



# ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

August edition

Volume 8, Number 6



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

**INSIDE**  
**Special feature on**  
**Women in Poverty**  
**on Pages 6 to 11.**

# ASWAC



## 1986/87 Board members

Luanne Armstrong - Edmonton office  
Sheryl Ackerman - Edmonton  
Michele Butot - Calgary  
Anne Dobbie - Edmonton  
Helen Greaves - Edmonton  
Karin Goldberg - Edmonton  
Sally Issenman - Edmonton  
Terri-Ann Marco - Lethbridge  
Deborah Perret - Calgary  
Shelley Scott - Lethbridge  
Jane Wiley - Edmonton office  
Anne McGrath - Calgary office

## 1986/87 Regional Reps

Annete Aarbo - Edmonton  
home 437-4938 office 432-3359

Gerry Bailey - Westeros  
home 586-2983

Joan White Calf - Camrose  
home 672-2210

Lavera Creasy - Calgary

Lori Crocker - Innisfail  
home 227-1141 office 227-3881

Naomi Lis - Lethbridge  
home 381-8727

## Important dates to remember

All members and interested women are invited to attend any or all of our board meetings. Come to the one nearest you! If you would like to see a board meeting held in your community, phone the office or let your nearest regional representative know.

The next board meeting is tentatively planned for August 22, 23 in Camrose. Following that meeting, the next one will be in Calgary, October 3, 4. Make sure that you tell all your friends to come to the Assembly, our Annual General Meeting of the membership and conference to be held November 13, 14, 15.

The deadline for the next issue of the ASWAC newsletter is August 26.

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## Donations

Donations have been most gratefully received from the following sweethearts; Adeline Miron, Deborah Payne, Elizabeth Lefsrud, and Marilyn Assheton-Smith.

## Hug these women!

These women deserve hugs and support for their continued support of ASWAC numerous undertakings; Gerry Bailey, Agnes Wiley, Pat Wouters, Donald Cormier, Lyn Morelli, Valda Roberts, Michele Kelly, Sheila Bertram, Shelagh Edington, Andrea Waywanko, Sheila, Shelly and Liam McD., Joan King, Marie Seeber, Joan WhiteCalf, and all the members of our local committees and committees, and caucuses.

## Call for submissions

If you have any articles, comments, art work or features you would like to see in the ASWAC newsletter, send them in! Letters should be marked, NOT FOR PRINT, if you don't want them in the newsletter. Any submissions will be screened for racist, sexist or homophobic content, and we think we are subtle enough to know satire when we see it.

ASWAC's mailing address is Box 1573, Edmonton, AB. T5J 2N7. Telephone 455-5777. ASWAC's Edmonton office is at 10826 124 St.

ASWAC Lethbridge resides in the Women's Resource Centre, on top of Woolworth's in downtown Lethbridge. Phone 329-8338.

The temporary Calgary ASWAC office is chez Anne McGrath at 1338 8 Ave. S.E., Calgary. T2P 0M9. The phone number is 233-9231.

## Our board meeting minutes

# Eighteen hours at a glance

The following is our record of the board meeting held at Gerry Bailey's farm in Westerose, near Pigeon Lake, July 4-5.

### Present:

Anne Dobbie, Sheryl Ackerman, Jane Wiley, Luanne Armstrong, Anne McGrath, Helen Greaves, Terri Ann Marco, Shelley Scott, Karin Goldberg, Deborah Perret, Honourary board members, (women who are interested in sticking out the entire 18 hours; Deborah Stinsman (Calgary), Lyn Morelli (Lethbridge), Brendan (beautiful baby boy), and Anna Pellatt (travelling feminist). Regional reps; Annette Aarbo, and Gerry Bailey.

We welcomed honourary board members and discussed the process of the meeting.

### Retreat:

We discussed our assumptions about the weekend. Some board members thought the weekend was planned as a regular board meeting while others remembered that we had previously (months ago) planned to hold some sort of retreat this weekend, and spend time together and talk of the work we do, how we do it, feminism, envisioning the future, etc. We decided to do our business on Sunday, and the rest of the time would be set aside for retreating. But before we did that, it became apparent that the office staff were overwhelmed with all their work and needed to talk about their concerns.

### Personnel:

Much discussion took place about the pressures of the office work and the toll it can take on our staff. The bottom line was basically that the staff need more support and direction between board meetings. A work planning committee was struck. Deborah, Sheryl and Helen volunteered to be on the committee. The work planning committee's priorities will develop over time and will structure itself according to the needs of the staff. The first meeting of the committee will be held on July 12 from 2-5 pm in Edmonton.

### New job in Calgary:

Anne was scheduled to do a two week orientation for the beginning of July, but because little preparation had been done for the orientation, and because doing the work seems to be the best way to proceed with orientation now, that is what was decided Anne should do. She is doing a lot of background reading into the history of ASWAC, and as other questions come up for her they will be dealt with.

Anne will focus her time and energy initially on setting up an interim office space in her home. The deadline for finding a permanent office space will be September 1.

Anne will be hosting a press conference to announce her position and the new office. The office phone number will be secured by then. To become familiar with ASWAC and her position, she will read the priority campaign briefs and begin to introduce herself to the women's groups in Calgary. She will stay in contact with the Edmonton office by phone at least twice a week.

