine was in rough shape for a while. ASWAC purchased 75 subscriptions which we have used for outreach.

International Women's Day Committee: ASWAC helped the IWD committees around the province with in-kind donations, organizing assistance and advertising.

Women's Centres Conference: ASWAC, primarily Frances,

A year of events that ASWAC has either initiated or co-sponsored. They are described in chronological order.

organized this conference for 47 women representing all women's centres in Alberta. Workshops were held on goals clarification, boards and collective structures, and women's centres as crisis centres.

Candlelight Vigil for Brenda McClenaghan: The vigil was co-sponsored with the Edmonton Sexual Assault Centre. Held January 29, over 300 people attended the vigil in Sir Winston Churchill Square.

Abortion Tribunals: Speak Out For Choice! Six women broke the silence by telling of their abortion experiences at this very moving event, held at the Edmonton Public Library, March 27. The Tribunal was held in conjunction with many such events across Canada, and was co-sponsored by Edmonton CARAL, Abortion by Choice. A candlelight vigil for choice was organized prior to the tribunal to publicize the event.

Gainers' Injunction: ASWAC was one of many groups and individuals who collaborated with a law suit against one of the injunctions brought against the striking workers at the Gainers Plant in Edmonton. This particular injunction forbade more than three people to walk down the street in front of the plant and was clearly against our rights to free association. The injunction was overturned.

"About Women": ACCESS TV produced this 13 part series on women for Athabasca's women's courses and public viewing. Although ASWAC was not a co-sponsor, we were interviewed many times for the programs and offered much background information to the researchers on the project. The series began in September.

The Northwest Conference on Women's Health was held May 9 & 10 at the St. Patricks Community School in Grande Prairie and was co-sponsored by ASWAC.

Fort McMurray CARAL: The McMurray abortion rights groups received support from ASWAC (including \$300) for the campaign to support a Therapeutic Abortion Committee at the Regional Hospital.

The Women's Building: ASWAC co-sponsored the hiring of an Administrative Assistant for six months of this year. The woman hired also did some work on the ASWAC library. We participated in the ongoing functioning of the Building in which we are housed including sending a representative to the monthly Collective meetings and taking responsibility for room bookings.

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The process assessment

by Cathy Bray

Further assessment of our process arose as a result of the "Process Assessment" which concluded this year after being initiated by Secretary of State in 1984. Renate Shearer, the consultant who was charged with reviewing the work of ASWAC and the Secretary of State Women's Program, presented her final report in May 1986. An excerpt of the report appeared in a previous volume of this Newsletter (June 1986) and the full report is available in the ASWAC office. The report is exciting reading, for it shows off our collective efforts and diverse characteristics, warts and all.

While completing the process assessment and reading it afterwards, we were able to evaluate many of the ways in which we work. Three processes will be highlighted here. First, two of our longtime members, Mair Smith and Julie Anne Le Gras, pointed out to the board in February that we

may have trivialized the evaluation. Mair said that "contact with members is surely as important as the issues you have chosen to work on", and Julie Anne mentioned that "over the years, members have turned off ASWAC because of, shall we kindly say, "isolated Board opinions and actions". These two sincere and forthright letters reminded this years' board of the continuing importance and difficulty of forging strong board/membership connections. Perhaps the seed of our recommendation to prioritize membership development next year were sown last winter.

We also assessed our process with regard to personnel and finances as a result of Renate's recommendations, three of which are as follows:

"I recommend that ASWAC":

- . develop staff procedures which formally outline conditions of work, benefits, holidays, and review of grievance procedures
- . develop financial procedures which address how deci-

sions are made and who makes them

- . making application for a third staff person with specific responsibility for research

Our self-evaluation and action with regard to the first two recommendations is still preliminary. Amanda Le Rougetel, former office coordinator, made a good beginning by leaving a series of well thought out questions about financial matters. The current staff has planned staff development days which will contribute to policy changes. The third recommendation, and the overall, very positive review for ASWAC, was a major help to us in getting an increase of \$30,000 over the previous year's grant from the Secretary of State. We were able to hire a part-time researcher and part-time publications coordinator. These initial efforts might provide a basis from which the future board can further respond to these recommendations.

**Now is the time to
renew your
membership!
Our membership runs from
assembly to assembly.**

Memberships can be renewed at the assembly

Board selection Process

As the end of each ASWAC year draws near, preparations are made for the selection of new Board members and Regional Reps to continue facilitating the work of ASWAC. In our attempt to make the process effective, efficient and, most importantly non-violent, we evaluated last year's process and, drawing upon it, established a selection procedure that we hope will be acceptable to all our members. This is our plan.

