



ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

volume 8

number 8



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

The 1986-87 ASWAC board and friends at its retreat



ASWAC

1986/87 Board members

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

1986/87 Regional Reps

Annette Aarbo - Edmonton
 h. 437-4938 w. 432-3359

Gerry Bailey - Westrose
 h. 586-2983

Joan White Calf - Camrose
 h. 672-2210

Lori Crocker - Innisfail
 h. 227-1141 w. 227-3881

Naomi Lis - Lethbridge
 h. 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 meeting held in your community - contact the office or regional rep nearest you.

The search for new board members for our 87-88 year is on. If you are interested in collective process, hard work and lots of sisterhood, think about nominating yourself at the Assembly. We ask women who are interested in sitting on next year's board to declare their interest on or before the Saturday evening at the Assembly. We conduct our formal selection process Sunday at the Business meeting. Think about it!

The Alberta Status of Women gratefully acknowledges the financial support it receives from the Secretary of State Women's Program.

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Hug these women!

Due to the Assembly mad rush, many women who deserve hugs and support for their work for ASWAC go unnamed in this list. Hopefully, they will be mentioned in the next issue. These women however will not go unnamed. They are the women who held us raise \$1100 at an ASWAC garage sale in September. They are, Anna Mioduchowski, Shelagh Boutell, Frances Adams, Ann Gallant, Brenda Manasse, Anne Stirling, Mary T. Hughes, Erica Wuensch, Michele Kelly, Lori, Cheryl Cunningham and Claire Handley. Thanks!!!!

Call for submissions

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 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. The Edmonton office is located at 10826 124 St. 2 Floor, Edmonton. Phone 455-5777. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 10-4 pm.

ASWAC Lethbridge lives at the Women's Resource Centre on top of Woolworths in downtown Lethbridge - #202 325 6 St. S. Phone 329-8338.

The Calgary ASWAC office is located in the Old Y Centre for Community Organizations, Room 303, 223 12 Ave. S.W. T2R 0G9. The office is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The phone number is 233-0731.

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.

1986-87 Recommendations from the board

Work for the future

Each year the ASWAC board evaluates its work of the year and makes recommendations to the Assembly of the membership for the coming board year. An important part of this evaluation is the priority campaigns. Our priority issue campaigns for the past year were childcare, pay equity and membership development. This year's Board is recommending that we keep the membership development campaign as a priority issue and that we incorporate childcare and pay equity into a broader, more comprehensive campaign of women and poverty.

Women and Poverty

We know that women's economic status is a key factor in our unequal position in society. Our work is usually low paying or part time, our childcare expenses are out of proportion to our income, we have little or no pension benefits, the social services on which we rely are dwindling, and we have little or no income security. In addition, our ability to be free of violent situations is jeopardized by our lack of economic independence.

An overview of the economic status of women and the economic issues that affect us should be prepared to be published early in the new year. We believe that the priority issues of childcare and pay equity should be expanded to a campaign on women and poverty, using many methods to address this. A campaign on women and poverty would include such issues as pensions, unionization of female job ghettos, affirmative action, human services cutbacks, minimum wage levels as well as childcare and pay equity. The brief would provide a ground plan for next year's work with specific actions. This overview would look at both paid and unpaid work and would include an analysis of how women are kept poor. We hope to be able to look at all the issues in a unified way and use the brief as an educational foundation for further strategy. We recommend that the new Board plan a year long campaign that would include public awareness, public speaking, workshops and direct action on issues as they come up.

Childcare

The childcare committee should have support to continue its work. The issue of universally accessible, publicly funded, free childcare

should be incorporated into the women and poverty campaign. We must continue our commitment to provide high quality childcare at all of our events.

Membership Development

The provincial membership development committee has designed a multi-media campaign with the theme, "FEMINIST: MORE THAN THE LABEL". The campaign includes tv and radio advertisements, T-shirts, buttons, posters and practical information. We recommend that membership development continue to be a priority issue and that the MORE THAN THE LABEL campaign continue through the year with two promotional periods in January and June. We hope that this campaign will help to address the fears and misconceptions about feminism among grassroots Albertan women. MORE THAN THE LABEL is intended to run in co-operation with other groups throughout the province and help to initiate local committees. Regional reps could act as a resource consultants helping to put the campaign into action.

Committees and Caucuses

There should be one Board member to act on, consult with or be a resource to, each major caucus and committee. The Board should try to meet occasionally with sub-groups in a format similar to the community reports section of Board meetings. The issues of autonomy of caucuses and committees and their relationship to the Board should be more clearly defined this year. Which committees are committees of the Board and which are committees of ASWAC as a whole should be clarified.

Work Planning Committee

This year a work planning committee was struck to help plan the day-to-day work of staff based on the priorities established at each Board meeting. The committee met twice in between Board meetings and helped determine which of the million and one priorities set out at the Board meeting could be done before the next meeting. The committee consisted of all three staff people and two other Board members, one from Calgary and one from Edmonton. This should be a standing committee of the Board.

Lesbian Visibility

Lesbian invisibility should continue to be addressed by ASWAC. There should be a lesbian workshop at each assembly and money for the lesbian caucus of the ASWAC membership to continue. Articles on lesbian issues should continue to be published in the newsletter.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

Anne and our youngest member, Brendon

Racism

The Board had many searching discussions on the issue of racism. We must learn to integrate anti-racist work and the concerns of women of colour, immigrant women and visible minority women into all of our work. Education on racism is the responsibility of white women and education about the concerns of immigrant women, women of colour, and visible minority women should be identified by women from these groups with suggestions on how to deal with the issues.

Hiring Practices

The personnel policy must be finalized within the month of January. In the case of hiring, a committee of Board members and non-Board members who are members of ASWAC should be struck to interview applicants and make a recommendation to the Board. When appropriate, someone representing the community for which the person is being hired should be put on the committee. The committee members should be selected by consensus of the Board and will report to the Board with a recommendation to be finalized by the Board. This is an ad hoc committee which dissolves after reporting to the Board and having their recommendation ratified/finalized. The Board then takes responsibility for the hiring decision. The Board recommends the process, mandate and make-

up of the committee by consensus prior to striking the committee. Board members applying for staff positions are excluded from discussion of the process, mandate, composition and the decision for that particular hiring. Positions in ASWAC should be open and will be advertised in the women's movement press. All paid and unpaid previous work experience will be taken into account for the hiring process.

Process

We highly recommend that the first meeting of the new Board include a discussion and workshop on the collective process. The Board should have a full orientation and an extensive get-to-know-each-other round. At this year's orientation, we shared the experiences and thought that led us to become feminists. The Board should consider having at least one retreat that is not a regular Board meeting. Written Board reports should be prepared by each member and read at the beginning of each meeting. We should not stay too long on the second day of the meeting. We tried to honour the circle (we sit in a circle) by welcoming new people properly and by respecting our time together. We built in specific time breaks so people could wait for the designated break. Punctuality is very important. Community report sessions at board meetings should be continued. Expectations about travel expenses should be clearly stated. Agenda building should be done with a brainstorm, time setting and prioritizing. Goodbyes for Board members who leave during the year should be formalized. We should learn to listen to each other fully and recognize our differences. We should also be careful not to silence ourselves - take responsibility for what we're feeling when we're feeling it. There will be a written orientation package with a language glossary of the jargon (circle, round, process, hierarchy, patriarchy, misogyny, etc.) - "If you don't ask the question, the group gets dumber." We tried to have social time together on the Friday evening, dinner together on Saturday and time alone. We found it important to have social, non-agenda time together.



Of course, aside from all this some really major questions remain - what do you wear to your first Board meeting and what is politically correct makeup? These questions and many more are subject to ongoing debate.