### Membership Development:

The board approved the cost of production of a television commercial that the Membership development committee has proposed. It will cost \$700 and we hope that it will be premiered at the Assembly as we want feedback from the membership before we air it on T.V. The commercial's theme is: Feminist - More than a label.

### Assembly:

The location for the AGM, November 13, 14, 15 will probably be held in Camrose or Red Deer. Jane and Luanne will confirm the location.

The workshop committee explained to the board, the format of the workshops for the assembly, and laid out the agenda for the entire weekend. Much support was

received by the committee for the work that they had done in choosing the workshops. It was felt that we will provide many exciting, and politically relevant workshops.

Our applications for funding for the Assembly (from the province) needs to be completed quickly and sent in. Anne Dobbie and Luanne are working on it.

#### Legal Defense

Fund: We need money and/or help with ideas as the court case continues. Edmonton has a legal fundraising committee and will be discussing the possibility of hosting a benefit dance or concert. Calgary and Lethbridge are planning activities, so members are encouraged to contact their board members if they have ideas or can help.

#### Regional Reps:

Next meeting will be held in Innisfail September 20. Gerry reported from the last meeting that two important issues need further discussion; one being recruitment of more regional reps, the other being to consider changing regional rep zoning.

#### Meech Lake:

Anne McGrath will prepare a short brief to present to the New Democrats' public hearings on the constitutional accord. She will concentrate, in her brief, on how the Meech Lake Accord affects our goals for a child care system in Canada.

#### Childcare:

The board engaged in a lengthy and lively discussion concerning work done inside the home and how our child care campaign does not address policy solutions of how to monetarily reward this type of work. More discussion is needed to continually address how we value women's work and

reward this type of work. More discussion is needed in order for us to be able to address the value of women's work and the choice that some women want, and that is, staying at home to take care of children.

#### Saying Goodbye:

The Board acknowledged that we have not always been great at saying goodbye to those board members that resign during the year. Luanne volunteered to write Darlene and Sheryl agreed to write to Kathy. We also decided we need to let the membership know of resignations through the newsletter.

#### Donation:

We agreed to donate \$100 to the Calgary Reclaim the Night committee to ensure that the march takes place again this year.

#### Co-sponsor:

We also decided to lend our support (\$175) to the Women's Resource Centre and Program, Dept. of Extension, U of A, for their forum on Racism and Sexism.

### The 1987 ASWAC Annual Assembly

# **FEMINIST:**

## **More Than a Label**

## **November 13-14-15, 1987**

### **November 13-14-15, 1987 Camrose, Alberta**

All members and interested women are urged to attend this exciting conference and Annual General Meeting. Free on-site childcare and first-class accommodation.

Mark the date on your calendar! Brochures with workshop descriptions and other details will be available soon!



# A country full of feminists

The National Action Committee's Annual General Meeting, held in Ottawa in May, was both exciting and disappointing, according to Deborah Perret, of Calgary, who was ASWAC's delegate to the conference this year.

The conference brings together representatives of the more than 450 member groups of NAC, representing the extremely broad based women's movement in Canada. "Women of colour, the french women, immigrant women, and lesbian women, were powerful voices," Deborah reported.

Although some of the workshops were disappointing; for example, she found that the

lobbying skills workshop lacked action and strategy ideas-- she reported that in a workshop titled, "Is Global Sisterhood Possible; Can NAC Serve Women of Colour?", there was an exciting sense of educating ourselves...the sense that its up to us to find out what it is that we're racist about."

This workshop was put on by Glenda Simms, who was a speaker at the Women and Racism series sponsored by Calgary SWAC. Simms is the President of the Congress of Black Women of Canada. Deborah found the issue workshops to be the strongest part of the conference. They were held on such topics as Side by Side, (Legal rights

for lesbians), Accessible Childcare, The Women's Movement at the Crossroads, Criminal and Civil Penalties for Pornography, Custody and Mediation, Equal Rights for Aboriginal Women, Peace --- Formulas for feminists -- and Prostitution.

"The structure of the conference was somewhat intimidating and silencing," reported Deborah, "but I'm not sure how it could be changed. Many of the more controversial resolutions were referred to the executive and this makes for centralist decision making." She feels that next year ASWAC should make a stronger effort to submit resolutions of her own to this national conference.



National  
Film Board  
of Canada

Office  
national du film  
du Canada

## Marketing Officer Women's Market Development Edmonton

The National Film Board offers an opportunity for stimulating and challenging work for a period of two years in the promotion and utilization of film and video to community and educational audiences, particularly women's organizations and groups concerned with women's issues. The position will be based in Edmonton; the territory will be Alberta and the Western NWT.

Applicants for this position must possess a university degree, personal initiative, organizational abilities, a good cultural background, a marked interest in cinema, marketing experience, and a knowledge of the women's community in the territory.

Good fringe benefits and salary range from \$25,000 to \$41,000 commensurate with qualifications and experience are offered.

Candidates are invited to forward their resume prior to 14 August 1987 quoting competition number 24 to:

National Film Board  
Personnel Branch  
PO Box 6100, Station A  
Montreal, Quebec  
H3C 3H5

NAC: THE ORGANIZATION THAT  
SPEAKS NICELY TO POLITICIANS

by Deborah Perret

Robert rules and orders  
the gathering Womanspirit.  
The scent of Wild Womanhood  
caged by "friendly amendments."  
"The passion of an action"  
stolen by outsiders,  
jealous and fearful  
of the birth  
of Ourselves for OurSelves.

