



ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

Vol. 5, No. 5



Photo by Muffy Mathewson:
Positive Images: Women by Women.

Often when people try to sum up the activity of a group or individual and can point to no immediate, tangible results, they conclude that the activity was a failure. But how can you count all the circles made by a stone when you toss it into the water.

From "Burning Questions"
by Alix Kate Shulman

And it Took So Long But...

We have had, or more accurately I have had, difficulty getting the work done to ensure that our financial records could be audited. I have even had some difficulty understanding the appropriate audit period (fiscal year, or board to board). This spring we finally had the audit completed that you should have received at last fall's annual assembly; that is to March 31, 1983. But you have never received a formal copy of that audit, so I'm placing that financial statement in this Newsletter.

We are in the process of getting the next audit done, to March 31, 1984. An audited statement will be available for our annual assembly in Calgary on November 3 and 4. I (and others on the board doing the financial work) will be happy at that time to discuss any aspect of our financial status. But if you have questions or concerns before then, please feel free to call me at home in Edmonton.

Marilyn Assheton-Smith

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE
GENERAL ACCOUNT
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
AND MEMBERS' EQUITY
FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1, 1982 TO MARCH 31, 1983

RECEIPTS

Secretary of State - Plan of Action 1982/83	\$58,000.00
Secretary of State - Political Awareness Project	9,000.00
Donations	4,395.78
Interest	2,354.58
Memberships	3,490.00
Sales & Miscellaneous Income	984.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$78,224.36

DISBURSEMENTS

Accommodations & Meals	\$ 1,692.32
Dues, Fees, Subscriptions	434.15
Elections	371.50
Facilities & Rentals	1,110.00
Fund-raising Activities	275.00
Insurance, Repairs & Maintenance	237.38
International Women's Day	3,044.34
Materials	3,030.69
Photocopying	2,109.43
Political Awareness Training	504.32
Postage	3,073.89
Printing	4,136.96
Salaries & Benefits	40,177.77
Telephone	1,963.86
Travel	7,286.80
Miscellaneous	40.11
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$69,488.52
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 8,735.84
Members' Equity, beginning of period	13,336.62
Adjustments to Members' Equity	(1,839.79)
MEMBERS' EQUITY, END OF PERIOD	\$20,232.67



Frances'

Hi Everyone

I'm back at work in the ASWAC office after a two and a half month leave of absence. Before I get completely up to my eye-balls in work again and forget that I was away on a glorious vacation (six weeks in Greece and three weeks in various parts of Europe) I'm going to tell you how wonderful it was. Its fun to tell the stories of my travels to other people and watch their eyes light up with memories of their own trips and hopes for future ones.

This was my first trip to Europe and I was mainly "getting away from it all" rather than going on a sight-seeing tour. I've been working for ASWAC for nearly two years and in the past year devoted a lot of energy to the Sexual Assault Centre in Edmonton as well as the pornography committee of Every Woman's Place. So, I was due for a long break. Strangely, I thought I would leave a lot of my "politics" behind and just "hang out" but I ended up in innumerable discussions about feminism, peace, global politics and so on. Not only did I discover that I couldn't "leave myself" in Edmonton, I realized how much I didn't want to. Extremely tired of talking about pornography, nonetheless I found myself up until the wee hours of the morning on a couple of occasions discussing exactly that (with good results!).

I read a wonderful book while I was in Greece - "The Anatomy of Freedom" by Robin Morgan. It spoke to me with such hope, understanding and humour that my heart positively swelled. I recommend it to all of you who are feeling "burnt out" or despairing.

I fell in love with Greece particularly, with the sun, the sea, the flowers, the fruit, the donkeys, the music, and, oh yes, a wonderful Greek man (yes, they

THE 1984 ASWAC ANNUAL ASSEMBLY



Vacation

are fairly rare). It was elating and tender, crazy and heart-wrenching (I wonder what memories I'm churning up now!). Its too bad that Greece is on the other side of the planet but at least its the same planet!

I find it difficult to impart the feeling of the country to all the people who have asked, "how was your trip?" Our first day travelling from Patras to Athens I almost started crying, the flowers and the sea were so beautiful! And, after a couple of weeks I started to feel so good about myself I told my co-travelling friend, Michele, that I was "absolutely gorgeous" I just felt so wonderful! As another friend said, the whole trip was worthwhile if I could feel like that.

Its impossible to do justice to all the countries I travelled through but I visited Amsterdam, Koln, Munich, Venice, Florence and Paris. I visited a few galleries, museums and other attractions but mostly I just walked and walked and took a lot in. My "new" greek sandals are almost worn through!

So, I'm back and, good heavens, the pace is so fast here. I have a lot of energy and I'm feeling able to tackle my work afresh but I'm going to try and take a little better care of myself than I did last year.

And when am I going again? Next summer I may return to Greece and travel on to India, Nepal, Thailand and parts thereabout. To all of you who have always wanted to "take off and go", do it!!

I'll be talking to a lot of you, I hope, in the next while and maybe you'll see me before my tan completely fades. Yamos!!

Frances Adams

FEMINISM IN TRANSITION BREAKING THROUGH-- GROWING FREE!

November 2, 3, 4, 1984

At the YWCA, 320 5 Avenue S.E.,
Calgary. For information, contact the
ASWAC office or one of our Calgary
board members, Deb Carnat, Shelagh
Bouttell and Suzn Morgan.

The theme of this year's assembly, the first to be held in Calgary, reflects in particular the radical changes which ASWAC herself has undergone in the 9 years of her existence, and also hopes to provide a forum for other feminist groups to reflect upon change. We will do this by sharing with each other different aspects of our work in order to explore and demonstrate change, and to communicate the need for change.

We change: the environment in which we work changes and so the nature of our work must change. Sometimes change is heady and exciting; more often it is threatening and misunderstood. It is hoped that this assembly will be an opportunity to share our excitement and to offer support for each other in the risks that we all take.

I will be spending the month of October in Calgary to work on the nitty gritty's of the assembly. During that time I want to meet as many Calgary ASWAC members as possible - and persuade some of you to get involved in the work of the Assembly. I'm really looking forward to being in Calgary for long enough to get to know many of you a great deal better.

Mair

You can start to do your work for the Assembly by reflecting upon the changes you see in your feminist involvements in general, and in ASWAC in particular. Look back over your old newsletters, minutes from groups you belong to, projects you've worked on. How has the way you work changed, and why? Is the process of change comfortable for you and your group? Are you achieving more - in quality and/or quantity - than you were a year ago? five years ago? ten years ago? How about burn-out - does this happen more or less? And has the way you deal with burnout changed? Have you noticed any changes in the relationships between you and the women you work with - think about these and ponder about why the changes have occurred, or whether some changes could/should occur.

Have all the changes been 'planned' (structured) or 'unplanned' (organic). How were decisions for change reached? Has the decision-making process itself changed?

If we can come together in November with answers to some of these questions we'll be in a much better position to understand the process of change in the feminist movement in Alberta.