On the value of mothers

by Karin Goldberg

My story of the year really begins three years ago after the birth of my son. I thought that I had made a noble choice, the right choice for a woman. I decided to stay at home and devote myself to being a mother. Of course, there were many problems in my belief about the nobility and correctness of my decision, as I, like most women, was a victim of my conditioning. But there is one conviction about motherhood that I believed then and still believe now: Mothering is a profession and as such should be thought of in the same way that society views any other career.

Unfortunately, believing in something and being faced with the reality of a situation can cause some very explosive and devastating conflicts; and so, I was in turmoil for a great deal of the time. I had set out to be the best mother I could, and by the time my son was eighteen months old, I was firmly convinced that either I was not cut out for motherhood; (an idea which had terrible implications for me), or, that society's whole concept of motherhood which included long hours, isolation, and absence of pay or benefits was a very large crock of dirty diapers. Daily, I vacillated between these two ideas. Was it society, was it me? Then, without really knowing why, I took a women's studies course with Athabasca University.

I will skip over all the familiar but nevertheless juicy details of how, during the course, I almost filed for divorce, tried to run away from home and many other predictable activities. I will just say that I suffered a tremendous upheaval in body and soul, and I needed a place to vent my energy and explore my new found sense of who I had become. ASWAC was that place. I decided to become a board member and I dove into my duties with great enthusiasm.

Some of the responsibilities I undertook were working on the childcare campaign and the Kitchen table papers. The latter were supposed to be discussion papers on the value of unpaid work, expanding the idea of the model of mothering as the basis for the way society devalues all of women's work. I found that working on this project helped me to keep in focus my own commitment to bringing my experiences and ideas about being the mother of a young child to the forefront in ASWAC. Through the discussions I

had at board meetings and project meetings, I was very gratified and deeply moved by my sisters' attempts to understand my position and to share my experiences and goals. In fact, it was in large part because of this climate of empathy that I started to again feel proud about being a mother; and, it was also these feelings that encouraged me to want a second child. However, it was really when I decided



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

Karin and Jane talk to the media

to put my son, then two, into daycare part time, that I realized that I could start again with a baby and still feel that at some point I could reclaim my life. It was at this point that I started to work on the childcare campaign. Looking back on the work I did concerning the daycare issue, I am struck by two points. First, that this is of course, a very important time in our history and that inadequate daycare is one of the major hurdles in our fight for equality in the workforce. But, the second point I think, is crucial. I believe that as feminists, we have much to lose by focussing solely on universal daycare while neglecting the issue of unpaid work. I believe that these two areas are closely intertwined and that we cannot work on one without the other. If we try to separate these issues, it is yet another way that we allow ourselves to be weakened by scattering our energies and creating schisms in our movement. There should be no battle lines drawn between women who work in the home and those who are in the paid workforce.

In fact, I think that this division is more harmful than most of us care to consider. I started my work for universal daycare with the belief that it could be equally beneficial to women who can and do choose to work in the home. These women could opt in and out of the daycare system and enjoy a better quality to their lives as well as feeling secure that their children were well looked after and were learning important skills. However, I found

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Groomed as a feminist

by Annette Aarbo

Always was one but didn't know it. Groomed by association with some wonderful women, I learned much in this one year. How to be politically correct - how to be politically incorrect; which I spend some time doing, especially about beer, buns, cheese. (don't ask!)

We had three regional representative meetings

that gradually and almost imperceptibly my own focus was changing so that I was only dealing with daycare for women in the paid workforce. I wholeheartedly agree that there is a pressing need for quality child care because of women's increasing financial responsibilities in combination with our poor economic status. But, this is precisely why there has to be some way that we can be rewarded financially so that we have the realistic choice to stay at home with our children.

Fundamentally, I believe that by not paying proper attention to this issue we will never be able to create a proper foundation for valuing all the work that women undertake. Still, it is even more important than women's lives; it is crucial to changing society's distorted values. Until citizens and governments recognize and act on the belief that children and the women who should be able to choose to bear them and nurture them are the number one priority, there can be no real progress in ecology, disarmament, or (heaven help us) trade.

And so, here I am (having recently moved to Toronto), seven months pregnant, and in spite of my eagerness and pride in the upcoming birth of my second child, I also have moments when I anticipate the familiar feelings of boredom, fatigue and helplessness. Sometimes I still feel scorn for myself as "just a housewife", but I have learned to ignore these pangs as feminism encompasses and embraces all careers and choices. I now find that I have something in common with every mother I meet, and I am continually surprised by the depth of conversation we can manage when we discuss our frustrations and concerns.

I am very proud to have been a board member of ASWAC. I miss you all and wish you all the best in your work and much happiness and fulfillment in your lives.

Love, Karin.

in Calgary, Edmonton, and Innisfail. I contacted five other regional reps in rural Alberta to co-ordinate these meetings. Considering that the regional rep system was only recently developed much time and effort was spent defining the outline for the work.

My work as the Edmonton regional rep is somewhat different than the rural reps because of the office and staff presence in the city. One of the duties I took on was to represent ASWAC on the Women's Building Collective. In this capacity I attended meetings regularly and assisted with the official opening of the new Women's Building (this is where I learned about politically correct food!).

One of the areas where I learned the most about working by consensus and collective decision making was in the time I spent as one of four women on the Hiring Committee for the new staff position in Calgary. This process was relatively new to me (to begin with) but I feel that this experience had a clear impact on my thinking, and there is no doubt in my mind that this had enhanced my daily activities as a developing feminist.

Much time and energy was put forth over an extended time and although much was learned and gained there were other things which I had in mind to do as a regional rep. Specifically, these are relative to: orientation of new members and finding ways to gather more women into ASWAC.

In general my contact with ASWAC and specifically as a regional rep has made me more closely involved with women's public events such as the IWD Coffee House, and the Take Back the Night March. These celebrations are new to me and I enjoyed being part of this with my new feminist friends. Also, I joined caucus meetings within ASWAC on issues which enlightened my personal politics.

I joined two Board meetings this year in Edmonton and Calgary and the retreat in Westrose for one day. Working with women in all sized groups is not new to me; although the process of working collectively by consensus is long, it is thorough and much is accomplished overall.

Through all the ups and downs this year I gained and enjoyed much and therefore I will continue to be involved with ASWAC in the coming year.

Questions keep coming

by Sheryl Ackerman

At our final board meeting, we spent time generating the recommendations we wished to pass on to the assembly. It was then that I felt the strength of the learning I had gained through my year on the ASWAC board. It was then, too, that I felt the sadness of having to say I will not be able to continue on the board. At this time, full-time teaching is an all-consuming matter.

I realised part way through the year what was to be my major learning; namely that I must not be so concerned with finding answers as with asking the big questions, the hard questions.

Many of our recommendations come to you as a result of our looking at some of these big and/or difficult questions. Many of the changes we embraced through the year were also the result of dealing with these important questions.

Values

Do we share the same/similar values? Do we assume that they are the same or do we try to articulate them? Do we have room for diverse values, or are there some values that we consider essential? How do we respond to differences in values? Do we use the term "politically correct" and what do we mean by it? Do we share the same/similar purpose and have we articulated it? Do we share a vision and/or take time and energy to talk about it? Do our principles guide and inspire our work, processes and structures?

Language

Do we speak a "language" that is common to all or exclusive to some? Are we making assumptions that everyone means/understands the same thing when using a particular word or phrase? Is language helping or hindering our communication? Is our language intimidating to some women? If we are using language that some women don't understand, do they feel safe in asking questions or does it feel too risky to ask? Can we find a way to make the language clear so as to avoid assumptions and misunderstandings? Are we keeping silent when we should be speaking/asking? If we are keeping silent when we need to know/say something, are we blaming others for our silence, or are we willing to take responsibility for our silence?

Are we silencing others? and are we silencing ourselves?