Women of Colour  
The French Women  
The Immigrant Women

create fire  
red hot in their anger  
not silent  
their breath vitalizes me  
I shiver,  
challenged.

The Lesbian Women  
even our sisters do not try  
to heal the sorrow  
of fatigue  
sadness  
isolation  
repetitive.

The swollen tongues  
of many words unsaid  
the un nourished bodies go home  
and wonder  
where they have been.

# WOMEN

by Luanne Armstrong

Much as we would often like to forget the fact, we live in a capitalist society ruled by a money economy, where the person who has money has more choices and power in their life than someone who does not. Women, as a whole, have less money than men, that is, we are poor, but we are often poor separately instead together, because we do not realize how deeply economic inequities between men and women are built into this society.

One of the most profound and least commented on social revolutions that has taken place in the past twenty years, is, simply, that women have gone to work outside of their homes. Women want and have a right to jobs and we have exercised that right. But, the financial, social and political rewards that should have followed such a choice have not come about. Instead, although women are working in

the paid labour force, their economic power in relation to men's remains small, and in fact, this year, for the first time in eight years, decreased instead of increased.

Lets look at some figures... in 1984, Canadian women earned, on average, only 64% of what Canadian men earned. Almost fifty percent of the paid labour force in Canada is women, but in 1984, 26% of these women had only part time jobs. Sixty eight percent of employed women are not unionized, and therefore receive only the benefits guaranteed by the Employment Standards legislation, which is minimal. However, domestics and farm workers are excluded from this coverage.

In Alberta, two-thirds of the people earning minimum wage are women. A new and disturbing phrase has entered contemporary political jargon... "the feminization of poverty." Families headed by women are 4.5 times more likely to be poor than families headed



*Andie*

---

# HOW MANY

by men. After divorce or separation, a women's income falls, on average by 70%, while a man's rises by 43%.

The way we value work in this society is lopsided and contradictory. For example, as a society, we say we value mothering, and we pay sentimental lip service to the work that mothers do. But we give single parent women just enough social assistance to keep them from starving, force them to live in sub-standard housing, in dangerous and degrading situations, tell them its their own fault for not being able to keep a man, any man, and then blame them if the children they are raising fail to meet society's standards in school or as adults. Even though, as a society, we say we believe that caring for children is important and skilled work, we pay childcare workers in Alberta minimum wage and consider it adequate.

There is no one single answer to the problem of

women and poverty. Legislated pay equity measure are an important change that must take place. Accessible, flexible, dependable, non-profit childcare would ease many women's minds and allow them the opportunity to make some choices. But, as Marie Laing suggests, we also need to think long and hard about how we value work. Sheila Rowbotham, writing in Woman's Consciousness, Man's World, in 1973, pointed out that the closer paid work resembles women's traditional work of serving and caring for people, the less it pays. It is depressing to realize, fourteen years later, how true this still is.

(This article is an abridged version of a brief that was presented to the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issue's hearing on the topic of Women and the Economy.)