1) Women interested in being on the Board or action as a Regional Rep should declare their interest as soon as possible, preferably prior to the Annual General Assembly. A biographical sketch of yourself with relevant movement and other work and your goals for your work with ASWAC should be submitted to the ASWAC office. All those received prior to the Assembly will be included in the Conference Kits given to Assembly participants.

2) If you have not declared your intention to run for the Board or as a Regional Rep prior to the AGM you will have the opportunity to do so on



The 1986 ASWAC board, (top row, left to right) Suzn Morgan, Terri-Ann Marco, Lavera Creasy, (middle row) Jane Wiley, Lorraine Mitchell, (bottom row) Aura Rose, Cathy Bray, Luanne Armstrong, Frances Adams. Missing, Eunice Olsen and Marty White Sun.

Member or Regional Rep.

3) An information session, entitled, "Working with ASWAC and ASWAC Working with You",

women will be reintroduced at this time. A short period is allocated for questions to be asked of the women by ASWAC members - this time will be limited as we hope most discussions, questions and/or concerns members may have can be raised in conversations with the women Saturday evening. A yes/no vote will be held by secret ballot. Ballots will be collected, tallied up and results announced at lunch.

we have attempted to devise a process that is non-violent, non-hierarchical, yet effective

Saturday, either directly after lunch or following dinner. All women interested will be asked to introduce themselves during one of these periods. The opportunity to stand for selection will close after Saturday's supper. This will provide sufficient time throughout the evening for ASWAC members to talk individually with women interested in becoming a Board

will be held Saturday afternoon between 4:15 and 5:30. This is open not only to those members interested in being on the Board or acting as a Regional Rep next year, but also for those who would like to become involved in ASWAC in other ways.

4) Selection of Board Members and Regional Reps will occur Sunday morning. All interested

This procedure has been proposed by the 85/86 Board. Two members, Lisa Walter and Aura Rose, who are not putting their names forward to return to the Board next year will be facilitating the process. Should you have any questions about the proposed selection procedure please do not hesitate to contact Aura Rose through the ASWAC office or at home at 433-0349.

Annual Assembly 1986

**“changing ways to
change the world”**

**friday, november 14 sunday,
november 16**

registration 4 - 8 pm
Keynote Address 8:30 pm
Entertainment and a Wine and
Cheese to follow.

Spirituality Service 8:30 - 9:30 am
Selection of Board members
10 - noon

**saturday,
november 15**

Workshops 9 - Noon
Concurrent sessions on Pay equity,
Childcare, Aging and Health and
Abortion rights.

Workshops 1 - 2:30 pm
concurrent session on Farm
Women, Labour Legislation,
Superwomen's studies, and
Lesbians within ASWAC.

Closure of Assembly

Business meeting 1:30 - 4 pm
Caucus time 5:40 - 6:30
Banquet and Entertainment
6:30 - midnight

**Come to the
Country Lodge**

3308 53 Avenue
Innisfail
227-2666

Accommodation in the Country Lodge is \$15 for the weekend or \$10 a night. There will be four women to a room, each room has two double beds. If you want to share a room with a specific person, let us know. Non-smokers will be matched with non-smokers.

Childcare subsidy has been set for \$50 maximum for off-site childcare. If this is not a good arrangement for you or your children, please phone the office.

To register phone 424-3073.

November 14, 15, 16

Innisfail, Alberta

Looking back, looking ahead

The following is an analysis and recommendations for our two priority campaigns for 1986; childcare and pay equity. We are proposing that membership development also become a priority issue in 1987. We hope these recommendations will serve as a focus for discussion at the business meeting at the Assembly.

by Frances Adams

Given the enormous amount of work that ASWAC has initiated and responded to in the past year apart from pay equity and child care, I think that we have achieved admirable results thus far with our priority campaigns.

The low attendance at many of our pay equity presentations and workshops was a problem. Given the enormous support for legislated pay equity among Albertans (over 80%), it is difficult to discern why the workshops are not swamped. We need to find some way to give the concept meaning to the lives of women in Alberta. Until we find some answers, we may want to stress the media work on this issue, rather than public events.

... it is essential that we have board members for whom quality, non-profit, day care is a burning issue.