ASWAC PROPOSALS TO UNITED WAY

ASWAC has not yet received a reply from the Edmonton United Way concerning recommendations made to the fundraising agency in the wake of the June controversy involving Planned Parenthood.

As you may recall, the United Way board initially turned down Planned Parenthood's request for funding. A few weeks later, amid accusations of coercion on the part of Catholic Social Services supporters on the board, the decision was reversed. Shortly after, Catholic Social Services withdrew from the United Way Campaign.

At the height of the debate ASWAC drew up an information sheet and a form letter for distribution around Edmonton. Other members of the ad hoc group were Edmonton Working Women and the International Women's Day Committee.

The letter supported United Way in its decision to support Planned Parenthood and urged it to study two recommendations:

- 1) that the United Way consider introducing a donor option plan and that it carry out the necessary research, planning and discussion needed for decision on implementing this system;
- 2) that a community task force or advisory group be formed to look into the whole role, structure, expectations, needs, functions and responsibilities of fundraising organizations like United Way.

The information sheet included basic facts about the United Way and ASWAC's assessment of the factors which led to the furor around Planned Parenthood's request. These factors included:

- .the coercive political and somewhat less than charitable behaviour of certain United Way board members, most notably former chairman Fred Day;
- .the inability of some United Way board members to withstand the political pressure applied by certain people on the board and within the community;
- .the United Way's refusal over the years to confront the political realities of certain agencies providing services, some of which are funded, some are not. Rather

the United Way has chosen to try to stick to an avoid-controversy-at-all-costs approach, which in the end has resulted only in getting it deeper into the very "controversy" it has been so afraid of. This fearful approach has left United Way open to manipulation and, at times, untenable pressures from both within and without;

.the United Way's apparent inability to identify and to deal with its changing role from a fundraiser for a few long-established "charities" to a very large, corporate-style fundraiser for a large variety of what are now essential services in the community. When United Way began, it was set up as a group of agencies wanting to carry out fundraising together. Over the years, United Way has got into funding specific programs within agencies, which means its decision-making powers and responsibilities have increased and changed. Also, the nature of the services provided by some of these non-profit agencies now

seeking funding has also changed-become more complex and, for some, threatening. However, there are indications that the United Way's basic structure, procedures and, most importantly, the attitudes of some of its members and member agencies have

not changed since those early days when things were so much simpler and when the assumption was everyone had the same values and worked the same way.

.the need for the community, as well as United Way, to question the wisdom and the efficiency of relegating so many of the resources and so much of the decision-making power around funding community services to the hands of so few, namely large fundraising organizations like United Way.

Response to the letter campaign was good, with several local women's groups distributing to their members. Copies of the package are still available through the ASWAC office.

Meaghan Dean

ASWAC In The News



ASWAC has been doing a lot of media work in the past few months. Since June 18, ASWAC has responded to at least 53 calls from media in Alberta and elsewhere.

Subjects discussed have covered a variety of subjects, including: Aug. 15 women's debate, Planned Parenthood/United Way, sex stereotyping in media, affirmative action, abortion, battering, abortion and the constitution, freak show at Klondike Days, dethroning Miss America, women's studies at Athabasca University, changes to human rights legislation, the first t.v. debate, Turner's bum-patting, territorial report on wife battering, higher rate of unsolved homicides when they involve women, treatment programs for men, Women's Secretariat, general federal election comment.

ASWAC's media duties are shared by staff, board and members. We don't have one or two assigned spokeswomen. Instead, what we do is refer media to the member, board or staff person who is most up-to-date and knowledgeable on the particular subject.

A particularly interesting aspect of the media work we've done lately has been using it as an opportunity to do some educating and consciousness-raising with individual reporters around the many ideas and activities feminists are working with. Most of these discussions are never reported, but we hope that taking the time to do the background work now will eventually contribute to improved, more sensitive media reporting of women's work in future.

Meaghan Dean

Sec State

Wood Yew Ring?

Work on the proposed evaluation of ASWAC by Secretary of State Women's Program (see article May issue) is moving along slowly but so far, constructively.

Some ASWAC stoard members met in early June with Marc Arnal, the new regional manager for Women's Program. This was primarily an introductory meeting. Arnal also met with the stoard at its August 1-2 regular meeting. This discussion included an exchange of each other's ideas and expectations around the proposed evaluation.

Due to the complexity of the evaluation proposal, it is extremely difficult to convey accurately and fully in writing the details of the work being done around the evaluation idea. The ASWAC stoard is concerned that members keep updated on the progress. Members are encouraged to phone the ASWAC office or stoard members if they want to discuss it in more detail. The proposed evaluation will also be discussed at the ASWAC annual assembly in November. Please call us--we would love to talk with you about this!

Meaghan Dean

What kind of tree is a Telephone Tree? Well, for undertakers an ash tree, for clothing stores a spruce tree, for cats a fir tree. Dogs are ok because they have their own bark. Newly weds would install a pear tree; long-distance lovers a pine tree. You, of course, would have a yew tree. Airlines communicate by plane trees and mental health facilities by nut trees. Trunk calls are no problem; branch offices are well serviced. If there's an answering service you can leaf a message. If it all breaks down you call the repair service - tremendous. (You'll know its not working because you can't hear the annular rings.)

Does ASWAC want a telephone tree? Well, I guess we wood, but right now its not a poplar idea, so we'll just lumber along without one. However, if your sap rises on reading this - why don't you pick up your yew tree and let your thoughts bear fruit.

Mair, Meaghan & Sam

Well, the response to my offer to revive the Telephone Tree to suit

our present needs was underwhelming to say the least. Only one person, a new member in Grand Centre, contacted the office to ask to be put on the 'tree'. Well, one long distance leaf does not a tree make, so for the moment - I've dropped this idea but am looking for suggestions and ideas for other ways for us to increase our network and share our information.

Mair

Feminist Tour

Took some time out from federal elections, United Way, Miss America and all the other heavy duty expressions of patriarchy to do something really neat this summer. Peggy Chalmers, coordinator of Golden, B.C. Women's Centre was in town, and we 'did' the Feminist Tour of Edmonton. We spent time at the Women's Secretariat, at WIN House, at the Sexual Assault Centre, Planned Parenthood and Every Woman's Place. And, of course, the ASWAC office. And talked a blue streak. As a result, we plan to do the first out-of-Alberta edition of Webspinner in Golden, probably later this year. I find these opportunities to see women's Edmonton through fresh eyes very helpful for me, too. I learned a lot of things about what's happening that I didn't know before.

I'd do it again, too - anyone want a feminist tour?

Mair

Welcome

The ASWAC office welcomes Samantha Faichney as our new bookkeeper, replacing Donna Reed who found our books and a very full-time job to be a bit too much to cope with! Is it selfish of us to want Sam to stay away from full-time employment so we can keep her?

It's Here

In the March Newsletter, Marilyn Guille told us of her intention to compile an ASWAC publications list. Well, its now ready - it has 40 items on it (we were surprised too!).