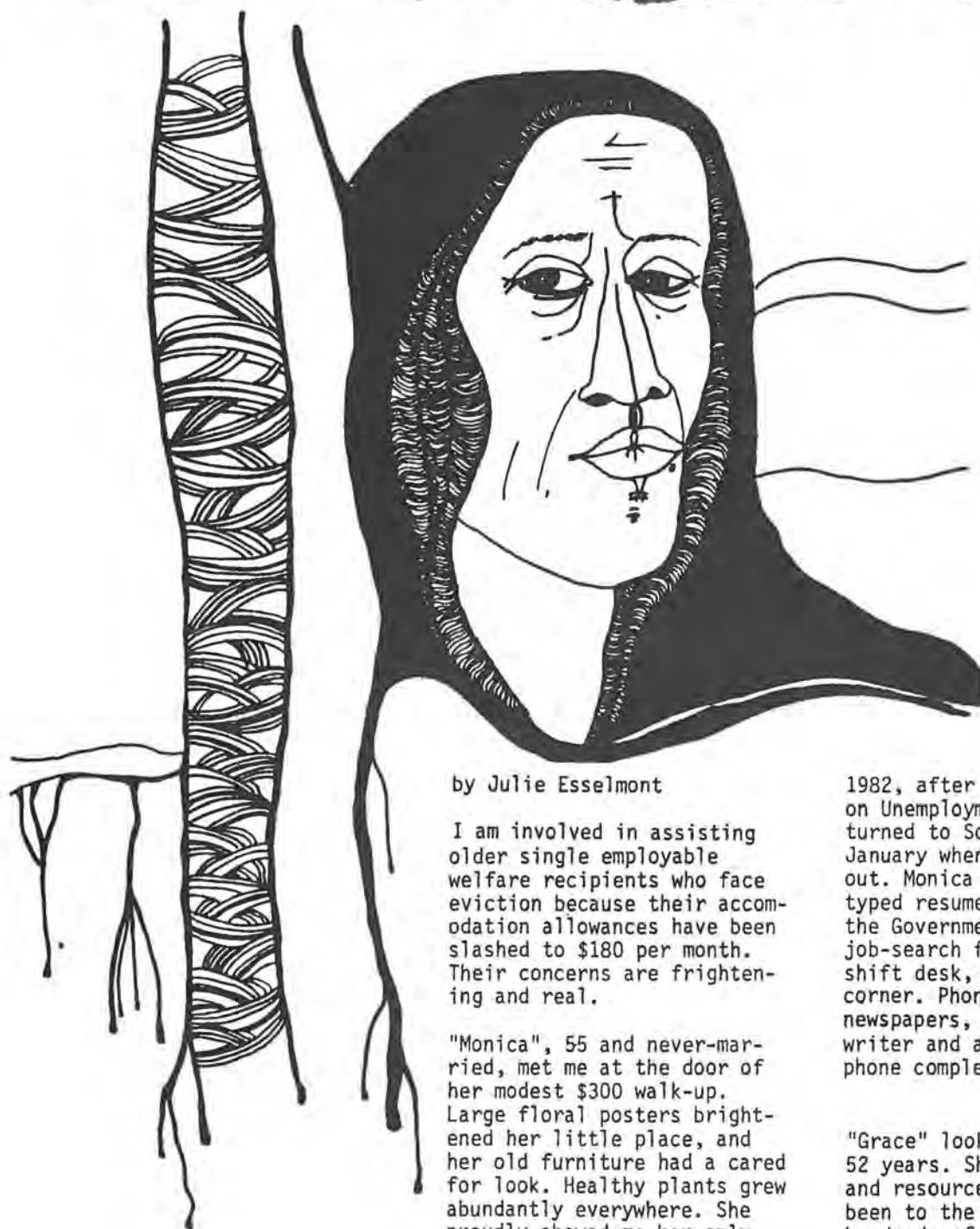
## With nowhere to go

Homelessness is a grim reality for thousands of Canadians, according to a survey conducted by the Canadian Council on Social Development.

On January 22, 1987 nearly 8,000 Canadians slept in temporary and emergency shelters across Canada. During 1986, beds were provided to about 100,000 homeless and destitute people and over 1 millions meals were served by about 300 of Canada's shelters and soup kitchens.

And the figure does not include people who slept in shelters which did not participate in the survey. For example, many transition houses for battered women chose not to participate because they were concerned about protecting the confidentiality of their clients. In addition, some shelters were undoubtedly missed.

# WOMEN IN POVERTY



by Julie Esselmont

I am involved in assisting older single employable welfare recipients who face eviction because their accommodation allowances have been slashed to \$180 per month. Their concerns are frightening and real.

"Monica", 55 and never-married, met me at the door of her modest \$300 walk-up. Large floral posters brightened her little place, and her old furniture had a cared for look. Healthy plants grew abundantly everywhere. She proudly showed me her only "luxury" - an apartment sized freezer wedged between the bed and wall in her tiny bedroom. She buys inexpensive cuts of meat, makes creative casseroles, which she freezes, and always has one week's worth of meals on hand. Needless to say, Monica has never used the Food Bank. She worked full-time as a cashier-receptionist until the slump of

1982, after which she survived on Unemployment Insurance. She turned to Social Assistance in January when her savings ran out. Monica sends out carefully typed resumes and completes the Government's compulsory job-search forms from her make-shift desk, a card table in the corner. Phone books, paper, newspapers, a portable typewriter and an old black telephone complete her office area.

"Grace" looks older than her 52 years. She too is thrifty and resourceful and has never been to the Food Bank. She has hundreds of low budget recipes which she shares as a neighbourhood volunteer. She declared that she "always paid her way" until 1983 when she lost her clerical job. Like Monica, she lived on Unemployment Insurance and savings until seven months ago. She becomes apprehensive, withdrawn and shows signs of depression when she talks about her future, the thought of



# WOMEN & POVERTY

which terrifies her. Her tiny \$325 Norwood apartment is neat and orderly, and Grace appreciates her quiet neighbourhood. Her days are spent looking for work, and she uses the resources of a nearby agency for typing resumes and socializing a little. Her seven-year-old television set provides entertainment, as Grace does not go out at night. Her only marriage ended in divorce 25 years ago. She has no children.

Monica and Grace do not smoke, and they drink very seldom. They have no relatives in Edmonton.

I joined Monica on her search for a \$180 apartment. As we approached the rundown old building, ever-cheerful Monica said, "it might not be too bad inside." We followed the caretaker along the dingy hallway which reeked of urine and garbage, waited while he fumbled through a wad of keys and, upon pushing open the rickety door, he said, "this here's the suite...three hundred dollars." A splintered cupboard teetered precariously on the old plaster wall, and a pair of empty wine bottles on the warped window-sill filtered the sunlight into the sleazy room. Somewhere a door slammed and a husky voice screamed 4 letter oaths. To complete this depressing picture, the filthy floor was littered with cigarette butts. "Bathroom's down there, wanna see it?" "No thanks, we've seen enough," Monica replied. Once outside, Monica raised her voice for the first time: "Three hundred bucks - for that!"

Searching for a place for Grace was equally futile. \$180 will buy nothing at all.

Monica and Grace, both Alberta-born, are typical of the single employables I have met. Perhaps when they were younger, they were not competitive enough to be success-

ful in our materialistic society. Perhaps they were too gentle, too easy-going and too passive to escape their dead-end jobs. They did, however, serve society as contributing wage-earners for many years, and each in her own way - made a contribution to that society.