NOTE: Starhawk says if we don't ask the questions, the group gets dumber.

Process

Do we understand the relationship between what we do and how we do it? What do we mean by collectivity? Do we understand what the collective process involves? If not, how can we educate ourselves/each other about the collective process? How do we enable a new



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

Board meeting party game fun

(board) member to become familiar with the collective process, particularly the process we are using? What improvements can we make to the process to prevent member burn-out or drop-out? How do we pass on the learnings (through hard, hard work of many women over many years) about process? How do we balance our need to do the hard work with our need to deal with the emotions generated by that work? Do we all understand the same thing when we talk about working by "consensus" and are we committed to it? What selection process do we use (be it for board members, representatives to conferences, etc.)?

Structure

What/who is ASWAC to us? What is my relationship to ASWAC? Do we understand the very unique structure of ASWAC vis a vis collectivity? (staff members are also board members). How do we manifest the principle that all members are valued as equals? Do we recognise distinctions/differences between staff, board members, members? If we see the staff as distinct in some ways, how so we meet their particular needs and help prevent burn-out/drop-out? What processes do we have for hiring staff members? Have we

articulated a personnel policy dealing with job requirements, orientation, evaluation, and so on for staff members? What is the relationship of regional reps, caucuses and committees to ASWAC? How do we manifest our principles when it comes to project workers? (ie: PEP) Are there women absent or excluded from the ASWAC membership, and if so why, and how can we become more inclusive? How do we ensure that members at large are part of the collective process when, for example, they attend board meetings? What is our relationship to government funding bodies, and how does that affect what work we do and how we do it?

And so on...

These are only some of the questions that come quickly to mind as I sit here and reflect on the past year. Believe it or not, we have in some form or other dealt with many of them. Yet they are not questions which, once answered are answered forever. We are ever growing and evolving, and I'm sure even the questions grow and evolve through time. I have felt the pain and the exultation of working hard at some of these questions. My year has been full.

Personally, I feel I brought my own special talents to the board: my optimism (we can have it all!), my music, my photos celebrating who we are as women, my willingness to work and to learn, to talk and to listen, my ability to feel immense emotion (lots of tears!) and to share that. My sometimes "common sense". My great concerns have been to improve the actual board meeting process, to help prevent staff burn-out, and to try to articulate and face some important questions.

My joys have been many. Working with the women on the board, so diverse and particular and strong and intense and caring. Sharing myself, my life, my time, my vision with them and they with me. Knowing that I was valued for what I felt I had to offer. Experiencing the truth for me that I am ASWAC and that ASWAC is the organization which enables me to do the work I feel is important. Coming to a clearer understanding of myself. Being confirmed in my vision. Grasping the challenge of change. Feeling the love that inspires our work our lives and our being.

I am changed, and ASWAC is too.

I will move on, changed, but always close to ASWAC which is you and I and one of the ways (in our endless web) of working for change.

With great love, Sheryl Ackerman

Feminist work bestows wings

by Lyn Morelli

I first learned about ASWAC by attending a board meeting held in Lethbridge. I stayed all weekend because I found a lot of my own stuff was worked on at the meeting but called women's issues. I needed to be a part of the working process for my own growth, so I went to more board meetings and through the collective process decided that I would like to be an active member on the board. I've been trying it out, so to speak, and I hope that any time spent has prepared me for a commitment to the collective structure of the board next year.

Maybe it's the great paycheques and fun opportunities to travel in snow and rain. My family thinks it's just great that I'm gone all the time and they look forward to mom leaving for those board meetings. The real truth is I have learned an awful lot about women's issues and the need for support of them. I feel a burning desire to set the world on fire. Terri Marco says that's being an activist, but I am not one of those!

What have I done? Well, I've been busy meeting with the Workshop Committee to put some order into the Assembly's workshops. In between that I have been trying to put together a legal defence fund committee in Lethbridge. There is also a Spirituality group that meets when I can find my key and remember to be there. I am facilitating the spirituality workshop at the Assembly, (Sunday at 8:30), and it is coming together, although it isn't easy to know what all of you would like to happen.

Take Back the Night in Lethbridge kept me hopping. I sure enjoyed working on that committee; it was a real learning experience.

The highlight of this year was the board retreat in Pidgeon Lake. I got to know the other women on the board better, and I felt a lot of love and support from the very special sharing time we had there.

I would like to be on the board this year. I've grown so much in the little time I've been involved that another year would be like giving a bird wings.

Around in circles

by Joan White Calf

Howdy, greetings from Camrose! This has been my second year as a regional rep for ASWAC; I have been a member since 1982. I was a bit shy about becoming an active member, so I spent the first couple of years just being an avid reader of the Newsletter. It was a great comfort to read about women who were actually doing things to change this patriarchal world we live in. The issues I read about were the very things that mattered so much to me; sexism, child rearing, pay equity - women having the right to make their own choices in life.

Being in a rural area is not often easy when you feel you're the only one who sees how unfair life is to some people. I admired these ASWAC women that I kept reading about. They were so knowledgeable on so many different issues, and I began to feel very familiar with some of the names. Even though I'd never met them, I felt like they were old friends.

One day I discovered that lo and behold, I wasn't the only lonely ASWAC member in Camrose. There were two others! One, Janet Beebe, who was at that time an ASWAC board member, became a good friend and mentor. Through Janet, I began to actually meet these women I had felt such a kinship with.

It was so great to be around women who not only understood how I felt about this mixed up sexist world, but who were actively trying to change it. Being around them gave me such a sense of purpose and a feeling of strength.

With Janet's help, Camrose and I hosted our first ASWAC board meeting two years ago. The only board meetings I'd ever attended were pretty much your standard hierarchical, Robert's Rules type meetings. So, I was amazed to see these task orientated women, sitting around in the sacred circle, taking the time to do a round, to check in with how everyone was feeling. With each woman that spoke, I felt myself being drawn in closer to the circle, until we were a tight, focussed group. When this focus was established, we began to deal with the business at hand. I remember thanking Mother Nature for bringing me to that place in time.

It's been like that since. Sometimes I get dragged down by life, especially during my pre-

menstrual cycle, and I'm tempted to hide away from the world - to not partake in the revolution. Being around feminist sisters always picks me up and carries me through these tough times.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

We really did play musical chairs

With lots of encouragement from ASWAC, I dared to be a regional rep for East-Central. I went through all the stages. I felt a big rush at actually becoming an active member; at times I was really nervous because I didn't really know what I should be doing as an ASWAC rep. Sometimes I felt really inadequate, like I didn't have a right to be in the movement. Many times I didn't live up to my own expectations. Fortunately, these feelings, came and went and I learned to trust myself. I learned to give myself credit for caring enough about people to try to change some things that really bother me.

It was always great to have another rep close by to get some support from. Janet and I ventured forth and tried our hand at presenting feminism to our fair city. We organized film nights, public readings, pay equity workshops, photo exhibits and started support groups. Often we were disappointed by small turn outs, but we learned that rural towns and cities are not the same as the major centres. The numbers are smaller to begin with. So again, I lowered my expectations a little. After all, one feminist is all you need, two is even better. Any more and you have a great chance for change.

Being a regional rep often gives me a kind of edge, in different situations. I remember walking into the local chain food grocery store and explaining who I was representing, and that we were going to do a pay equity workshop in Camrose. I asked them to tell me how certain

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Well, it's like...

by Deborah Perret

It was quite a year...
...when I joined the Board at the last AGM after three years of reading almost every feminist book ever written, listened to every tired feminist that graced my life and began to find my voice.