In looking at child care, it seems that it is essential that we have board members for whom quality, non-profit, accessible care and fair pay for child care workers are burning issues. Child care has not garnered the interest among board members that pay equity has. We need more bodies and minds devoted to working on the campaign consistently throughout the year. I hope that we can inspire more women without children to be more active given that many of us have more time than do overworked mothers.

Both the pay equity and child care campaigns need the active participation of unions. We had made little attempt previously to make connections with them. Union activity in the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care has been critical to its success thus far.

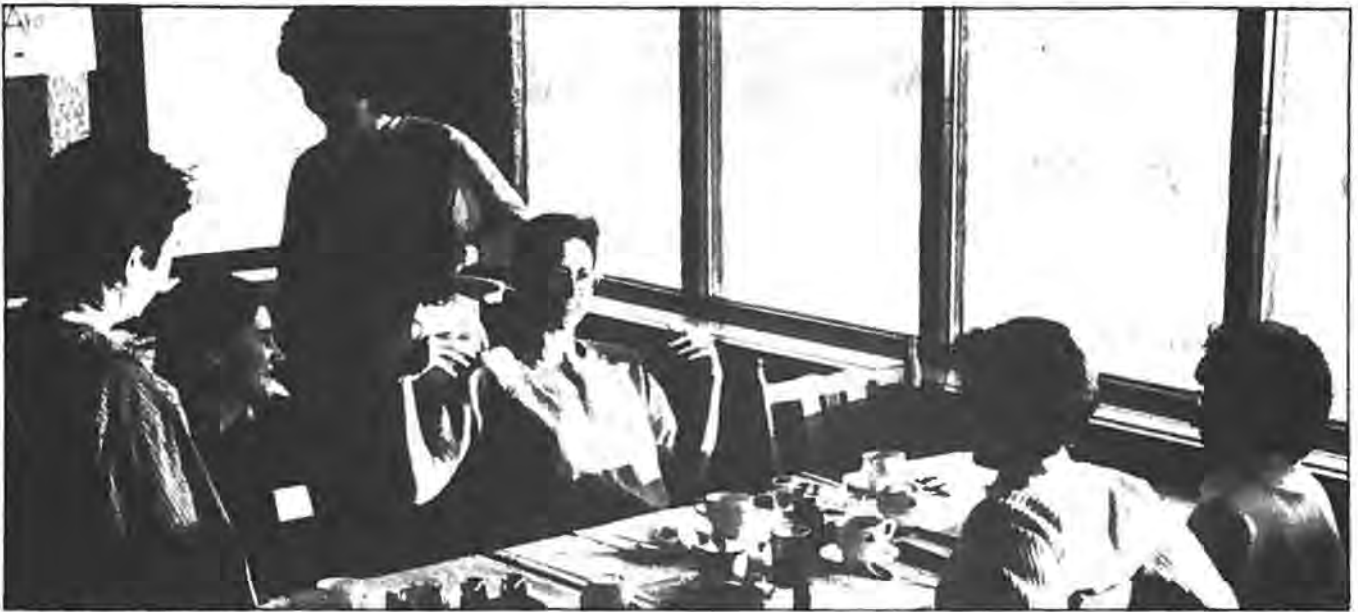
This year's board is recommending that we continue work on these two priority issues, and that we add a third: membership development. We hope that there will be lots of stimulating discussion about these issues at the business meeting at the Assembly.

Pay equity campaign: What have we achieved?

- * production and distribution of a pamphlet and other brochures
- * presented 12 workshops in 6 different areas of Alberta
- * press releases and dozens of interviews across the province
- * the basis for a Coalition has been started with endorsements gathered from many different organizations
- * a major presentation to the Alberta Human Rights Commission
- * a meeting with former minister of Labour, Les Young
- * a meeting with the minister for Women's Issues, Dennis Anderson
- * provided information and analysis on this issue in several Newsletters

Possible strategies and projects for the pay equity campaign

- * production of kits that included personal accounts of pay inequity and its effect on women's lives
- * do further work on coalition building and encourage other groups to do work on the issue
- * build links with unions, especially women's committees within the provincial unions
- * organize the National Action Committee's mid-year meeting next fall or winter; given that the sponsoring group is responsible for the content, we could have a national conference on pay equity!