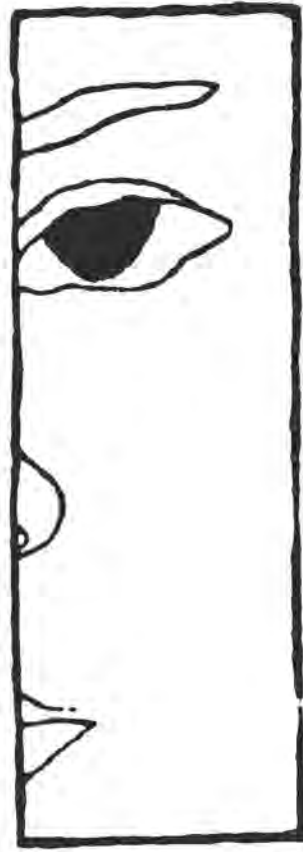
Their present situation is stressful and cruel. They are kind, clean-living people whose middle years are against them in a very tight job market. Although all have taken upgrading courses and attended "job search clubs", they still have difficulty obtaining an interview. They want to work and incredibly, they feel optimistic about their chances of "making it, someday soon".

Time has run out for Monica and Grace. They have never thought of themselves as burdens on society or "welfare

bums". They volunteer a few hours every week to their communities because they worry about people less fortunate than themselves. No employers however, have come forward with job offers, which would provide a passport to the dignity, self-esteem and solvency that these people deserve.

They all possess a remarkable ability to survive on very little in a time of rising costs. Can Mrs. Osterman not give them credit for this achievement? Instead, her department doggedly insists that they play its elusive "job-search" game - for jobs that do not exist, at least not for the middle-aged.

Mrs. Osterman, the Minister of Social Services must review the senseless, unfair and inhuman cuts to the single employable shelter allowance.



# WOMEN & POVERTY

by Luanne Armstrong

Marie Laing, an NDP MLA, recently introduced a pay equity bill into the Alberta Legislature. Although the bill made it to second reading, the Legislature has now adjourned, and the bill will have to be brought up again in the fall if it is to come to a vote.

Laing said, in a recent interview with ASWAC, that her interest in women and poverty has deep personal roots. She says she has always had a keen sense of injustice about how difficult it is for a single woman to raise children in this society, but it was not until she was divorced and faced with raising four children on her own, that she became outraged.

Laing believes that coupling pay equity legislation with affirmative action programs is just one method of dealing with the economic inequities between men and women in our society. Laing also believes that education, while it is extremely valuable for women, it is neither the problem nor the solution to women's poverty. "It's our value system," she says. "We undervalue the kinds of work many women do, such as childcare, secretarial work, counselling, and make the assumption that women will be satisfied with less.. women often work out of dedication and commitment, as well as to pay the rent and buy the groceries. I think we have to have a whole change of attitude... for example, look at



**Marie Laing, NDP MLA for Edmonton Avonmore.** months of age to go to work." Laing believes that right wing people who mouth platitudes about supporting the family ignore or don't see the obvious contradictions.

*"It's our value system," she says.  
"We undervalue the kinds of work many women do, such as child care, secretarial work, counselling..."*

"The lack of economic choices makes women vulnerable," She pointed out. "Women often have to stay in abusive or destructive situations because they have no alternative."

childcare. It's a tremendous responsibility, and right now there is a lack of standards for training. We need to look at the value of that work."

Laing is deeply concerned about the contradictions she sees in our society. For example, she points out that we say we value mothering, yet we make life for mothers on social assistance incredibly difficult. "Another contradiction... here we have a government that says it values children, but wants women on social assistance who have one child over four

Laing thinks there are other actions the government could take which would help alleviate women's economic hardships. She would very much like to see an increase in the minimum wage. "A high percentage of people receiving minimum wage are women." Laing is also concerned with part time work and the erosion of worker's rights. "The contracting out of work means that employee's benefits and job security are eliminated," she points out.

Laing wants women to speak out on the impact that a free trade agreement would have on women. She says there would be a loss of jobs in the textile and garment industries. Services and banking would move to the U.S., but most of all, she is concerned that there would be an erosion of the social safety net in Canada, which many women are forced to rely on. "Women would suffer disproportionately," she points out, if our social services were further eroded.



# WOMEN & POWER

## A victory in Ontario

by Luanne Armstrong

Pay equity is an idea whose time is surely coming in Canada. Although seven provinces including Alberta have legislation providing for equal pay for similar or substantially similar work, the federal government, Manitoba, Quebec, and now Ontario have pay equity, or equal pay for work of equal value legislation. Bill 154 in Ontario, has now passed its third and final reading. This legislation will introduce pay equity into the private and public sectors in Ontario.

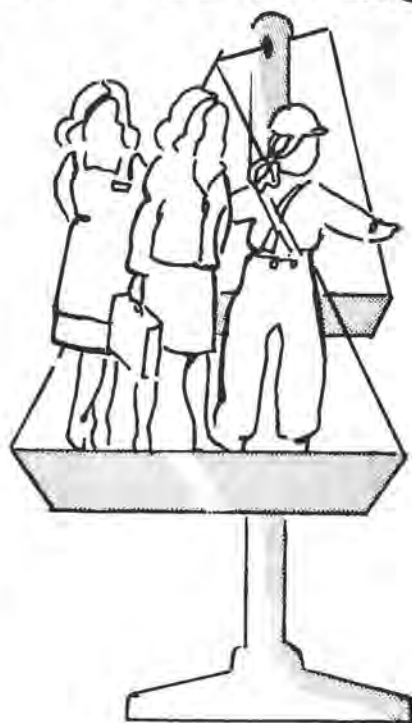
This bill requires that employers compare job classes occupied predominantly by women with those occupied predominantly by men. Where jobs are found to be of equal value, and where pay differences exist, wages of the female dominated job class will be raised. Comparisons are made on the basis of skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions.