...when I quit work and went to Mexico for a month, to dream, hike, swim, sunbathe, drink and discover who I was, to catch a glimpse of "me" behind all the labels I chose to embrace.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

...when I travelled to Vancouver to present a ASWAC brief on Secretary of State funding to the standing committee. I was shocked and appalled to realize that some of the committee members did not understand their own funding criteria and supported the funding of R.E.A.L. women, who, blatantly admitted to not supporting the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

staff's wages compared to other co-workers. Everyone was very co-operative and I doubt they would have told me much if I had walked in and requested such private information, on my own. As it turned out, there was an eighty cent difference in men's and women's salaries for comparable work. Guess who was making more money!

As an "out" feminist, I seem to have an interesting affect on some people. Perhaps we become other's moral conscience or something. During a casual introduction to me, one man insisted he was a feminist and paid his ex-wife \$1,000 a month in alimony! I felt that it was because I represented a large feminist organization that this man felt obliged to comment on such personal matters.

...when I travelled to Ottawa to attend the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and I saw many women silenced by the Assembly's structure and how angry I felt when the more "radical" member groups of NAC were disregarded.

...when I struggled with friends and lovers over conflicting thought and feelings about relationships, trust, homophobia, intimacy, loss, separatism and our visions of a feminist future.

...when my father told me he was having heart troubles and I cried

...when I finally received my degree from the University of Calgary. Sweet freedom after so much oppression!!

...when I worked with Women Looking Forward, Take Back the Night Committee, and the Lesbian Conference Committee, I was inspired by the endless "Womanspirit".

...when I went to "Witch-Camp" to study further with Starhawk.

...when I moved from Calgary to Ponoka to work at the hospital for people with mental health difficulties, where I now have found an acreage and live happily with my two cats.

...when I decided, even though I have experienced such pain and growth, that I would go back on the Board.

...because I found the power to like myself, to change, to learn and to ask for what I need and want.

Camrose and I were fortunate enough to host another board meeting this past August. It was as energizing and exciting for me as the first one I had attended. The round was as powerful as ever.

Now I'm anxiously awaiting ASWAC's Annual General Assembly, which is going to be held in my very home town. I think it will be a time for my beliefs, my family and friends to come together in my circle of existence. Thanks again, Mother Nature.

P.S. Come out all you feminist women who are hiding away out there - you might even get your picture on the cover of the ASWAC Newsletter. That's even better than the "Rolling Stone"!

Feminist boom town

by Shelley Scott

When I attended the Assembly last November, I had really only been an active ASWAC member for a few months. I thought, one should have years of ASWAC involvement under one's belt before attempting to be on the Board, and I wavered for most of the weekend between wanting to join and wanting to run in the other direction. But here were all these women encouraging me to go ahead and give it a try. So, I took the plunge and I am glad I did.

For most of my year on the Board, I felt that my main role was one of liaison, giving the Lethbridge members a sense of being in a provincial network by relating what went on at Board meetings, and letting the other Board members know what was going on in Lethbridge (hence the title for this piece...I feel I'm always weaving webs between women, and I love that). There was always a lot to tell the other Board members, because Lethbridge ASWAC has had an incredible year of activity and growth, and I'd like to summarize some of that activity for you here.

Beginning in November of 1986: ASWAC-Lethbridge members made a presentation to Lethbridge city council which resulted in November being declared Anti-Family Violence Month, and a film forum on wife abuse was held at the Lethbridge Public Library. This was the first of a series of film forums, co-sponsored by ASWAC Lethbridge and the library.

In December, The Women's Resource Centre opened and a party was held with speakers, entertainment, and the whole Board in attendance. Food and flowers were donated by local businesses, and the opening received good media coverage, marking the beginning of a positive on-going relationship between ASWAC-Lethbridge and the local media.

Much energy was focused in January and February on International Women's Day, and we worked with a wide variety of women's groups in Lethbridge to plan the event. The theme, Making Connections, was appropriate, as ASWAC-Lethbridge made valuable connections with many other local groups and individuals through the planning committee and through



Taking back the night photo by Sheryl Ankerman

the Think Tank, a meeting held at IWD where representatives of various groups met and discussed our common goals. International Women's Day itself, held on March 7 at the YWCA, was a great success, with good attendance, lots of displays and activities, and a wine and cheese social in the evening with music and poetry readings.

Also in March, a film forum entitled "On Images" was held on the 16, with the film "Killing Us Softly," the slide presentation, "Positive Images", and speaker Doreen Indra of the U of L speaking on images of women in the media. April's film forum featured ASWAC-Lethbridge member and board member Terri Marco speaking on reproductive choice and the film "Abortion Stories, North and South". This event, and a radio debate between ASWAC-Lethbridge members and an anti-choice representative, drew some intense discussion in the community.

In May, much work was done around developing our funding proposal including a meeting with our funding officer and a lot of filling out of forms. Also, ASWAC Lethbridge looked into a job development project proposal to possibly hire some staff for the Women's Resource Centre. This project is still in the works, but prompted some timely discussion about volunteers and paid work.

In June, one Discussion Evening was devoted to a discussion of spirituality, to tie in with the showing of "Behind the Veil:Nuns" at our monthly film forum. Out of this discussion came a Spirituality group, which meets to explore this aspect of our lives as women and feminists.

July was a busy month, with a social event on the 17 intended as a follow-up to the IWD Think Tank and a further opportunity for networking amongst groups. As at our opening, entertainment was provided by the always-wonderful Karen Howe. ASWAC-Lethbridge likes to think of itself as a branch of the Karen Howe fan Club! On the 20 of July, Mary Ann Ayim, a visiting professor from Ontario, spoke at the Women's Resource Centre on gender and language. On the 21, the film forum featured Anne Williams, Chair of the Lethbridge Nuclear Disarmament Coalition, as our speaker and the film "Women for America, for the World". On the 25, ASWAC Lethbridge was represented at a table of information and our F.A.K.E. (Feminists Alive and Kicking for Equality) sweatshirts were sold, at the first annual South Country Fair.

In August, Pat Chuchryk of the U of L spoke to us at the Women's Centre on her travels to Chile and work with the feminist community there, in a talk entitled "Women's Opposition to the Military Regime in Chile."

In September, the big event was the first annual Lethbridge women Take Back the Night March. A film forum was held on the 10, featuring the film, "A Matter of Choice," and our speaker was Naomi Lis, Director of the Southern Alberta Sexual Assault Crisis Program. The Take Back the Night March was held on the 18, and included a Rally and a Celebration with music by Peggy Ward of Calgary. For more details, see the Lethbridge report, in this issue of the newsletter. ASWAC-Lethbridge also participated in an Education Cutbacks Rally organized by the U of L Students Union on the 29, and participated in the planning committee for a Peace Festival, to be held on Oct. 24.

There was, of course, much else that went on throughout the year. ASWAC-Lethbridge members made presentations to City Council, the Meech Lake hearings, and many other bodies on a variety of issues. Wonderful women volunteered and kept the Women's Resource Centre open a few afternoons a week, responding to the growing inquiries from the public, various agencies, and the media, and attempting to keep our financial records in order. Other women went on talk shows and radio programs, others gathered and filed the growing amount of resource material available at the centre. Crossroads, a support group for women in crisis, continued to use the Centre as a meeting place. Some first steps were taken to connect with Native women and to meet the needs of differently abled women. Two newsletters were put together and mailed out. Women wore their F.A.K.E. sweatshirts proudly, women



At the pre-walk rally photo by Sheryl Ackerman

came to meetings and events and talked with their friends, and did all the other pieces of web-weaving that keep us strong. Discussion evenings brought women together to discuss Lesbian Visibility, relationships, health, the psychiatric system, and many other topics. It's been a great year for Lethbridge, and plans continue for the future.