Send us 50¢ for the list, and then peruse the catalogue at your leisure!

ASWAC BOARD MEMBERS

Marilyn Assheton-Smith	10919 80 Ave., Edm. T6G 0P9	433-9938
Shelagh Bouttell	2516 3rd Ave. NW, Cal. T2N 0L4	283-9903
Debra Carnat	429 29 Ave. NW, Cal. T2M 2M4	276-5554
Diana Chow	10935 85 Ave., Edm. T6G 0W3	433-1525
Marilyn Guille	Box 1941, Whitecourt TOE 2L0	778-3669
Amanda LeRougetel	9625 76 Ave., Edm. T6C 0K4	433-8615
Suzn Morgan	6423 Laurentian Way SW, Cal. T3A 4N2	246-8755
Judy Moynihan	190 Highland Cl. Ft McMurray T9H 3T5	791-4395
Marty Whitesun	Box 418, Hythe TOH 0C0	356-3797

Good luck to Donna Gibbons who is leaving the board and Edmonton to complete her degree at Queen's University in Kingston this fall. Almira Nicol, another Edmonton board member, was last heard of in Vancouver and is enjoying her travels, we hope, wherever she is now. We expect Almira back sometime this fall.

Yes, We Are Wonderful!

Dear Women:

It's not enough, this time, to just tell everyone at the office what a wonderful job 'we' did on the last newsletter. (Especially when I didn't actively participate in the production ...)

It's not enough, this time, to just have a discussion at the stoard meeting about the newsletter.

It's not enough, this time, to just write the odd article and sign my name. And it's not enough this time, to tell myself that I don't have the 'right' to write a 'letter to the editor', as it were, because I'm on the stoard and I'm in and out of the office, and I already know everything the newsletter will say anyway. It's not enough, this time, to leave the letters and comments and feedback to the 'members'.

Well, I am also a member. And the fact is that I live 'out there' in rural Alberta, and get my newsletter in my mailbox, just like everyone else. And it affects me deeply, every issue, no matter

Mid-Life Wellness

Women in their mid-life in our society face special challenges. Ideas about women, aging and wellness are changing rapidly: old models of women in this period of life are no longer appropriate. Join other concerned women at a one-day public forum on the physical and psychological aspects of mid-life for women. Topics include taking responsibility for your own wellness, preventing the menopausal syndrome, pros and cons of estrogen therapy; new knowledge on osteoporosis, hysterectomy; discussion of stress, endings and beginnings, rejuvenating your sex life.

The forum will be held on Saturday October 27 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The fee is \$25 and a limit of 200 women has been set. Plan to bring a bag lunch or eat in a nearby cafe. For more info, contact the U. of A. Extension Dept., Women's Program at 432-3039.

how much I already know about the day-to-day goings-on at the office!

A thousand years ago during the winter of 1982-83, I lived on a farm 30 miles from the nearest town, in a horrendous depression as a result of not having meaningful work to do, being a full-time mother to three active children, having no car, no close women friends, and a husband who worked 9-5 at the local sawmill. I also felt like the 'new kid on the block' in an area of traditional second and third-generation farm families. I was 'just' an ASWAC 'member' then, which meant that I received the newsletter every 6 weeks.

A year and a half later, (occasionally) at stoard meetings, we talk about the 'passive' nature of some of the readership. And I remember how it was for me then. That newsletter was, quite simply, my life-line to sanity. When it arrived in my little rural mailbox, I would devour every word over and over again - and get the strength to survive for awhile longer. Just to know that there was other women 'like me' 'out there', somewhere, was so incredibly comforting, and ultimately, healing. Yet, as vital as the newsletter was to me then, I could not have responded in any way. I was incapable of writing a letter, submitting an article, signing a petition or filling out a form - options available to me in any given issue. My energy was all directed toward my daily survival and sanity, and there was none left over to be an 'active' participant in the newsletter.

So my circumstances have radically changed (that's the subject of another whole book!) and now I'm on the stoard, and we still produce a newsletter every 6 weeks.

I still live in rural Alberta (although I had sense enough last spring to move into town!), and the newsletter is still vitally important to me - for all of the old, and some very new reasons.

First of all, my isolation today is just of a slightly different brand. There are only a few committed feminists in my area, and the newsletter links me with feminism all over the world.

Packed every time with information, news, events and analysis, it still affirms for me that I am not alone in the struggle 'out there'.



And now, because of my direct involvement with ASWAC, there is a new dimension to my appreciation for the newsletter. The last issue really brought it into focus for me, and this I had to write!

In the first place, we at the stoard occasionally hear vague charges that we're not 'doing' anything. As far as I'm concerned, every issue, but particularly the last one, lays that charge to rest. It was jam-packed, from cover to cover, with what we are 'doing'.

Secondly, f3minists in general are often charged with being 'single minded' or 'narrow minded', etc. The last issue clearly showed how much we, as women, care about all of humanity, how much we spread our energy over so many different areas and 'issues' and how 'well-rounded' we are in terms of our abilities to respond to the world.

Finally, what impressed me the most about the last issue was the willingness to risk. I didn't say 'our' willingness this time, because I personally didn't take any risks in the last issue. So I respond to that willingness to risk, as a 'member' 'out there' reading the newsletter, and I am strengthened by it. As a member of the collective,

reading risky stuff that some of us wrote, I am awestruck by our stamina. We know the backlash, we know the price we pay for risking, yet we keep pushing on. And I don't say these things to 'blow our own horn' as a collective, but again, to express the value of the newsletter as a reflection of who we are, and as a model of what we can be.

Marilyn Guille

Inuit Law Defended

June 7, 1984

An Open Letter to
Richard Neryso
Minister of Justice
Department of Justice
Government of N.W.T.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Dear Minister:

I am Inuit. Fully born and reared with Inuit culture and common laws. Inuit common laws may not be written but they are there and very often a stranger from out of town does not see them. If they happen to see them, they usually misunderstand them.

Traditionally there are laws that exist about rearing a young Inuit woman.

Personally, my very traditional grandmother brought me up and when she realized that I was a fully grown woman she did not dare let me go down to the river to get drinking water without an escort. If I took too long to get home she used to appear with a long stick in her hand - no way, the stick was not for me but it was for men who dared come near me. Do you get the picture?

Although traditionally Inuit women married very young (again under strictest guidance by the whole community) they had to be fully grown, not just physically but internal growth has to be considered, not to mention mental growth so that the young woman can be fully responsible. Even with all those considerations, the young couple have to live with their parents for at least 2 or 3 years until they are fully responsible with traditional marriage laws.

Traditionally such men that Judge Michael Bourassa let free would have been heavily ostracized by the whole community to the point that they become outcasts. They were not a credit to their community with such behavior whether

they were high, middle or lower class, or whether they were successful well thinking hunters.

Judge Bourassa, your judgement may be your "fad" but it is not passing fancy of Inuit people who have carefully maintained their common laws over 4,000 years.