Implementation of the bill will be gradual. Annual pay equity wage adjustments need not exceed one per cent of the previous year's payroll. Pay equity wage adjustment for the public service and broader public sector employees will start two years following proclamation, and must be completed within five years from the beginning of the wage adjustment period.

A Pay Equity Commission is being established to administer the Act. In addition, a Pay Equity office will provide public education and assist in the resolution of complaints. The office will also provide complaint resolution services by way of review officers, whose role

it will be to investigate complaints raised by employers, employees, or their unions on issues arising from pay equity plan negotiations and implementation. A Pay Equity Hearing Tribunal will provide an opportunity for an independent hearing in cases where agreement cannot be reached by key participants and/or review officers.

Although there are differences in the various forms of pay equity legislation that now exist in Canada, it is encouraging to see that this method of addressing the continued economic inequities between men and women is not only being put into practice in Canada, but is working.



## Waiting for the Minister

by Jane Wiley

When letter writing doesn't do the trick, a sit-in just might. On Wednesday, July 15, members of ASWAC, Edmonton Working Women and an ex-resident of Hilltop House sat in front of Mrs. Connie Osterman's office demanding a meeting, and after a two and a half hour wait, were led into the Minister's office. Meetings had been previously requested over the phone and in letter weeks previously, but those requests were not only turned down, but they weren't even acknowledged.

Mrs. Osterman met with the group for fifteen minutes and listened to compelling arguments against the closure of Hilltop House, a shelter for women with nowhere else to go. And although Mrs. Osterman paid attention to the stories of poor, desperate, and sometimes dying women, she responded with the same pat answers we've all heard too many

times before. Tough economic times, a regional office decision, no budget left, other services are provided, blah, blah, blah. The reality of women's lives; broken women with perhaps one chance left, didn't seem to fit into the discussion. They were, as it were, not the point.

The point, it seems, is that the provincial government is interested in doing away with itself. Privatization of social services and budget cutbacks are the tools of a small (minded) government attempting to appease the private business sector.

The Minister of Social Services appears to remain immovable on the issue of the closure of Hilltop House. However, if you are interested in attempting any further action on this issue, please contact the ASWAC office in Edmonton. Sitting-in is hard work, but it has the potential to bring results.

**August edition**



# Working women demand dignity

The following is an open letter to the women's movement dated June 9, 87 from Marilyn White, Chairperson of the CUPE Airline Division Women's Committee.

You may be aware that flight attendants at Wardair have lodged a complaint to the Human Rights Commission, alleging Wardair uses its female flight attendants as sex objects. The complaint is based largely on discriminatory grooming regulations: we must wear make-up, we must wear high heeled shoes, we must maintain company specified weight, and we must shave our legs and underarms. These regulations for females are laid out in the flight attendant manual and are strictly enforced.

We would like you to help us by writing to the company, as public pressure seems to be the thing to which Wardair responds best. If they think they may lose business, they may change their archaic and sexist policies.

We are not allowed to wear slacks, only skirts or dresses. Our job is physically demanding and requires a lot of manual work which we would feel more dignified and comfortable wearing slacks. Also, we would no longer have to show off our legs for the passengers.

Senka Dukovich, who filed the complaint and spoke on it to the media, has been disci-

plined by the company and suspended for two weeks without pay. We feel the company is trying to intimidate other women from speaking out and supporting the complaint when it is investigated by the Human Rights Commission.

Rest assured that the exploitation of female flight attendants by airlines has been documented and is historically sound. This exploitation continues today, as is obvious in Wardair's policies, and we are trying to right the situation step by step.

Coverage of the Human Rights complaint was on the front page

of the Globe and Mail on March 27, 1987, so Wardair should expect to hear from women's groups. We are convinced it is only the public (groups like yours) who can change Wardair's mind. The suspension has also received media coverage.

Please send letters to: Peter Bolton, Vice-President, Customer Relations, Wardair Canada Inc., 3111 Convair Dr. Mississauga, ONTARIO, L5P 1C2. It would be helpful if you copied us: Women's Committee Local 4015, Airline Division of CUPE, Suite 301, 5415 Dundas Street West, Islington, Ontario, M9B 1B5.

## News from the windy south

by Shelley Scott

In the month of June in Lethbridge we focussed on women's spirituality. At one of our regular discussion evenings we talked about spirituality, and the comments ranged from those who felt this was a very important part of their lives to those who had given up that area with relief or regret. It was agreed that traditional, established religions have done much to oppress women, and that new ways of defining spirituality need to be discovered. Out of this discussion came a new Spirituality group that will meet every second Sunday for meditation, reading, and further exploration of the spiritual side of women. For

more information or to join this group, call the Women's Resource Centre and leave a message for Lyn.