As for me, my involvement with Lethbridge-ASWAC was joined by my involvement with Board work, and I selected to be on the Membership Development Campaign Committee, attended meetings, and helped to plan for the first-ever feminist TV commercial! Hopefully, this revolutionary package will be ready for its grand premiere at the Assembly, and I wish it well in its attempts to reach all those women who we are not yet reaching, as I believe this is possibly the most valuable things for us, as feminists, to be doing...weaving more webs!

I also joined the Workshop Planning Committee, and tried to plan an Assembly with something for everyone...not an easy task, with such a diverse bunch of women, but a very educational process.

With the Assembly in November, we'll have come around the circle once again. I don't think anyone could say its been an easy year...its been very painful at times, and we've learned some hard-won lessons and we know we have many more to learn. No one ever said changing the world was going to be easy, but sometimes changing ourselves is even harder. I'd really like to thank every woman who has been on the Board this year, and all the women in Lethbridge, for your dedication and inspiration and acceptance. I've learned a lot, and I'd like to keep on learning by being on the Board again next year. And my final word is one of encouragement to the women out there who are trying to decide whether or not to come on the Board for 1987-88, as I was at this time last year... its not for every woman, but every woman who is on the Board will be touched by the experience. It's like catching a glimpse of how things could be.

Blessed be. Love and sisterhood, Shelley.

Ten jobs in a single day

Once, back in October of 86, there were four women in the ASWAC office in Edmonton. Then one went on to warmer climes in Vancouver, and one went on to the more august climes of the federal government. Two remained. Until January the ASWAC staff was Frances Adams, Project Co-ordinator, Luanne Armstrong, Office Co-ordinator, Jane Wiley, Publications Co-ordinator (half-time) and Lorraine Mitchell, Research Co-ordinator, (half-time). Now Jane and Luanne remain, and Anne McGrath is the project co-ordinator based in Calgary. The ASWAC office continues to grow, change and somehow, stay the same.

This has been a year of adjustment--to changing personnel, changing job descriptions, changing lives. Amid much thoughtful and careful debate, a decision was made in January, 1987, to open an ASWAC office in Calgary and to relocate one staff position there. This left two full time positions in Edmonton. We decided to share the job of Office Co-ordinator; Jane retained her position as publications co-ordinator, and Luanne finally attained her heart's desire, that of being labelled a feminist researcher.

Along with the thought and care that this year's Board has put into its own process, an equal amount of thought has gone into caretaking of staff, assessing work loads, and re-thinking personnel policy. The Board instituted a Work Planning Committee, to act in an advocacy and caretaking role for staff. The personnel policy for ASWAC has been re-drafted and now needs to be put into its final form.

Other changes have also had an impact on the staff. In February, the Women's Building in Edmonton moved. Consequently, we lived with boxes, unpacked files, and the smell of paint for several weeks. The Alberta government has continued its attack on women, with the erosion of health care, and the continuing crisis in access to abortion. ASWAC has maintained a high public profile in the press, and often this means busy hours for staff, answering the phone and filling the media in on all the things that they don't know.

Often, women have said things like, "I never really know what goes on in the office," or the equivalent. There is no such thing as a typical day at the ASWAC office. Some days are quiet and relatively peaceful...some days are frantic, with both phone lines ringing and people coming in the door two by two. With three offices, three

bank accounts, and a provincial membership, things can get complicated. And, after all, we are in the publishing and education business as well as the lobbying, research and public relations business.

But, unlike other businesses, we act as our own receptionists, file clerks, coffee fetchers, and errand women.

Then there is issue work. Often we set out to do projects, (such as protesting the closing of Hilltop House) which are short term and intense. But, its also important that we not lose sight of the goals of our priority campaigns; childcare, pay equity and membership development. As Board members, we help to plan and design specific issue work. As staff, we carry out these plans.

We also help plan and organize the Assembly. Although decisions about the workshops, goals, and the theme of the



Reaching out via satellite

by Terri Marco

Membership development has always been a personal interest and joy to me, and an important part of the work I do. Therefore, I was very glad to be working with the group of women whose task it was to decide how and what ASWAC's membership development campaign would be.

It is a broad area: to facilitate whatever members require in order to maximize their involvement and personal satisfaction/growth in ASWAC. It means:

- to know what members are interested in
- having an over-view of what's going on, what could go on, and who else is interested
- knowing what is keeping members from doing what they might like to be doing
- connecting members in safe and good feeling ways with each other, and giving them enough support
- getting out of the way and letting things roll.

Our work group discussed the range of places we could focus our work. The long and good discussion seemed to centre in on an issue that had/is affecting us all: the many women we have met with talents, energy, and who basically support all of our positions - who are not involved with our organization and other groups because "Feminist" is perceived as a "dirty" word, a "scary" word, and an "other than me" word. (The I'm not a feminist but syndrome...)

We knew what they are interested in. And we knew what was keeping them from participating. We talked a long time about the many cultural and media promotions and myths and negative conceptions of "feminist". We decided to attempt to break through the phoney bar-

riers between us and those women and reclaim the word feminist.

We realized that in many ways, this is ongoing work done by feminists everywhere - but we had a whole priority campaign to work with! We assessed our resources, and tools to look for the most effective way to promote our idea. Given that a tool is a tool, in itself a relatively neutral instrument, dependant upon its user - we decided to take the leap into mass media, and to build our own skills and confidence in using high tech tools ourselves! Surely a tool can sell truths about women, if it can sell lies!

So, after a great deal of fun (and creativity) playing as high-level advertising executives... (you should have been there...) the "More Than The Label" campaign was born!

Purpose: to break down the barrier around the word "feminist"; thereby increasing women's choices and options of ways to become active participants in working towards solving issues which affect them.

- Method:1) Mass-media education with as multi-media support as possible
- to place "More Than The Label" kits all over the province with ways to highlight the campaign simultaneously
 - 2) To produce a generic feminist tv commercial to spearhead the campaign
 - 3) To involve as many different women's groups as possible for their own benefit
 - 4) To highlight the campaign with 2 "blitzes"
 - 5) To provide follow-up techniques and resources to broaden the concept portrayed on tv in local communities
 - 6) To make "feminist" familiar and fun instead of different and dreary; to tell more of the real story of who we are and how we work.

continued from following page

Assembly are made by the Board as a whole, as the time draws closer, staff are busy doing registrations, answering questions, and filling in any holes in the organizing.

We try to set aside reading and study time, (apart from research work) to keep up with the issues and the volume of mail, reports, and magazines that come to the office. We also respond to

calls we get to do speaking and outreach work. This can be in churches, schools, almost anywhere. We respond to the media on an almost daily basis. We write, edit, and lay-out the newsletter and do writing and research

Often it feels as if we're on the "front lines" in terms for the struggle for an end to oppression. We hear

from women who are being hurt by this uncaring system; and we're directly involved in the struggles for abortion rights, better childcare, and a better economic deal for women. We're grateful to the many women who come in to give us support, help, and treats, It's exhausting, stressful, sometimes frightening, sometimes depressing, exhilarating and demanding work...and we love it!

Action and Outreach

The following are projects either initiated by ASWAC or supported by ASWAC in the last year.

Abortion caucus

The caucus was struck at last year's assembly and in the last 12 months has accomplished a great deal. The caucus is considering a name change and now considers itself autonomous as a group.

Perhaps its most exciting effort this year was a public forum with Dr. Nikki Colody and Lyn Lathrop. The event was well attended and followed by a workshop on strategy for pro-choice organizing. The caucus has since decided that its long term goal is to see the development of a free-standing abortion clinic in Edmonton. ASWAC will continue to support the caucuses' efforts.

Lesbian caucus

Last year's assembly also led to the development of a group whose goals was to ensure that lesbian issues and visibility become a priority within ASWAC. The caucus has met a few times throughout the year, and attempted to form a provincial network of lesbian ASWAC members. It is expected that the caucus will re-convene at this year's assembly.