Minnie Aodla Freeman
Edmonton, Alberta

For The Soul

Forty women and several children spent the weekend of August 10-12 together on land near Coronation at a 'Celebration of Women and the Earth', Alberta's third women's country festival. Hot sunshine, full moonshine, great food, and the peaceful company of other women characterised the weekend for me. We collectively wrote a song - just try to stop one of the writers from singing it to you!

Thanks are due to Gladys Creasy who shared her land with us for the whole weekend. Mair.

Chorus

Celebration -
of women and the earth
Celebrate
Celebration -
of women and the earth
Celebrate

We are women gathered here
And we're feeling free
With the sky
and the land
blessed are we

Coming back and growing deep
Roots into the earth
Reaching up -



feeling out
own rebirth

Laughing, singing, voices strong
Touching each with love
Sisters all
with the moon
up above

Resting safely in the folds
Of the prairie hills
Firelight
magic night
spirit fills

Written collectively by women at
the Celebration of Women and the
Earth.

A 1982 film, 'The Menopause Story' is highly recommended by one of the organisers of this event. The National Film Board Women's Catalogue, 'Beyond the Image', describes it thus: This film is, at present, one of the few available in the country on the subject of menopause. A group of women, ranging in age from their 30's to their 50's, discuss what it means to be facing menopause, in a society which reveres youth. The diversity of symptoms, attitudes, and emotional and physical reactions to this change - including hot flashes, osteoporosis, elation, depression - are all touched upon. A gynecologist and counsellor together discuss the pros and cons of estrogen therapy, a subject dealt with in more detail in the volumes 'The Menopause Book' and 'Women and the Crisis in Sex Hormones'. As well, dramatized sequences, which play with stereotypes, suggest ways for women to approach the "second 40 years of their lives".

The film is distributed by Mobius Productions Ltd., 175 King St. E. Toronto, (416-862-0255).

THE LAST BEST WEST: WOMEN ON THE ALBERTA FRONTIER 1880-1930
By Eliane Leslau Silverman
Eden Press
183 pages; \$14.95

I'd like to announce the emergence of a very relevant book by one of our own ASWAC sisters, Eli Silverman of Calgary. It is entitled The Last Best West: Women on the Alberta Frontier 1880-1930.

Eli spent two years travelling the countryside of Alberta talking to pioneer women and documenting aspects of their lives as the women themselves interpreted them. The bulk of the book is in the women's own words, woven together around themes such as childbirth and contraception, isolation and work. With this style, Eli has returned to us a sense of women's lives and history in the settling of the new frontier. It is wonderful reading and communicates the very real and full personalities of these women.

Thank you Eli for capturing our grandmothers, mothers and our stories that might otherwise have been lost.

Debra Carnat

Federal Elections '84

Edmonton Women's Election Committee

Recognizing the need for participation of some kind in the whole election process but also knowing the often thankless and tedious tasks assigned to campaign workers, three women got together and brainstormed on just what we could do: a). to participate and b). to make the candidates running more responsive in a public way to women's issues.

Our conclusions: all too often issues of concern to "minorities"!! are kept well in the background only to be brought out at a time when brownie points are needed by those running for office. So, rather than waiting around interminably for the candidates to talk about what we believe to be pretty vital stuff, we thought we would beat them to it and force them to respond to questions we want answered. We devised the following campaign:

1). we put together a questionnaire

and sent it out to all Edmonton candidates.

2). we put out a news release bringing our campaign to the media's attention

3). we are awaiting the responses to the questionnaire--they are to be returned no later than Aug. 13

4). We will tabulate the responses. We will watch the women's debate on t.v. on Aug. 15

We will compare national party lines with those spouted locally by candidates

We will synopsise the information gathered and draw some conclusions--maybe make a few predictions. We hope to be able to gather past and present statistics on women running in elections at the national level ie., which party runs women where, do they have a chance of winning or are women "allowed" to run only in hopeless ridings, who are the women running now, etc.

We will compile all this into

a fairly lengthy and all encompassing news release to be put out right after the women's debate on t.v.

Our purpose is to make the candidates be public about their support (or lack thereof) of women's issues and also to make this information as widely available as possible to voters, particularly women voters.

We urge you to make the candidates in your riding talk to you about women's issues--about issues that are of concern to you as a woman.

If our campaign is useful to you USE IT! Or model a campaign on our outline that is more suitable for the time and energy you have or the community in which you live.

GO FOR IT--MAKE THE CANDIDATES TALK AND MAKE THEM TALK WOMEN'S ISSUES!!!!

How Do Your Candidates Rate?

The following is the questionnaire sent out to Edmonton candidates by the Edmonton Women's Election Committee. Feel free to use it in your area or to model your own questionnaire on it.

PLEASE INDICATE THE STATEMENT IN EACH PAIR THAT BEST REFLECTS YOUR VIEW. USING THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW EACH PAIR OF STATEMENTS, ELABORATE.

1. ABORTION

Abortion is nothing less than the killing of unborn children. Our laws must be changed to protect the rights of the unborn.

Abortion is a legitimate medical procedure. Whether to abort or carry a fetus to term is rightfully the decision of a woman in consultation with her doctor.

2. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Women are underrepresented in executive positions and management in both the public and private sectors. Affirmative Action is an effective and just way to redress this inequity.

Affirmative Action puts gender in focus but turns a blind eye to qualifications. It is inefficient at a national level and puts our main breadwinners out of work.

3. BATTERED WOMEN

Government reports that one in ten women are beaten are sensationalist. Government spending for these services should not be further increased, but services for families in need should be provided by our churches and the volunteer sector.

One in ten women in Canada is battered by the man with whom she lives. The federal and provincial governments must provide adequate funding to ensure protection and services are accessible to women in crisis in all regions of Canada.

4. SUPPORT PAYMENTS

A woman has no guarantee of collecting support payments ordered by family courts (provincial jurisdiction) from a delinquent husband, especially if he chooses to leave the province. The federal government must immediately take steps to correct this situation.

In recent years the government has intervened in an increasing number of affairs that are essentially private family matters. Legislation that guarantees support payments can only lead to increase in family break-ups.

5. LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS

Constitutional guarantees for homosexuals would give them equal access to employment opportunities in fields like education. It is dangerous and unnecessary for the state to endorse this lifestyle.

Sexual preference is not a justifiable basis for discrimination or the curtailment of human rights. The federal government should include in the Constitution guarantees for all people irrespective of sexual preference.

The NAC Debate

I've been sitting here for 10 minutes chewing the end of my pen and trying to figure out how to even begin telling you what it was like to be at the Aug. 15 three-leader women's debate in Toronto. It was an experience that's left me with a wealth of observations and impressions. As I sift through it all in hopes of conveying even some of it to you here, I realize my memories, my interest, my prime focus is not on the leaders or the issues or the partisan political applause-metering--it's on the women.

What Was It Like?