On June 29, the Film Committee presented the National Film Board production: "Behind the Veil: Nuns", at the Public Library. An audience of about 50, including many nuns and Catholics, turned out to watch this excellent documentary about the history of women's roles in the Catholic church. The film was really inspiring, as it introduced the viewer to many great women whose achievements and strength in the early church have been lost as the church has become increasingly male-dominated.

Also in June, we had a farewell barbeque for one of our longtime members, Joyce Green, who is leaving Lethbridge for a new job in Saskatchewan. The women of Saskatchewan don't know how lucky they are!

On July 21, at 7:30 pm at the Public Library we will be showing a film on women's involvement in the peace movement, and our speaker will be Anne Williams.

continued on next page

## Join ASWAC today!

Become a member of

● child care committee ● abortion caucus ● lesbian caucus

participate as a

● regional representative ●

or volunteer in

● Edmonton - 485-5777 ● Calgary - 263-1550 ●

● Lethbridge - 329-8338 ●



# The real women have spoken

by Jane Wiley

The Standing Committee on Secretary of State has released its report on the Women's Program, titled, "Fairness and Funding", and many of us have breathed a sigh of relief.

The Women's Program, currently with a \$12.4 million budget funds voluntary women's groups to: "promote greater participation by women in all aspects of society, particularly in decision making and the political process and to increase the capability and effectiveness of women's organizations working to improve the status of women."

The Women's Program was pushed to review its criteria for funding groups because of pressure from anti-feminist, right wing "women's" groups who felt that they were discriminated against by not receiving funding. The hearings were set up to provide groups and individuals the opportunity to voice their views, and the overwhelming response by women from all parts of the country was something to be proud of.

144 organizations appeared before the hearings in person, and 265 groups and individuals sent in written briefs to the committee. Church groups, farm women, unions, sporting organizations, women centres and were represented and the overwhelming majority spoke in support of the current funding criteria, and supported the equality

principles as laid out by the Charter, the UN Convention on Discrimination and the Forward Looking strategies; the document that was produced at the end of the decade conference on women.

The recommendations of the final report state that, "the current funding level must be at least maintained and indexed to a cost of living allowance," and that the "Minister should consider increasing funding to meet the needs of new groups and emerging priorities."

The recommended criteria and eligibility for funding state that: "Funding should be directed to women's groups:

-whose main purpose is to improve the status of women in the home, the work place, the community or the world at large;

-whose principles, objectives and activities support

the attainment of equality for women as stated in the Charter of Rights, Dimensions of Equality: A Federal Work Plan for Women, and other legal documents to which Canada is a signatory including the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Forward Looking Strategies;

-who have a statement of purpose outlining their goals and objectives as well as an action plan for promoting the equality of women;

-who can demonstrate having planned, or undertaken, activities aimed at achieving equality for women."

The report also states that, "Special consideration for funding should be given to the following groups: rural and northern women, and doubly and multi-disadvantaged women (ie visible minorities, disabled women, immigrant women, elderly women, and women victims of violence.)"

July 25 there will be a South Country Fair in Fort MacLeod, featuring local musicians, craftspeople, and an ASWAC-Lethbridge table. Finally, we still have some F.A.K.E. (Feminists Alive and Kicking for Equality) sweat-shirts for sale at \$20 each. Phone 329-8338 to order your very own.



# happeningshappeningshappenings



## Ideas need bucks

The Calgary "Reclaim the Night Walk" is underway. The group doing the organizing has lots of ideas but no money. If you have any ideas about money, please call Linda at 262-1873. If you don't have any money but are interested in getting involved, call Linda anyway.

## For our own health

"Wellness for Women - We Deserve It!", is a conference sponsored by the Alberta Hospital Association and the Royal Alexandra Hospitals. It will focus on contemporary issues in women's health. All women are invited to register. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Cynthia Carver, author of the book, "Patient Beware". Concurrent sessions will offer each participant a wide variety of choices including Women and Self-Esteem; Stress Management; Nutrition for Women; Osteoporosis; Women as Victims; Eating Disorder; Issues in Sexuality and Fertility; Premenstrual Syndrome; Mid-Life issues; The Ethics of Reproductive Technology; and Sexually Transmitted Diseases and AIDS.

Sessions begin the evening of October 16 and continue through Saturday, October 17. For further information, contact Education Services, Alberta Hospital Association, 10025 108 St. Edmonton, AB. T5J 1K9, phone 423-1776.

## Something to do

Women Looking Forward, a network of 72 women's groups in Calgary is sponsoring two discussion evenings in the near future. August 20 at 8 pm at the YWCA, 320 5Ave. SE in Room 121 will feature "Towards 2000 - Without Nuclear Weapons". The evening will feature reports from local women who attended the World Congress of Women in Moscow, June 23-27.

September 17, same time same place, the topic will be "Racism in the Women's Movement". All women are invited to attend.

For information about the childcare subsidy that is available, contact 269-1144.

## From her own mouth

Common Woman Books in Edmonton is presenting two exciting evenings in the fall. October 14, poet Betsy Warland will be doing a public reading. Anne Cameron, author of The Daughters of Copper Woman, will read Oct. 28.

## Abortion rights

The next meeting of the Abortion Caucus will be Tuesday, September 15, at 7:30 pm at the Women's Building in Edmonton, 10826 124 st. This meeting will be a regular meeting of the Abortion Caucus and will focus on strategies for fundraising.