NDP Consultation

The women of the New Democrat caucus in the legislature called for a consultation with women's groups to discuss its priorities and agenda in regards to women's issues. A number of ASWAC members and board members attended this day-long event.

The Alberta/NWT Women's Centres Conference

One of our board members was involved in the organizing of this year's conference and many of our members were involved in the workshops at the conference itself. The meeting was a success and a

network of women's centres was struck at the time. It would be great to see a conference happen again this year.

May Day 87

In Edmonton, a huge May Day celebration and march was organized by the Alberta Federation of Labour. ASWAC had a table at the fair which was held at the Butterdome on the U of A campus.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC)

ASWAC is a member of NAC and sent a delegate to both last year's mid year conference and the AGM. The board agreed to have a more open delegate selection procedure to make these events more accessible to our members. This year's mid year conference is being held in Edmonton, November 20,21, so undoubtedly many ASWAC members will be in attendance.

Women Studies Outreach Project

This project, based at Athabasca University was co-ordinated by Florence Ellis. ASWAC worked with Florence providing ideas and publicizing the speaker's bureau and the learning packages that were developed.

Edmonton Women's Building

The Women's Building is a collective of women's groups that rent space to-

gether. This year the building was forced to move into a less than perfect space, and has had to do a lot of work to make the building presentable. ASWAC has been one of the major forces behind the building since its inception. The building has recently incorporated and is desperately seeking more tenants. A number of the offices in the

space are currently vacant and must be filled in the very near future.

The Newsmagazine

ASWAC has supported this publication in a number of ways. We have bought subscriptions for the Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton offices and flog them as much as possible.

Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care

ASWAC is a member of this coalition and has had a representative on the board.

Women Looking Forward

This group is an enormous network of over 70 women's groups in Calgary. ASWAC is one of them and our Calgary board members have been very involved in Women Looking Forward's work from the beginning.

Coalition Against Human Services Cutbacks

This year, Calgary seems to have been the place to build coalitions. ASWAC has been involved with this one recently, and is

working with them to organize a people's parliament on cutbacks for the spring.

Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association

ASWAC is a member of this organization and worked with its representatives in Edmonton throughout last year. We worked with it to respond to the Federal Special Common's Committee on Child care and we helped to collect petitions about a national child care program for a June campaign.

Hilltop House

Hilltop House was a home for women without a place to live in Edmonton. Last spring the provincial government announced that it was closing the house due to "lack of funds." ASWAC knew, along with other women's groups that the only thing that was lacking was political will on Connie Osterman's part and organized a lobby to support the re-opening of the house. ASWAC members responded like never before to a letter writing campaign. After the Minister of Social Services refused to meet with us, we organized a sit-in in the Minister's office and finally met with her to discuss our concerns. The house remains closed and many Edmonton women are now on the street, but we sure gave it a good try.

Canada Place Day Care Society

A group of concerned parents successfully lobbied for federal government support for an on-site day care for its federal employees at Canada Place. ASWAC supported their struggle and was very pleased to see their success. Now the group is left to raise the money for the centre's opening.

Take Back the Night

This was the first year that Lethbridge held a Take Back the Night Walk, and the Lethbridge ASWAC women were extremely pleased by the result. ASWAC supported the walk in Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton this year.

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and Accumulated Surplus for the year ended March 31, 1987 (with comparative figures for 1986)

	1987			1986		
	GENERAL	CONFERENCE	SECRETARY OF STATE	GENERAL	CONFERENCE	SECRETARY OF STATE
RECEIPTS (Note 2)	\$ 6,610	\$ 12,053	\$ 112,001	\$ 8,570	\$ 12,250	\$ 99,486
DISBURSEMENTS						
Accounting			3,100			1,875
Advertising and promotion			106			525
Bank charges		18	150		89	200
Board Outreach			1,131			1,353
Dues, fees and subscriptions	50		468	350		1,948
Evaluation expense			388			19,366
Honoraria					1,425	1,425
Insurance			224			95
Legal	359		359			
Meetings and conferences		320	10,461			4,927
Office	101	4,234	13,905		2,119	9,222
Rent			4,430			3,030
Telephone	160		5,092	116		2,223
Training and development			376			
Travel and lodging		7,747	2,291		9,336	7,917
Wages and benefits			62,379			41,481
	670	12,319	104,181	466	12,969	93,812
			117,170			107,247
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	5,940	(266)	7,820	8,104	(719)	5,674
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS BEGINNING OF YEAR	11,935	114	14,522	3,831	833	8,848
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS END OF YEAR	\$ 17,875	\$ (152)	\$ 22,342	\$ 11,935	\$ 114	\$ 14,522
			\$ 40,065			\$ 26,571

Our board meeting minutes

Eighteen hours at a glance

The following is our record of the board meeting held in Calgary, October 3,4. This weekend also marked the official opening of the Calgary office. Hooray!

Present: Jane Wiley, Deborah Perret, Anne, Shelley Scott, Terri Marco, Helen, Michele Butot, Luanne Armstrong, Sheryl Ackerman. Honourary board members; Lyn Morelli, Nancy Miller. Visitor, Nancy.

Assembly: We reviewed the workshop facilitators and ran over the agenda. The New-to-ASWAC session on Friday was clarified as being for new members and prospective board members and regional reps. Somewhere in the agenda it would be a good idea to find time for prospective board members to discuss the position. The written pre-orientation package should include; "Changing Ways", Stories of the Year, and travel, time and process information. Anne and Luanne agreed to work on the written package.

The publicity for the Assembly is somewhat hampered by the postal strike. They will be mailed if the postal strike ends. Otherwise, we will attempt to hand deliver as many as possible.(brochures)

The budget for the Assembly is a bit optimistic but workable. We decided to sell t-shirts and buttons. We agreed to purchase 50 100% cotton large shirts, and 200 buttons that sport the, "Feminist: More than the Label" slogan. Lethbridge will look into prices.

A Women's Place, and Common Woman Bookstores will be asked to set up tables at the assembly, along with the Newsmagazine.

Board Mem. Selection: The selection process will work much the same as last year. Women will be asked to declare their interest in running for the board prior to dinner on Saturday. Each candidate will be asked to introduce themselves, explain their interest, and talk a little bit about their past and current involvement in the movement. They will be asked questions from the membership. They will

also receive distinctive name tags. There is a sixteen member cut-off. There will be a yes-no vote at the Sunday business meeting. We all agreed that we need a member from the northern area.

Membership Development: The membership development committee has continued its work on the "Feminist - More Than The Label" public education campaign. The resulting plan includes the distribution of 20 media kits that will include a copy of the commercial (for tv or radio where appropriate) and information for the groups as to how to use the kit. The commercial and the kit should be ready for its grande un-veiling at the Assembly.

Community Reports: This is the time in our agenda when visiting groups or individuals can meet the board and discuss and issues or concerns that they may have.

A representative of Sister of Sistren, a new Calgary feminist popular theatre group came and explained the origins of the group to us. Sistren is a women's theatre group from Jamaica that works with women to empower them to do work on ending their oppression. Sistren did a workshop in Calgary in June and inspired a group of Calgary women to use the techniques of Sistren to do their own work. In the future, they hope to plan popular theatre workshops besides continuing to write and perform their own pieces. They will perform at the Saturday evening at the Assembly.

Mudechi - means Women of Chile, and Ema Urra came to tell us about this group and its activities. It is a large women's group in Chile and now has numerous chapters in Canada. In October it is sponsored an event to raise people's awareness of the military dictatorship in Chile and the number of disappeared persons. Ema promised to keep us up to date about this group's events.

The Calgary Women's Health Collective has lost all of its Sec State funding. Sec State has decided that it will not fund groups that primarily work on education surrounding women's health issues. Sec State will only fund groups working on the issue of access to health services. The Collective is looking into alternative sources of funding and is beginning plans to offer feminist counselling services. The group is moving into an office in the Old Y, the same building that the ASWAC office is in.