Breakfast at last year's assembly

photo by Sheryl Ackerman

Child care campaign: What have we achieved

- * brief to the Federal Task Force
- * brief to Edmonton's Public Affairs Committee on out-of-school-care standards
- * encouraged member lobby (by letter) of MLA's for increased commitment to non-profit and higher quality care
- * lobbied the Alberta Government for an increase in out-of-school-care funding (FCSS)
- * joined the Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care. Frances is now a board member
- * participated in the Ad Hoc Emergency Group on Out of School Care
- * made links with the Calgary Association of Quality Child Care
- * met with Dennis Anderson
- * did some Media work, primarily reactive
- * major insert in Newsletter

Possible Strategies/Projects

Possible actions and projects for our childcare campaign

- * build stronger links with child care groups and centres outside of Edmonton
- * focus more attention on child care needs of women who are not in the paid work force
- * continue to emphasize the abysmal pay of most child care workers; address the value of women's work and pay equity in the context of this group of women workers

Membership development:

- * support the development of local ASWAC membership committees. These committees could act as support groups, welcome committees for new members, lobby around local issues, and do whatever they felt was important
- * develop a new membership brochure, as well as a membership resource list
- * find new ways for members to get involved, these could be advertised in the newsletter.
- * use the Athabasca University's speakers list as a resource

ASWAC regional reps

Last year at the Assembly, we developed a system of regional representatives for around the province. These are some suggestions for their work next year.

- * wherever possible, two women should share the duties of regional rep, for support and to avoid feelings of isolation
- * reps should have regular meetings, and have money allocated in the budget for their travel. One board member should try and attend these meetings, and likewise one regional rep should try and attend each board meeting.
- * reps should try and identify non-threatening ways of getting together with local women around local issues such as kitchen table meetings
- * the regional rep structure should include orientation for new members and reps
- * identify better ways to publicize ASWAC events, such as pay equity workshops.

**Alberta Status of Women Action Committee
Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and Accumulated Surplus
For the year end March 31, 1986
(With comparative figures for 1985)**

	1986				1985			
	GENERAL	CONFERENCE	SECRETARY OF STATE	TOTAL	GENERAL	CONFERENCE	SECRETARY OF STATE	TOTAL
RECEIPTS (Note 2)	\$ 8,570	\$ 12,250	\$ 99,486	\$ 120,306	\$ 3,841	\$ 1,947	\$ 54,560	\$ 60,348
DISBURSEMENTS								
Accounting			1,875	1,875		500	540	1,040
Advertising and promotion			525	525				
Bank charges		89	200	289		20	112	132
Board Outreach			1,353	1,353				
Dues, fees and subscriptions	350		1,598	1,948	10		557	567
Evaluation expense			19,366	19,366				
Honoraria		1,425		1,425		400		400
Insurance			95	95			110	110
Meetings and conferences			4,927	4,927				
Office		2,119	9,222	11,341		2,038	9,412	11,450
Rent			3,030	3,030			1,953	1,953
Telephone	116		2,223	2,339			2,342	2,342
Travel and Lodging		9,336	7,917	17,253		5,124	11,340	16,464
Wages and benefits			41,481	41,481			39,523	39,523
	466	12,969	93,812	107,247	10	8,082	65,889	73,981
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	8,104	(719)	5,674	13,059	3,831	(6,135)	(11,329)	(13,633)
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS BEGINNING OF YEAR	3,831	833	8,848	13,512		6,968	20,177	27,145
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS END OF YEAR	<u>11,935</u>	<u>\$ 114</u>	<u>\$ 14,522</u>	<u>\$ 26,571</u>	<u>\$ 3,831</u>	<u>\$ 833</u>	<u>\$ 8,848</u>	<u>\$ 13,512</u>

2. RECEIPTS

Details of receipts for the year were as follows:

	GENERAL	CONFERENCE	SECRETARY OF STATE	TOTAL
Provincial grant	\$	\$ 4,500	\$	\$ 4,500
Interest income		42	1,754	1,796
Secretary of State		4,000	97,000	101,000
Wage subsidy grant			732	732
Donations, memberships and other income	8,570	3,708		11,391
	<u>\$ 8,570</u>	<u>\$ 12,250</u>	<u>\$ 99,486</u>	<u>\$ 119,419</u>

The financial records of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee are in very good order at this time. We have received all of our funding from the government for this fiscal year. Keep those donations coming!

Judy Elliot, bookkeeper
October 15, 1987

Paula Caplan debunks myths

by Luanne Armstrong

The myth of women's masochism is a "giant mislabelling of human behaviour", said Dr. Paula Kaplan, head of the Women's Studies department at OISE, at the University of Toronto. Kaplan was speaking as part of the series of public lectures put on by the Women's Resource Centre of U. of A.