Anyone who is concerned about women's reproductive choice is invited to attend.

## No more secrets

"No More Secrets" is the title of an upcoming conference on Child Abuse, May 24-27, 1988. The conference is designed for professionals who work in the area of child abuse.

It will explore the complex reality of: incest survivors, children of alcoholics, public mores, and state responses to child abuse. It will look at the impact of feminist theories, practices and experiences on professional work.

If you have submissions you would like to make to the conference, or if you want more information contact: Community Resources and Initiatives, 303A Melita Ave. Toronto, ON, M6G 3X1 or phone (416) 536-6340.

## Counselling workshop

Dr. Sophie Freud will be doing another workshop in Edmonton, "Making a Difference as a Counsellor". Dr. Freud is a professor of Social Work at Simmons College in Boston.

The workshop will be Thursday, October 29, 1987 from 1-4 pm at the Westin Hotel. Registration is \$40. For more information or to register contact Community Services Outreach, Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, at 462-5550.

## Take Back our Night

It is feminist tradition to host a Take Back the Night walk on Friday, Sept. 18 in our cities. As of yet, little action has been taken to organize this year's event in Edmonton.

If you are interested in helping to organize the walk, please contact the ASWAC office, and we will put you in touch with other women who would be willing to work in a collective manner to make the walk a reality. Phone ASWAC at 455-5777.

# happeningshappeningshappenings

## Hate does hurt

EGALE (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) has launched a campaign called HATE HURTS, to pressure the government into taking some action on discrimination against gays and lesbians.

In October 1985, an all-party committee unanimously recommended "...that the Canadian Human Rights Act be amended to add sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination to the other grounds, which are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, disability, and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted".

The government of Prime Minister Mulroney has made a commitment to introduce legislation. The government has not acted to fulfill this commitment. Are they hoping that Canadians won't notice, that they will be allowed to hold back on their promise until it's too late to do anything for a long, long time?

It is now clear that the government needs to be pushed even harder to ensure that equality rights for lesbians and gay men is followed through to become a legislated reality. Time is running out. Canadian men and women need our support.

EGALE is asking for people to write letters to their MP's and the Prime Minister expressing support for the equality right amendment regarding sexual orientation.

For more information about EGALÉ write to P.O. Box 2891, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5W9. EGALÉ is a coalition of concerned individuals and organizations.

**What's happening?  
Tell us: 455-5777**

## Feminist Lecture

Dr. Margrit Eichler, renowned feminist sociologist, will be giving the key note address to a conference titled, "Every Family is a Working Family", sponsored by the Vanier Institute of the Family, September 18-19.

Dr. Eichler is the author of Families in Canada Today in which she investigates the changing patterns in household management, income generation, parental and marital roles, and child care systems. Her work in these areas makes her an ideal person to address the central theme of the conference: the relationship between families and work.

The conference will be held at Lister Hall, University of Edmonton, and Margrit will be speaking Friday, Sept. 18 at 12:30 pm. For more information contact the conference co-ordinator, Anne Mason at 120 Holland Ave. 3rd Floor, Ottawa, ON. K1Y 0X6, or phone (613) 722-4007. Copies of the conference brochure are available at the Edmonton Social Planning Council at 423-2031.

## Workplace Day Care

In January, 1988, The Canada Place Child Care Society proposes to open the first federal government-supported Western Canadian day care centre.

The volunteer run, non-profit society has elected an 11 person Board of Directors and is working towards obtaining municipal and provincial licenses. Part of this as a goal is to raise \$50,000 to purchase toys, books, furnishings, equipment, resource materials, etc, needed to outfit the Centre. If these items are not in place, the Centre cannot open.

The society is undertaking to raise funds by holding a garage sale, a bake sale, raffle, and by appealing to charitable organizations. We ask that anyone able to donate contact Ms. Carol Buchanan at 459-7519. Donations will bear the name of the donating body. Watch for advertisements of our sales! Your support will be greatly appreciated.

**NEXT  
SPRING**



## Women and the Family "feminist perspectives"

is the working title of an exciting southern Alberta conference co-sponsored by NAC, ASWAC and Women in Action in Medicine Hat. The conference is still in the planning stages, but if you have ideas, money, or would like more information, call ASWAC Calgary, 233-9231.



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# **CAN YOU HELP the Legal Defence Fund?**

ASWAC has set a target of \$10,000 to cover court costs in our (and others') legal battles. We need:

- Ideas for fund-raising
- Donations to the fund
- Volunteers for fund-raising projects

Plans are presently underway for a giant garage sale to raise money for the defamation suit against ASWAC. Donations of goods to sell can be stored at the Women's Building, 10826 - 124 Street. Phone 455-5777.

ASWAC memberships run from September to September with a grace period from September to the Assembly in November. That means you only have a few months to renew your 1987 membership. So renew now and beat the rush!

<b>Name:</b> _____	<b>Membership:</b> \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<b>Address:</b> _____	<b>Donation:</b> \$ _____
_____ <b>Postal Code:</b> _____	<b>Legal Defence Fund:</b> \$ _____
<b>Phone:</b> _____ (home) / _____ (work)	<small>* suggested membership fee is \$10, but we will accept whatever you can afford.</small>

Please make cheque out to: ASWAC, Box 1573, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N7