The Voice of Women in Calgary is quite active. Shirley, one of its members came to the community reports session and filled us in on their latest activities. They initiated the "Make Calgary a Nuclear Weapons free zone" campaign which was successful, and now they are looking into getting a large sign stating the same on the outskirts of the city.

Each November and December the Voice of Women does an Anti-War Toys protest, where they hand out leaflets to shoppers about war toys.

They are also working on the Canadian Peace Pledge campaign, which is an extremely well-organized effort to encourage people to make peace an issue in the next federal election. (See info in this newsletter.)

The Women's Show:

The Edmonton Women's Show is a large trade show of interest to women to be held October 16, 17, and 18 at the Northlands. ASWAC is going to have a table and we will need many volunteers to staff it. There will be child care provided at the show.

Work Planning Cttee.

The work planning committee presented its terms of reference to the board meeting. The committee is keeping minutes which are to be kept in the Edmonton office.

Recommendations:

At the end of each board year, the board makes recommendations for next year's work. These ideas are then presented to the Assembly and discussed by the membership. This year's discussion went very well

and everyone was very pleased with the outcome. The recommendations are laid out in the "Stories of the Year" portion of this newsletter. Copies of "Stories of the Year" will be in the registration kits at the Assembly.

Finances:

We have made some changes to the budget vis a vis the Sec State recommendations for which we have sought approval from regional office. In other respects, the financial picture of ASWAC was seen to be fine.

It was noted that the 87-88 budget should be arranged to reflect the new job descriptions of staff.

Personnel Policy:

Helen has (somewhere) the revised personnel policy. When it is found it will be sent to staff for approval then sent to the rest of the board for approval, along with the old policy. Any discussion regarding the policy will take place just prior to the Assembly, so that the policy can be approved before the new board comes in.

Evaluations:

Anne is due her three month probationary evaluation. We discussed many different possible processes for staff/board evaluation procedures and decided that we need to do more work in the future before we have a set evaluation process laid down. We agreed that staff will receive an evaluation at the three-month point in their employment and that this procedure will be somewhat different from the one used to do a yearly evaluation of long time staff. We also discussed possibilities for evaluation of unpaid board members. At the end of this long discussion, we agreed that current staff should be given the opportunity to undergo an interview evaluation with the old board, prior to the Assembly. Helen and Anne agreed participate in the interviews, and a report will be written and put on record. The new board will have as one of its duties to draft a more permanent staff/board evaluation procedure.

PEP grants:

We discussed the possibility of applying for two PEP grants, one

for Calgary and one for Edmonton. These positions could act as activities co-ordinators for the two cities. The deadline for the applications is Oct. 31, and staff agreed to do some work on ideas and discuss them at the upcoming work planning committee meeting.

Lawsuit and fundraising: Deborah's lawyer is now the new Ombudsman, and Brian Mahoney has become her new lawyer. The case may go to court in January. One idea for fundraising is volunteering to work for other group's bingos for a cut of the take, since many groups have trouble finding enough volunteers to staff their bingos.

At the Assembly we agreed to do a fundraising pitch. We are going to get a barrel and set a goal for the weekend, and then periodically clean out the barrel and let the assembly know how much money we have collected.

Cutbacks: A steering committee in Calgary is working on a peoples parliament for March to look at the situation of government cutbacks to human services. Groups from all across the province will be invited to attend. Anne and Michele are involved with the steering committee.

NAC Mid-year: The National Action Committee on the Status of Women's mid year conference will be held in Edmonton, November 20,21 at the Terrace Inn. All board members who are interested in attending will be subsidized for their registration. Travel receipts will be reimbursed for also. If anyone else is interested in attending, please contact the Edmonton office for more information.

Abortion Caucus: Is changing its name and sponsoring a rally at the leg Oct. 18 at noon. The rally is being held in conjunction with other rallies nationwide. Generally, the caucus has been quite active and successful of late. A January workshop is being planned on the topic of "dealing with the media". Representatives from the Caucus met recently with Marv Moore, Minister of Health to discuss

the abortion crisis, and funding for birth control clinics. Marv said that he supports sex education in the public schools, but made no announcements about funding.

Bookkeeper: Our bookkeeper has resigned as of November 1, and we will be accepting applications for the very part time position until Oct. 20. The Edmonton office will be responsible for hiring.

Older Women: Gerry Bailey has heard about a group that is setting up an older women's network in Toronto. Gerry requested that the board subsidize her travel to that meeting. The board agreed to free \$180 from the regional rep budget for this trip.

Shop-Talk: Luanne has had a brilliant idea! She wrote a letter to all of the status of women's groups in the west and asked if they would be interested in a weekend networking meeting. All of the groups has so far been very positive about the idea. Luanne is currently looking into funding possibilities to pay for travel for two staff and board members from each group to come to Edmonton, sometime next spring.

Match: Match is an international organization that matches women's projects in the third world with groups in Canada. They have expressed the desire to do a mailing to our membership to which we agreed. NB. We also agreed that we should put a note on our new membership application form so that women can ask that their address not be given out to other organizations.

Volunteer Appreciation: We decided that we wanted to recognize some of our most dedicated volunteers at the Assembly this year.

Stories of The Year: Everyone was reminded about the deadline for submissions to this upcoming issue of the newsletter which is "Stories of the Year". We divided up the story list and many agreed to submit articles or stories. This edition of the newsletter serves as our mid-year report to the Secretary of State.

Amidst hoopla and fanfare

by Anne McGrath

Amidst hoopla and fanfare, the Calgary office was officially opened on October 3. We are now firmly installed in our office in room 303 of the Old Y, 223 12 Ave. S.W. The phone number is still 233-0731. The official opening was properly celebrated with champagne, cake and a ribbon cutting ceremony. Speeches were spoke, drinks were drunk, and cake was consumed.

There seems to be a lot happening these days and I have a feeling that we're just getting rolling. The Reclaim The Night march was very successful with an estimated 120-150 women and children in attendance. A theatre performance by Sisters of Sistren was well received and the weather was perfect for marching. Unfortunately, the media focus-

sed on the fact that men were asked to contribute in ways that excluded them from joining in the march.

The Meech Lake constitutional hearings held by the New Democrats were addressed by quite a few women's groups and had a fair amount of media coverage. Although the federal NDP seems unlikely to reverse their position of support for the Accord, there is still some possibility for the New Democrats to oppose it. The Alberta Liberals will be opposing the Accord in the provincial legislature but thus far the most that the Alberta New Democrats have agreed to is to press for amendments.

The ASWAC brief is entitled, "Fatal Flaws and Egregious Errors: The 1987 Meech Lake Constitutional Accord" and is available on request.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

The ribbon was cut, the cake was eaten and fun had by all.

Congratulations & best wishes

In my work with various community organizations, whether native, disabled, official languages or women, there is a general feeling of being "left out" here in Calgary since most provincial groups are Edmonton-based. It always seems all the action is in Edmonton and that the Edmonton region is better served by the organization.

There usually isn't a lack of good will but there are few travel dollars, limited human resources and it's just easier to build a circle of activity around those who can meet weekly to strategize.

ASWAC has made many efforts to broaden its base with the input of regional representatives, rotating of board meetings, and the annual assembly. The

opening of the Women's Resource Centre in Lethbridge last year has helped link women in this area to what's happening in a broader perspective. Needless to say, everyone benefits as there is sharing of information and work in the many areas that must be addressed to improve the status of women in Alberta.

And so, I bid a warm welcome to ASWAC to Calgary and especially to Anne McGrath as co-ordinator. The Calgary women's community is alive and active. There is a tremendous amount we can do with each other's support.