"Women are caught in a perfect Catch 22", she pointed out, by a psychiatric definition of their behaviour. First, the behaviour which women are taught is "normal" i.e., submissive, unselfish, nurturing, is now being labelled by psychiatrists as self defeating and masochistic. However, women who don't behave in this way are punished by society and called other terms, "aggressive, castrating, etc." "Women are damned either way" Kaplan said.

Kaplan pointed out that the psychiatric definition of masochism is contradictory, since the behaviour that is labelled masochistic involves women who are trying to avoid pain. As an example, she cited a study she had done of 12 and 13 year old prostitutes in Toronto, who were expected to exhibit masochistic behaviour. However, Kaplan said, they were really exhibiting normal behaviour in trying to survive in the situation they found themselves in.

Kaplan also explained the work she had been doing in trying to keep the American Psychiatric Association from listing as a new psychiatric disease, something called masochistic personality disorder, which will, almost by definition, include most women who exhibit unselfish, nurturing, normal female

behaviour. Kaplan pointed out that this definition would end up punishing victims of abusive behaviour, for example. Final hearings on this will be held in December.

Kaplan also dealt in her talk, with four other myths, including the myth that women are not friends, and can't work together, the myth that mothers are responsible for everything that happens to their children, and the myth

that male and female spatial abilities are different, which she said, her studies had shown to be untrue, even though other psychologists took such differences for granted. Psychological research is politically loaded, she pointed out.



In conflict with the law

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies has published a booklet entitled, "A Forgotten Minority, Women in Conflict with the Law", and there is a copy at the ASWAC office.

The booklet that they have produced is a very readable study of the realities of women's lives who are desperate and at the end of their rope.

The reasons that women commit crimes are neither glamorous nor exciting. Poverty, and the threat of male violence are strong motivators for women to break the law. Some women go to jail for standing by their man, at the scene of the crime. Many women who are arrested, have experienced violence and abuse in their lives.

The study reveals the plight of the Native women and shows that native women make up a disproportionate percentage of the prison population.

"In 1982, Native women comprised more than 20 per cent of the number of women in prisons in Alberta and British Columbia and more than 70 per cent of the total

female prison populations in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. In 1976, Native women constituted about 2.5 per cent of the total female population of Canada, yet they comprised 21.7 per cent of the total inmate population at the Kingston Prison for Women. In 1984, 20-30 per cent of the inmates were Native."

Prison experiences for women are fraught with health problems and depression. Many women lose their children to foster homes while in prison and have difficulty getting them back afterwards. All in all, most women do not experience rehabilitation in prison, nor do they find the support and the help that they need.

The booklet ends on a positive note however, as it looks at alternatives to the prison system and suggestions for reforms. The conclusion is a call to action, asking women to work for the Elizabeth Fry Society nearest to them, or to arrange with their local jails to visit with women in custody.

Both Edmonton and Calgary have active Elizabeth Fry Societies, and their addresses are listed in the phone books.

Woman as politician

Part two of our series on women and politics is an interview with Pam Barrett, NDP MLA for Edmonton Highlands. Pam has a Master's degree in Political Economy from the University of Glasgow, and worked as a researcher in the New Democrat Office prior to running and beating Dave King in the May provincial election. Aura Rose conducted the interview.

Aura: What is your background?

Pam: "I grew up as the sixth child of seven, with a mother who had very strong instincts with respect to how the world treats women, how the world undervalues women, how society accepts these male generated stereotypical views of women, and a mother who decided to fight against that stereotyping. Money was not easily accessed, so this was a double burden for my mother. From that background, I developed fundamental views that differ from the more conventional views of many."

Aura: Why did you become a politician?

Pam: "Because I think that the most effective way to fight the wrongs is to be in the echelon of the decision making process, and the top level in the province is to be an MLA."

Aura: Has this required a significant change to your lifestyle?

Pam: "Yes, absolutely. I have no time to myself."

Aura: Do you feel that more women should get involved in politics?

Pam: "Absolutely. I feel almost lonely here. If it wasn't for two other progressive women MLAs I would feel very lonely here. A women's perspective is unique and needs full representation at the decision making level."

Aura: What factors hinder/help women to get involved?

Pam: "The biggest hinderance is the left over common perception that women are not right for the job. I didn't face the individual hinderances that some women do, in as much as I do not have children or a spouse. So I don't have demands on my time at home aside from those of my wonderful little feminist dog. However, and I don't mean this to be sexist, not being a male I may also note that I didn't have a wife to do all the things that I do myself. And that took a lot of time away from the campaign. No one did my banking, grocery shopping or cleaning. I lacked what an 'ordinary' married man might have had."

"The biggest help was that I was fortunate in attracting high powered women who not only worked, but ran my campaign. Also, with the awakening consciousness in North America, there may even have been a

slight advantage to my being a female, in as much as some people would say 'I never voted NDP before but I'm glad to see a woman running.' People are waking up to the recognition that we are fully valid participants in society."

Aura: How can the women's movement encourage women's involvement in politics?

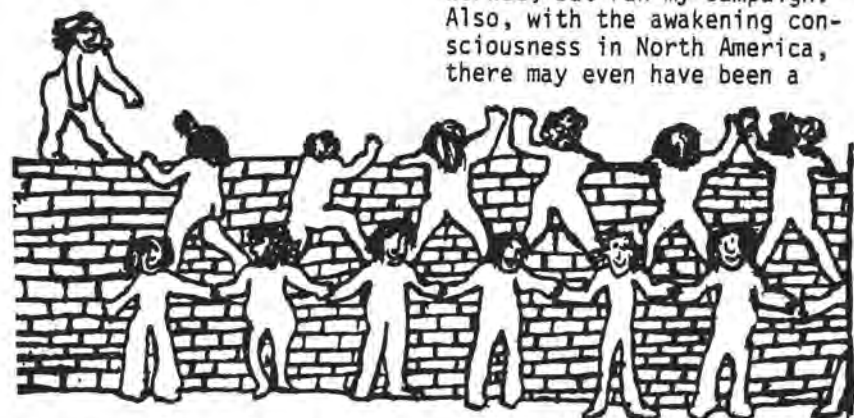
Pam: "Show them a few wins. The role modelling is very important."

Aura: Do you feel that women make a different type of politician than men?

Pam: "Yes. I think we speak more from experience, and draw more heavily upon it. I believe that women have developed gut instincts for asking the question 'how will that affect the people who otherwise go without voice. It comes from the experience of being women, from being unrecognized, in large measure, in our society. That leaves us to say - how will that affect the people this issue really affects? Women have a vital connection to grass-root politics."

Aura: How are women affecting politics in the short and long term?

Pam: "In the short term by directly challenging the concepts as enunciated by politicians from all spectrums. The concepts all too often have a hidden understanding that does not reflect the validity of women in any of the concerns enunciated by women. In the long run by achieving the kind of balance that would result in the deconditioning process. To decondition people out of stereotyping, away from assumptions that have left women as second class citizens. If we can make policies that delegitimize those concepts, in the long run you get equality of gender."



Women redefine the meaning of peace

by Luanne Armstrong

My understanding of the feminist perspective in the peace movement came abruptly, and forcefully. It was at a peace workshop, about half men and half women. As the morning's discussion began, it soon became apparent that the men and women there had different matters to discuss. The women wanted to talk about social change, about feelings engendered by nuclear weapons, about how to transform our society from a constant state of war and violence to a peaceful one.

The men wanted to talk about throw weights, IBMs, the feasibility of the Soviet's building a base on the moon, and what the US should do to counter that. One man said loudly, putting an end to almost all discussion for the morning, "there's no point in talking about social transformation. Its easy. You just do it."

Later that afternoon, just before a scheduled workshop on despair and empowerment, the men all left, and the women stayed and dealt with their feelings of frustration and anger, not only over nuclear weapons, but about the ways in which they had been silenced and frustrated by the day's events.

As I began going to women's peace events, I heard women like Dr. Ursula Franklin and Dr. Rosalie Bertell and Solanges Vincent and so many others explain and analyze how the system of mutual terror, nuclear weapons, was part of a global system of militarization and violent confrontation which is a natural result of patriarchy, a system which retains control through hierarchy based on power and terror, not just

military terror, but economic and social coercion as well.

This system, of course, places men, particularly white North American men, on top of a descending pyramid of oppression of poverty, violence and pain, where women and children, and in particular, women and children of colour, suffer the most. Feminists understand this clearly. Not surprisingly, many men, particularly those who are benefiting and continue to benefit from such a system, do not. They also can't seem to understand how they got themselves in such a mess and what to do about it. Clearly, at this point, nuclear weapons are not of much use to anyone except to continue to make arms manufacturers rich, and keep the wheels of capitalist economy spinning.

But conferences such as the True North Strong and Free?, from which a feminist perspective has been almost totally excluded, will do little to change such a system, no matter how much lamenting and sighing goes on. Without an analysis and willingness to change...without the men involved in the perpetuation of the patriarchy, and of violent global militarization, understanding their role, without a vision of a free and open society where such weapons are neither needed nor possible, all the conferences in the world won't change anything. Ever since nuclear weapons were invented, both the men involved in inventing them, the men involved in building them, the men involved in deploying them, the men involved in designing strategies for their possible use, have been deploring what they are doing. But they have continued to do it.

In the meantime, women have been massively and globally



involved in organizing, analyzing, healing, reading, writing, talking, and developing alternate ways of working together for social change.

World wide, women do eighty percent of the work of social development and social change, and in the peace movement itself, at least seventy-five percent of the active members are women. Together, women are developing a spiritual, bonded vision of a peaceful world, and they are slowly and deliberately working toward finding ways to implement their goal. It is a slow process, but then, it has taken us a long time to get in this particular mess.

It won't be the architects of nuclear terror that decide to take the system apart, no matter how obviously ludicrous it is.

Excluding women's voices from disarmament negotiations, or attempting to exclude them within the peace movement itself, is one more way of perpetuating the system, not of changing it. It won't work, of course. Women will continue to work for peace in many ways, because they understand the vital importance of their voice and their vision.

Feminist understanding and perspective within the peace movement is vital. That it may not be heard loudly and clearly at the upcoming True North Strong and Free conference is tragic for all of us.

Employment project launched

by Dianne Desrochers

The Edmonton Business and Professional Women's Club has introduced the Women's Employment Program (WEP).

WEP is a one-year project whereby business and professional women in the Edmonton area, who are either unemployed or currently seeking to change career directions may send in resumes. When someone from either the private or public sector needs to fill a vacancy, the B&PW's Club forwards copies of all resumes in its files of women who have relevant experience in that area.

Club President, Dianne Desrochers, said that WEP is the largest community project they have ever undertaken. This service is absolutely free to both employers and to professional women who want to submit resumes. WEP is sponsored in part by the federal government and, in part, from the Club's own resources. Desrochers stressed that the BPW is not acting as a personnel or employment agency. Neither does it accept responsibility for the accuracy or authenticity of the resumes it receives. While the program is open to any professional women in the Edmonton area, all applicants must have a minimum amount of skills and qualifications. She must be gainfully employed or belong to at least one of the following:

- the BPW
- any women's organization
- any professional or community association
- any non-profit or volunteer organization
- the Chamber of Commerce
- any service club

After convincing the federal government to help finance WEP, Desrochers has now pulled a second coup. She has arranged for the Chamber

of Commerce to deliver 6,000 brochures along with the Chamber News in December. Essentially, the WEP brochures, which sells the program to potential employers, will reach every business and government department in the city.

"We have just under 100 resumes on file already" said Desrochers. "They cover everything from secretaries to engineers, to social workers." The BPW has also

received a lot of support from the local media.

Desrochers stressed that WEP is not only a community service project, but also meets her Club's mandate of working toward the improvement of economic, employment and social conditions for women.

If you wish to submit your resume or would like further information, contact the BPW at P.O. Box 11965, Edmonton, T5J 3L1 or call 452-5530.

Women of India: speak

In Search of Answers, Indian Women's Voices from Manushi
Edited by Madhu Kishwar and Ruth Vanita, published by Zed Books London, 1984.

by Janet Beebe

In Search of Answers is a compilation of articles, editorials and letters from India's feminist journal Manushi. I've known of Manushi for a number of years, but read it for the first time only recently.

In Search of Answers, was a valuable find, allowing me to get a sense of earlier issues.

The book is not an easy one to read, because it is so moving, but it did raise immeasurably my consciousness of how millions of women live in other parts of the world.

It is a political book. The women of Manushi take sides. Specifically, they are committed to providing a voice to India's many poor and dispossessed women. As well, they strive to gather news and stories from all parts of India in an effort to build solidarity among Indian women regardless of the multitude of regional and class differences which exist.

In Search of Answers contains a number of sections: Women's lives, Women's struggles, Vio-



lence against women, and Women's Politics. The issues dealt with are wide ranging, including land rights, dowry, bonded labour, 'natural disasters' - in fact, any issue which has been shown to have a heavy impact on women. In addition, there are a number of letters reprinted from Manushi's pages, as well as an interesting account of Manushi's origins and operation.

The book can be found at the Women's Resource Centre, 11019 90 Ave, Edmonton. (US distributor: Biblio Distribution Centre 81 Adams Dr. Totowa New Jersey 07512.)