Do you have any idea what it is like to be in a room with nearly 2000 women who know they are making herstory? It was quite incredible. The sheer happy, excited noise of us was wonderful. Hundreds and hundreds of women all talking at once to each other--sharing information, comments, jokes. And the laughter... hearing women--dressed to the nines amidst the regal splendor of the Royal York Hotel--laughing in a way you never or seldom hear women laugh when men are about or when they sense a place isn't safe--guffawing, hearty, right-from-the-gut laughing. The whole atmosphere said, "Here we are! This is ours--our space, our stuff and our breakthrough--and we know it!" It was as though getting the three leaders there was simply a pretext for our own celebration.

What Did I Think of the Debate?

Well, it gave Winken, Blinken and Nod an opportunity to show how well they can do their homework when they have to and that the three parties obviously have some very good women researchers and advisors on women's issues. It gave renewed life to the art of the campaign promise and gave everyone a vivid lesson on the survival value of the word "yes".

As an active feminist, I found

none of the facts and figures they trundled out particularly revelational. I do feel that the fact they said them and did so on live national television could prove to be an important and useful political gain for women. No matter what they choose to do (or not do) when the election is over, they cannot go back on what they said about inequities for women in Canadian society. They cannot deny that they (at last) publicly acknowledged some of the basic truths about the violence and inequalities Canadian women face.

Maybe they don't know it yet, but they crossed the political point of no return that night.

I was impressed with the preciseness and scope of the questions and delighted with the way the panelists did not hesitate to challenge the leaders when they were being evasive or particularly ignorant on a subject. My only regret is that the format prevented more questions from being asked and that there were not enough "why" questions. It is one thing to ask what a candidate's party line is on pensions or childcare or battered women's shelters, but it could have told us a whole lot more about the depth of their understanding of the issues if we had also asked them why their parties took the positions they did. The audience response to the "why should we trust you now" question also indicated that more "why" questions were in order.

To me, the most important political statement of the entire evening came from the women in the audience. The fact they refused to be absolutely silent throughout, despite the network rules and the demands of the organizers, was a satisfying and clear indication that, indeed women are not going to be silent

any longer. I have a hunch that the implications of those women refusing to "do what they were told" was not lost on the political party officials and the media honchos.

Contrary to what the media have tried very hard to have everyone believe, the audience response was not due solely to the presence of political party supporters. There were Liberal, Conservative and NDP supporters there and they did respond along party lines at times. However, there were also several times when the applause for a particular statement transcended all party lines. I would say most women there were responding to what was being said and not just to who was saying it, especially when it came to subjects like childcare, abortion and services for battered women and survivors of sexual assault.

Did We Gain Anything--Was It Worth It?

Yes.

For two hours, the leaders of Canada's three major political parties and a sizeable chunk of the viewing public were focussed on what women's concerns are and what women are coping with in this illustrious democracy of ours.

We achieved the impossible. We got the three leaders in a debate on live television--an event the networks, the political party higher-ups and many a skeptic had said was impossible to do. The women's network showed--yet again--that it works and in the process we've provided another large hint that women, politically, are a force to be reckoned with. They may not understand yet exactly what our power is or why we work the way we do, but they are starting to remember that indeed maybe "it's not nice to fool with Mother Nature".

Note: There is much more to say about the debate, including the fascinating story of how the debate came to be and what the National Action Committee went through to organize it. Watch for the next issue of Webspinner for more.

Meaghan Dean



Research and Women

Knowledge is a powerful sounding word, like wisdom. We tend to think of it as some "thing" experts have, or universities have, or books and libraries have, yet we all "know" what we need to know to carry on our daily lives. We know because we have heard from experience, by trying and failing and trying and succeeding; we have learned by listening to others describe their experiences and what they know; we have learned by reading about other peoples' learning. Many of us who know, us women, that we still have a great deal to learn to understand the social, political, and economic forces that act for us and against us. We have a great deal to learn so those forces that are against us can be changed. We, much more than most men, have a vested interest in changing the social structure.

We also know that the "knowledge of experts" is often used against us, as medical knowledge or legal

knowledge or political knowledge or psychological knowledge. It is from that perspective feminists speak of mainstream knowledge or the knowledge of experts as male-stream knowledge, knowledge of the more powerful used to control and contain the less powerful. In contemporary feminist scholarship in Canada and throughout the world relatively new models of knowledge are being developed, models that recognize the knowledge of every woman and that challenge as destructive, the so-called objective knowledge of experts and disinterested observers.

In late September a small group of community-based women and academics are holding a workshop near Devon which will address these issues through the topic of research on women and work. Research is strongly defined as feminist research, research grounded in the experience of women and oriented towards change

no matter how small. Work is recognized as not only paid employment, but the unpaid labour of the woman in the household, the unpaid labour of women engaged in political action, and the unpaid labour of women "voluntarily" serving the community.

There will be between fifty and a hundred women at that workshop. We will focus on how to do research given the knowledge problem described above. At least one of our concerns will be how do "technically trained researchers" in university or elsewhere, collaborate with women building their knowledge through work in women's organizations. Maybe we will take steps towards a women's research centre in Edmonton; maybe we will just network and build relations that can enhance our "knowledge" work. I will give you an update when it is all over.

Marilyn Assheton-Smith

Job Creation: Why Not You?

For many women the traditional job market offers few opportunities for real advancement, or even placement. Especially for women whose skills and interests lie outside of the clerical or service fields, today's tight economy means fewer choices and more limited options. The federal government recognizes this situation and encourages the employment of women in programs of assistance offered to employers.

One of the goals of job creation programs is to get women into the job market in positions that go beyond the clerical and service occupations. Employers applying for assistance in creating new jobs are thus asked to give serious consideration to hiring women. A positive hiring plan - one that includes women, native, youth and disabled workers - is a credit to the employer applying for federal financial contributions.

The federal government department responsible for the creation of jobs through financial assistance for projects is the employment

development branch of the employment and immigration commission. We conduct business with applicants in the context of different programs that address different sectors of industry, and the labour market. To the employer, this means a variety of programs which offer different kinds of assistance and different financial arrangements.

As a project officer with the Employment Development Branch, it is my job to work with employers and organizations that may wish to tackle new activities in their business or service operation. I am available to assist employers with developing applications, to present information about the different programs we offer and to refer applicants to resource people in other job creation agencies.

A special assignment of mine is to solicit applications from employers and organizations that make a special effort to hire women. A business may be eligible for our programs whether incorporated or not, profit making or not, and regardless of the industry

they are a part of. Probably the most significant criteria of all our programs is that sponsors apply for new activities, or initiatives that the employer does not already operate.

Federal government support through most programs comes in the form of dollar contributions on a contract basis. We can provide money for wages, benefits, and some monies for materials and supplies. Depending on the nature and scope of the application, projects may employ three new workers or thirty, and they might work for two months or a year.

This information is provided for your interest. Some of you may want to apply: if you run a business, work in a firm that is open to expansion, or belong to an organization that is undertaking new objectives, I may be able to help you.