I am looking forward to working with all of you.

Carol Blackstaffe
Social Development Officer,
Women's Program, Secretary of
State.

The Alberta Liberals had a very good all day forum on Family Violence recently in Calgary. The panels were excellent and covered the issue quite thoroughly. The most powerful moments came when former victims spoke.

The issue of cutbacks to human services is still gathering attention from a wide cross section of people. A committee charged with organizing a conference on this issue has been meeting. The plan is for a conference in the form of a people's parliament called P² which will be held in mid-March.

The Status of Women Action Committee (SWAC) in Calgary is holding a series on our heritage as Albertan women. They have a series of films and workshops on this theme. Call Lisa at 262-1873 for more information.

Please call or drop by the office if you have any questions, concerns or a burning desire to volunteer your time for ASWAC.

Southern feminist boom

by Shelley Scott

The big event in September was, of course, the first annual Lethbridge Women Take Back the March, co-sponsored by ASWAC-Lethbridge and Lethbridge Family Services. A great deal of time and effort was put into organizing this event, and that effort certainly paid off, as the March was a great success.

Events leading up to the Take Back the Night March began with a film forum on sexual assault held at the public library on Thursday, Sept. 10. On Tuesday,



photo by Charles E. Robichaud

Lethbridge had as large a turn-out as Edmonton.

Take Back the Night events were held in these Alberta cities this year.

Sept. 15, women met at the Resource Centre to make posters and banners for the march. And then Friday finally rolled around! The evening began at 7 pm with a Rally in Galt Gardens Park; Naomi Lis spoke, providing the audience with some chilling statistics about sexual assault in Lethbridge, and ending with an account of her dream of a world where women and children are free from the fear of violence. Then a greeting from the Peterborough Rape Crisis Centre was read by Carol Green. The rally concluded with Peggy Ward, singer/songwriter from Calgary, singing the Take Back the Night Anthem. The close to 200 women and children in attendance picked up their posters, banners, and megaphones and began the march, which wound through the

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downtown area, passing most of the bars and the theatres, and ended at the Women's Resource Centre.

At the Centre, the women were greeted with hot chili from one of our male supporters, childcare was provided, and Peggy Ward entertained us with more of her wonderful music. Then music was put on and we danced until the wee hours of the morning, celebrating our strong and positive action against violence. The organizers of the march were very pleased, not only with the success of the evening, but also with the community support from the media, the police escort, and especially with the many women who attended and the co-sponsorship of Lethbridge Family Services.

Other events in September included a presentation by ASWAC-Lethbridge member Ida Horne to the Meech Lake hearings (with thanks to Anne McGrath for sending down her brief), and a Education Cutbacks Rally, organized by the U of L Students' Union on Sept. 29 to coin-

cide with the Tory cabinet descending on southern Alberta.

ASWAC-Lethbridge will be focussing on Women, Poverty and Pay Equity in October, with briefs on pay equity being presented to Lethbridge City Council and the School Board. There will be a film forum on this topic, to be held on Tuesday, October 20 at 7:30 pm at the library. Our speaker will be Marie Laing, MLA for Edmonton Avonmore and NDP spokesperson for Women, Children, peace and human rights.

Also in October, ASWAC-Lethbridge will host discussion evenings at the Women's Resource Centre on Tuesdays, the 13 and 27 and a business meeting on Thursday the 8. Phone 329-8338 for more information.

Looking into the future...November is Anti-Family Violence Month, with a film forum on Tuesday the 17, and December will be Birthday month.. the Women's Resource Centre will be one year old! By the time you mark all these events on your calendar, you won't have time left for sleeping and eating!

happeningshappeningshappenings



Film series

A Writer in the Nuclear Age: A Conversation with Margaret Laurence and Nuclear Addiction: Dr. Roosalie Bertell on the Cost of Deterrence, two films from the NFB Speaking Our Peace series will be shown at Tory Lecture Theatre L-12 at the U of A, November 12, 7:30 pm.

All women are invited to attend this film, one is a series sponsored by the Co-ordinating Committee on Women's Studies.

Working women

Are you a woman experiencing unfair treatment at work? Are you unsure of your legal rights in the workplace? For free and confidential advice, support and assistance, call the Working Women's Hotline at 453-7957.

It's not just your nerves

The Family Life Education Council is presenting a program designed especially for women. "It's Just Your Nerves" is the title of a short course beginning November 6.

If you tire of hearing that its just your nerves, this course will help you look at the pressures in your life: parenting, job, women's roles and how they relate to the use/misuse of prescription drugs and alcohol. For more information call 451-6335.

Exciting media package

"Feminist: More Than The Label" is an exciting, new public education package designed by ASWAC's membership development committee. If your group would like to get in on the action, please call Lethbridge-ASWAC at 329-8338.

Spirituality conference

A steering committee who is organizing a conference on Women's Spirituality is looking for more members. Call Donalda Castle at 439-3595 for information.

Women's music event

November 28 is the date of an exciting concert with Moon Joyce and Karen Howe, at the Edmonton Public Library at 8 pm. The concert is a fundraiser for Moon's new album. Tickets are \$12 and there will be a celebration to follow, so come meet Moon and Karen!

Public lecture

Women and Change in Today's Society is the title of a public lecture being given by Dr. Sophie Freud, Wednesday November 18 at 7:30 pm at the YWCA in Edmonton. The cost of the lecture is \$25. Dr. Sophie Freud is a professor of social work and the granddaughter of Sigmund Freud.

**What's happening?
Call 488-8777**

LMDF meeting

The Edmonton Lesbian Mothers Defense Fund will be hosting a regular meeting at The Women's Building in Edmonton, 10826-124 St. on November 21 at 12 Noon.

The childcare room at the Building will be used to provide childcare for the kids. For more information call 439-5724.

Canadian Peace Pledge

You can make an important contribution towards making Canada a world leader for peace by joining the Canadian Peace Pledge. It is a: pledge by voters to support only candidates who take concrete steps to help end the arms race; a pledge by Canadians to make this country a voice for world peace.

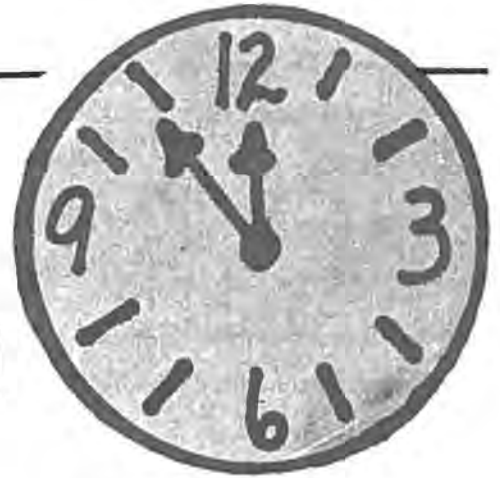
The Canadian Peace Pledge is a campaign sponsored by hundreds of peace-related groups in Canada and facilitated by the Canadian Peace Alliance. Contact your local peace group or write to 555 Bloor St. W., Suite 5, Toronto, ON. M5S 1Y6 or phone (416) 588-5555.

**The NEW Calgary office needs
a desk, a worktable, a file cabinet &
a coffee maker.**

Phone Anne

at 233-0731

**The Alberta Status of Women
Action Committee**
Box 1573, Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 2N7



Your time is up!

If your label has a little '87 in the corner — or worse (gasp!) an '86 — it is time to clip the form below and send it in.

If you come to the assembly, you can renew there.

P.S. If you can't afford to renew but want to remain an ASWAC member, please send in the form below.

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!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ (home) / _____ (work)

Membership: \$ _____

New Renewal

Donation: \$ _____

Legal Defence

Fund: \$ _____

** suggested membership fee is \$10,
but we will accept whatever you can
afford.*

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