Subscribe to Manushi, a quarterly magazine, at c1/202 Lajput Nagar 1, New Delhi 110024 India. \$18 Canadian (\$19 if you pay by personal cheque) and \$24 US for institutions.

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Moon in concert

On November 22, 1986, the Newsmagazine for Alberta Women is sponsoring a fundraising concert with Winnipeg singer/songwriter Moon Joyce. Warm-up act for the event is Peggy Ward of Calgary.

Moon is an energetic performer, who says her voice is her primary instrument.

Moon will also be performing in Calgary, Friday, November 28 at 8 pm at Orpheus Theatre, SAIT Calgary. Tickets available at A Woman's Place Bookstore. The Calgary concert is brought to you by SHE WHO productions.

Racism and Sexism

The Calgary Status of Women Action Committee is sponsoring a very exciting speakers series and conference this fall and winter, called, Women of Colour: Women and Racism. November 7, the speaker will be Glenda Simms, President of the Congress of Black Women in Canada. She currently lives in Regina. The panel will cover Racism and Sexism, the relationship between them and how they work to create double and triple oppression for women of colour. Other panelists will include Bea Medicine, a Native woman speaking from her perspective, and Lynn Fraser, a white woman active in the Calgary women's movement.

Work with ASWAC

ASWAC has these exciting volunteer tasks to be done:

- Assist with the registration at the Assembly
- researching software prices, makes, and model and uses for a computer in the ASWAC office.
- do research into current issues affecting the lives of women in Alberta, ie, the Forget Commission Recommendations, or extra billing and abortions. The research could be published in the newsletter.
- library cataloguing, filing, and sorting of the existing library.

Benefit for El Salvador

The Friends of Ames in Edmonton is sponsoring a benefit concert Friday, November 7 at Sacred Heart Parish. Performers include Sue McGowen, Garret Henley, Tami Cooper, Los Ciptillos and the Victor Hara Dance Troupes. Patty Hercul of the National Coordinating Committee of Friends of AMES will be speaking. For info 425-1271, or 424-6943.

I.W.D. Committee meets

All women interested in working on the International Women's Day Committee, I.W.D. is invited to attend the general meeting on Nov. 27, 7:30, at the Women's Building. To register for child care phone Andrea at 451-3287 in the evening or 429-3570 days.

More work on P.M.S.

We are a group of researchers who are interested in examining the physical and psychological changes which occur in the menstrual cycle in the hope that better methods of diagnosis may be developed. If you have filled out a premenstrual assessment form from a study done last year or if you have no premenstrual symptoms or minor physical symptoms, we would greatly appreciate your assistance. Please call Shirley at 432-6311 or Dr. Cumming Ob/Gyn U of A 432-6636 (leave a message with Elaine.)

Concerned about porn

If you are concerned about the issue of pornography and would like information, suggested action or just to talk about it, you can contact PAAP (Positive Action Against Pornography) at 486-3409.

PAAP has compiled and produced a "Pornography Hurts" information kit. This kit offers: definitions, facts, studies, links, legislation vs. no-legislation, further reading list and what can you do?. For \$4 you receive this kit and a life-time membership with the organization.

PAAP also has buttons "Porn: Entertainment or Abuse?" and signs that say, "Shop here this store does not sell pornography". PAAP's office is at #202 10006 - 149 St. Edmonton, AB, T5P 1K8. We look forward to hearing from you.

New publication for women

Around the Heart is a new, Edmonton based society publishing a participatory newsletter by and for women. Beryl Schmitke 468-0099 or Valerie Joneson 469-5636.

Are you out of date? Read on!



ASWAC's membership runs from conference to conference, November to November, with a 'generosity' period beginning in September.

If you bought or renewed your membership on or after September 1, 1985, you are up to date and ok, you will have a little 86 in the top right corner of your address label. However, if your membership dates from before September 1, you will have a little 85 or even 84 in the top right corner of your address label and **you need desperately to renew your membership!!**

So . . . if you and your membership are out of date, please take a minute and send in your renewal to the office. Donations of any variety are always received with squeals of delight.

ASWAC's membership runs from conference to conference, November to November, with a 'generosity' period beginning in September.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

PHONE - home _____
work _____

**suggested membership fee is \$10.00 but we will of course accept less. Please make cheque out to: ASWAC, Box 1573, Edmonton, AB T5J 2N7

Membership:
NEW / RENEWAL

Donation

Where did you come across the Newsletter?