I hope you will call me if you have questions, or would like more information. Call 420-4030 - I look forward to hearing from you!

Lisa Walter

The More Things Change...

While the rape laws in Canada have changed, there are still indications in Alberta and Northwest Territories courts that the attitudes of some judges have not.

In the past year and a half there have been at least half a dozen cases in Alberta and the NWT where sexist and blame-the-victim attitudes particularly blatantly permeated the judges' comments and sentencing.

In March 1983, Chief Justice William McGillivray halved the eight-year sentence of a man who raped a polio-crippled woman, adding that a woman who accompanies a man home in the early morning to drink beer shouldn't be surprised if she is raped. More recently, in Yellowknife, NWT, three men--charged with having intercourse with a female under 14--were sentenced to one week each in jail. The girl was 13 years old. The judge said the three had proved themselves to be community-minded citizens and that sexual relations at an early age is part of the Northern Native culture. This case was appealed and, amidst public outcry and pressure from women's groups, the sentences were increased to three months each--suspended sentence.

Alberta got off to what many feminists consider a bad start with the new legislation. The first case tried in Alberta under the new sexual assault law was that of Andrew McDonald, who pleaded guilty to sexual assault causing bodily harm to his estranged wife. Grande Prairie Judge Ken Staples sentenced McDonald to one year--six months for the physical injuries and six months for the sexual assault. "I think it cannot be said," added Judge Staples, "that the trauma suffered by the victim is as great where there has been a past history of lawful sexual relations with the accused as it would be if she were attacked by a stranger."

Staples' comments caused concern for a variety of reasons. Not only could it set an unfavorable precedent for application of the new sexual assault law, but it reinforced the myth that rape and violence

are separate--a myth it was hoped the wording of the new legislation would dispel. It also reinforced the long-held assumption that rape is on the same continuum, albeit at the far end, as courtship, love and consensual sex.



A Lethbridge case which followed quickly on the heels of this one cast a pall of gloom over many women's hopes that the new laws would get away from judging women under moralistic standards. Judge V.P. Moshansky handed down a "not guilty" verdict in the case of William Grant Irwin, charged with sexually assaulting a woman as she walked home around midnight. The judge said many of the woman's actions worked against her, including that she was married with two children and had gone to a bar without her husband and has a "propensity for promiscuity". During the in camera evidence for discovery she acknowledged she had intercourse with another man two months before the incident.



The judge said he doubted the woman's motives for laying the charges. The defendant testified he thought she was upset because she didn't climax. The judge also said he was concerned about convicting the accused solely on the testimony of the victim. She testified she had

screamed many times during the rape, but there were no corroborating witnesses.

Moshansky said the accused appeared to be a credible witness as he was calm and clear, while the woman was not because she was "frequently sobbing and in tears for no discernible reason".

A look at various sexual assault cases dealt with in Alberta during the past year indicates conviction and sentencing vary widely for similar situations. In May 1983 a man who broke into an Edmonton woman's home and raped her was sentenced to eight years. In January 1984 Court of Queen's Bench Justice J.J. Kryczka of Edmonton sentenced a man to four years for breaking into a house and sexually assaulting a 37-year-old retarded woman.

Another pattern indicates that the circumstances surrounding the assault seem to affect the length of sentence--and within the judges assessments of these circumstances lurk the ghosts of the old stereotypes about rape. Sexual assaults in which the woman is dragged off the street or raped in her home tend to net higher sentences than those involving alcohol, parties, Native women or the woman knowing the man.

Suggestions for an educational program aimed at correcting sexist attitudes of some Alberta judges have so far met with firm refusal from Alberta Attorney General Neil Crawford, who maintains the independence of the judiciary is very important. About a month after saying this, the attorney general intervened in an eviction case by insisting a man be prosecuted even though the court said the man should never have been charged in the first place.

"There seems to be a backlash since the new laws came in," says Mair Smith, ASWAC organizer. "In some ways things have got worse for women in sexual assault cases. It's as though they're saying 'go ahead and change the law, but we're going to show that we can still get at you--so there'."

Meaghan Dean
article for NAC Status of Women
News

Announcements

Photo Displays

Charter Conference

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms became "law of the land" in December, 1981, when it was adopted by the Parliament of Canada. Equality Rights of Canadians are assured under Section 15(1) and (2) and Equal Rights for both sexes are assured in Section 28. Prior to adoption of the Charter, provincial governments demanded and received a time period of three years to review their existing legislation to bring it into line with Charter conditions. That three year moratorium will end on April 17, 1985 and, at that time, Sections 15 and 28 in relation to equality rights will become law.

Between now and April 17, women of Canada have the opportunity to become informed and educated about implications and the impact of the Charter. In Alberta, an "Ad Hoc Committee on Women and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms" has been established for this purpose.

There will be workshops on the Charter across Canada on the weekend of October 19, 20 and 21. Our Alberta Conference will focus on keynote addresses which outline the impact of the Constitution on Canadian/Albertan women, workshops on Constitution-

al theory and theories of equality, and a wrap-up session which plans future actions of women with particular reference to the April 1985 proclamation date of Sections 15 and 28.

Please keep October 19, 20, 21 open for this conference.

If you are able to help with planning the conference, please contact: Sandy Susut at 432-3093 or Ardelle Dudley at 471-7913.

Positive Images: Women by Women is the name of a new Edmonton group dedicated to reflecting positive images of powerful women back into our society. Consisting mainly of photographers, the group is assembling a collection of original work which will be appearing in public in many guises from this fall. Watch out for some great reflections of you! The ASWAC office has more information - 424-3073, or call Linda Nicholls at 451-2424 in the evenings.

Raffle

Plans for a raffle for a two-week trip to Nicaragua for two are well underway. All that is required is the "okay" from the Alberta raffle licensing department.

Co-sponsored by ASWAC, Change For Children and Farabundo Marti Committee (FMC), the proceeds will go towards establishing at least half a dozen day care centres in El Salvador.

If the raffle license is issued, tickets will go on sale in September at \$5 each. The draw will be December 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the Ukrainian Centre 11018 - 97 St. Tickets will be available through a number of groups, including ASWAC. Watch future issues of the newsletter for more details.

Donations

\$c

Since the last edition of the Newsletter we have received \$195 in donations from members and friends. Thanks so much to the following: Linnie Currie, Brad Yandt, Lynette Brockelsby, Julia Melnyk, Helen Collinson, Lynne Parent, Patricia Lundie, Suzn Morgan, Doreen Marie Indra, Saskia Scott, Jean Ross, Natalia Dobrolige and Mary Clarkson!

\$c

Ukrainian Feminists To Mark 100 Years

The relationship between ethnicity and feminism will be examined at the **SECOND WREATH** conference, to be held in Edmonton during the Thanksgiving weekend (October 5-7) 1985. This will be one of many themes explored by the **SECOND WREATH** conference. Organizers have planned the conference to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the women's movement in Ukraine.

As a lead-up to the conference a commemorative banquet will be held in Edmonton this December. The banquet will honour early Ukrainian feminists, as well as credit contemporary women for their role in enriching Ukrainian community life in Canada. Additionally, a national lecture tour will be launched this fall to celebrate 100 years of the Ukrainian Women's Movement and to promote the **SECOND WREATH** conference.

Organizing the conference and related activities is the **HROMADA** women's group. **HROMADA** is an Edmonton based community group



which seeks to stimulate and promote Ukrainian cultural, social and intellectual life in Canada.

The Ukrainian Women's Movement was founded in Western Ukraine in December 1884. One of its foremost proponents was **NATALIA KOBRYNSKA** (1851-1920), a noted literary figure and women's activist. Many of the topics raised in her journal, such as daycare facilities, education and communal kitchens are as relevant today as they were a century ago.

The **SECOND WREATH** conference will explore issues raised by the early women's movement in Ukraine, and place these issues in the present-day context.

For additional info, contact: Sonia 432-0685, Halyna 474-1146, Myra 439-0633 and Teresa 476-8525.

Collectively Yours?

No, this is not an appeal for money although I'm sure many ASWAC members have supported us generously with donations and book-buying. What we are asking for is an expansion of the collective. We are looking for creative, dynamic women out there who love to work among books and are interested in working collectively.

The present collective has dwindled dangerously. We are six now. Two of the group are setting up a women's magazine (as well as taking care of kids and working at jobs), one person has a new baby and is producing a film. A couple of us have been five-year veterans and need a change but we are afraid if too many people leave at once the store might deteriorate or fall apart. However, with the present lack of committed energy, the store is already teetering (as you may have noticed this summer when we were closed during store hours).

In a lot of ways the store is in good shape. Through our PEP grant this past winter we worked on stream-lining our systems. We've made it much easier for collective members and friends to order, do special orders, do send-backs and work on marketing strategy. We have an excellent core of friends that consistently do shifts so we can keep the store open. (The problems this summer stemmed from the fact that there weren't enough collective people around or who had the energy to do the scheduling.)

But, in the past, we've done more than just run the store. We've sponsored concerts, special events at the store such as poetry readings and author's breakfasts. We need more women working together to do this again. One of our ideas is a film festival.

How To Become a Collective Member

In the past, women worked in the store as friends until collective members got to know them and they got to know the workings of the store. If they expressed an interest they eventually became collective members. Collective members and friends have both expressed dissatisfaction with this system. They have complained that we differentiate too much between friends and collective members - that hierarchy is being set up, that it's like an

elite club that, to join, a person has to "make the grade".

On the other hand, running the bookstore is an intricate business. And working collectively - with part-time people whose lives may be packed with other responsibilities - can be slow going and frustrating. It's a task not everybody is suited to.

So, we have been battling ideas around about how to get new people - and new energy and blood - into the store faster and with less conflict. We have a good, solid manual written about how to run the bookstore (knowledge is power). We are in the process of writing a list of policies that people must adhere to if they join the collective (and could change at meetings if they saw fit). We are also writing a history of the store. As well, we would like to draw up some general principles, gleaned from our experiences working collectively, to give potential members an understanding of the kind of spirit and co-operative attitudes needed to work in a collective. Finally, we would like to create a buddy system between old and new collective members, so a person would feel more anchored in the collective, have someone to talk to, take problems to and also learn from if they get tired of reading the litanies.

Some of the basics of operating as a collective member are two meetings a month, four hours of shifts a month, and taking on a responsibility like ordering, sending books back, book-keeping, paying bills, organizing special events or setting up booktables outside the store.

If this is all a bit overwhelming, think, too, that the store is what people make it; there has been and always will be leeway in the store for members to take sabbaticals, to work less at times if their lives become too hectic. The feedback, appreciation, love and good conversation from our customers is wonderful. Often the bookstore is the first place women in trouble turn to.

If you are interested, please contact Sara Berger at 424-1452 or leave a message at the store, 432-9344. We will be in contact with interested women after our meeting of August 26.

MEDIAWATCH



- Have you ever felt insulted or angered by how women and children have been portrayed in printed or broadcast materials?
- Have your complaints been ignored or dismissed?
- Does your group need speakers or materials such as complaint forms or information about sexism and pornography in the media?
- Do you want to be actively involved with MediaWatch Alberta?

Founded in 1981, MediaWatch is a national women's organization dedicated to improving the portrayal of women and girls in the media by eliminating sexist and pornographic images and encouraging the creation of images that reflect the changing and diverse roles of women in Canadian society.

In June, I became the Alberta representative for MediaWatch--short for National Watch on Images of Women in the Media Inc. A small group of Alberta MediaWatchers is now working on an activity plan. A primary objective is to form a provincial network of women and groups who share MediaWatch's concerns about sexism in the media.

We will keep you informed about MediaWatch and our plans for the future, one of which is a provincial workshop in March 1985, in cooperation with Positive Images: Women By Women (Edmonton). If you want to know more about MediaWatch, are interested in becoming a local contact in your community, be involved in some other way, or would like to have complaint forms, please contact:
 Julie Anne Le Gras
 10647 - 125 St.
 Edmonton, Alta. T5N 1T7
 Phone: 482-2766

There are complaint forms and brochures in the ASWAC office, and Mair Smith, ASWAC's organizer, has offered to take them around the province as well. I hope to hear from you.

Julie Anne Le Gras



Good News From The Summer School



HEAR YE . . . HEAR YE, SISTERS!

The Summer School Collective is thrilled to announce that the Final Report of the SUMMER SCHOOL held in June 1983 at Silver Creek Ranch is now available. This is no ordinary report -- it not only contains basic information about what workshops happened when, who participated and so on, but also invaluable things like transcripts of the 3 key note addresses, summaries of the workshops given, a full description of the process of the organizing of the School itself and much more . . .

SO. . .

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this document send a self-addressed 10" x 13" envelope with \$1.48 in stamps on it to: Summer School Report
c/o 10112-88 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 1P1 *

Almost all of the workshops given at the summer School were put on tape; we are hoping to find a conveniently located home for them so that they are freely accessible to any and all interested women. We will publicize the location of this home when it has been found. Stay tuned!

Kris Farkas, a Collective member, has spent this summer putting together a handbook which discusses options available to women's organizations when wanting to incorporate themselves as a "legal" entity. Copies of this will be available soon. For further information please contact Kris at the above address. *

There is talk of organizing a second Summer School - before any of us want to commit ourselves to beginning that long process we want to know if there is any demand out there in the province for such an event. We would really appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us -- what would you do differently from the first Summer School?, what did you like, what didn't you like?, would you be interested in attending a second Summer School?, what would you include on the "agenda" of the School? . . .

Send any and all feedback, ideas and good wishes to the Summer School Collective,
c/o the above address *

PMS Workshop

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective will be presenting a workshop on Premenstrual Syndrome on Tuesday, September 18 in Room 120, Corbett Hall on the U. of A. campus. The workshop starts at 7 p.m.

Many women experience physiological and psychological changes pre-menstrually such as irritability, tension, headaches, depression, breast swelling and tenderness, weight gain, and cravings for sweets and alcohol.

We will be presenting up-to-date information on the causes of premenstrual syndrome. As well, we will be looking at what women can do through diet changes, vitamin supplements, exercise and stress reduction to cope with these symptoms.

Pre-registration is required: the workshop is limited to 35 people. To pre-register, call Pat Leginsky at 463-5585 (evenings) or 427-7305 (daytime).

Women's Centre

The University of Alberta Women's Centre received a grant from the federal government this spring. The grant has enabled the Centre to hire 6 people; 3 to establish a resource centre, and 3 to write a handbook. These projects are meant to increase the awareness of people towards the conditions of women in our society, and on our campus.

The Women's Centre handbook is currently being completed. We hope to have 10 thousand copies printed for distribution in September. Sources for funding are limited, however, and the grant the Centre received from the federal government does not cover printing costs. If anyone has any ideas of ways to raise money, or would like to make a donation, please contact us.

The Centre is also putting together a Resource Centre composed of a library and filing system. Because the purpose of the Resource Centre is to educate people on women's issues, we are maintaining two focuses when looking for materials. First, we hope to acquire information which shall stimulate a desire in the community to develop an active interest and concern for women's issues. Our second focus is on academic materials which we expect will help students research term-papers on women's issues. We are looking, therefore, for information on feminist philosophies, psychology, literature, etc.; on the history of the suffrage movement, particularly in Canada; and on violence against women. Again, funding for these ideas is a problem; financing a comprehensive Resource Centre is extremely expensive. For this reason we would like to ask the women's community to contribute any relevant information to help us develop the Centre. If you have any books, periodicals, essays, pamphlets, posters, music, or films you would like to donate, please call us or come down to the Centre. We are in room 270 of the Student's Union Bldg; our phone number is 432-2882.

We would like to thank the staff of this publication, who have given us the opportunity to reach so many people.

A Vision



A VISION
10 MILLION WOMEN
10 DAYS
SEPTEMBER 20-30 1984

Dear Women,

The most massive NATO exercise will take place in Germany the last two weeks of September 1984. More British soldiers than ever before will participate. The NATO military machine will virtually occupy West Germany - tanks in the streets, forests and fields, men in silver suits playing chemical warfare games. The lives of women, their children and loved ones are at stake.

Europe is not their playground.
WE CALL ON EUROPEAN WOMEN TO WALK OUT IN PROTEST.

Men have always left home to go to war. Women have provided the support system which enables this to happen. Women have kept their country running - we take over child care and jobs, we make do, cope, cover for men. What if women withdraw this support?

Men have taken much time and space to make the world the way they want it. Women demand 10 days of a lifetime to work for a world which women want. The government has asked employers in Britain to release 57,000 Territorial Army men from their jobs to participate. Women demand the same: time and space to discuss together the world we want.

Please ask all the women you know:

- Do you think there may be a nuclear war?
- Do you think you can do anything to change it?
- Do you think 10 million women could change it?

We are all responsible for being one of those 10 million women.

Please ask all women you know:

What kind of world do you want?

A world
 where women are safe
 where children matter
 where women are free from male violence at home on the street
 where black and white women are not divided
 where old and young women are not divided
 where we can share with other women in the world
 where other women's children are healthy
 where old women are respected
 where cities are beautiful
 where cities are safe to walk in
 where nature is respected
 where we are free from the terror of nuclear war
 where women are not raped
 where women's values matter
 where women can support themselves
 where women are paid for their work
 where ...

Each woman will have her own answers.

Asking the questions, talking and thinking about the answers, are just as important as the 10 days of gathering together.

This is a vision, more than an action.

If 10 million women begin to move towards Greenham, our countries will come to a stop.

We may be turned back on roads, at airports. Wherever we are, that is out space. We can claim it, it is "Greenham". Each woman must decide what she will do during those 10 days. Call in sick at work and stay in bed? That is our space. Gather with other groups of women at home? That is our space. Sit down on the roads wherever stopped? Turn back and sit down further away? Try again next day to reach

Greenham? Go back home and sit down?
Confrontation is not the action. The fence at Greenham is not the focus. The gathering of women is the action. Women asking, answering, talking, planning, making links, is the action. Withdrawing our support from the system is the action. Thinking about what kind of world we want is the action. Reaching out to each other is the ripple; gathering together is the wave.

It's not impossible. One million women took part in local actions on 24th May 1983. It didn't change the world BUT it empowered 1 million women. Each of those women only needs to contact 10 women.

This is not a Greenham Peace Camp action - this is a women's vision. Please take whatever you need from these ideas and words - they are part of my personal vision - other women are writing to their friends in their own words. Make your own letters, posters, advertisements, songs, paintings, leaflets - share your vision with 10 women.

Ask men you know to cover for these women's jobs, back them in trade unions, take care of children, provide money - the support system women have offered them in the past. I believe that a world where women are safe will be a world where men are safe too. All women who want the world we are thinking and talking about, please help.

We can take responsibility for the world we want to live in. This is the beginning.

Love,
Martha
Greenham Common
Women's Peace Camp
Yellow Gate



BREAATH



Can we in Alberta share in this vision? Each of us talk to 10 other women about our vision for peace, and take part, with them, in some action which will, in some way, make that vision a reality. That will be 8,000 women in Alberta acting for peace - Alberta will change.

Seeing Stars?

Dear ASWAC Members:

If you've been watching the stars on the back of your newsletter, you'll know whether or not you are a "fully paid up" member ie., if you paid your membership since Sept. 1 of 1983. If you are not a f.p.u.m., there will be a star on your mailing label.

The back cover also explains how the membership fee works and that we are still mailing to members who are up to two years in arrears. We've been discussing this "generosity" lately in the light of hard times and tight budgets and have decided that if your membership has not been paid since Sept. 1, 1982 then this will be your last newsletter. People in this category are receiving an insert to draw their attention to this decision more clearly.

If you have a star on your label but do not have an insert, then you fall in the middle category--overdue but by less than one year and you will continue to receive a newsletter until the next conference in November. However, we would like to impress upon you that a \$10 membership is very little to pay for one year's worth of membership let alone two and if you truly support ASWAC's work we know you'll want to renew right away and maybe make a donation to reflect the "free" mailings you've been receiving.

Mistakes happen and we know that occasionally people have "paid up" and still received the dreaded star. If this happened to you, please let us know.

In sisterhood,
The Stoard



SUPPORTIVE MEMBERSHIP/DONATION*

Name.....

Membership

Address.....

Donation

Apt. No.

Street

City

Postal Code

Phone.....

Home

Office

Make cheque payable to Alberta Status
of Women Action Committee,
P.O. Box 1573, Edmonton, T5J 2N7
Telephone 424-3073

* We suggest \$10.00 membership per year.

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE