

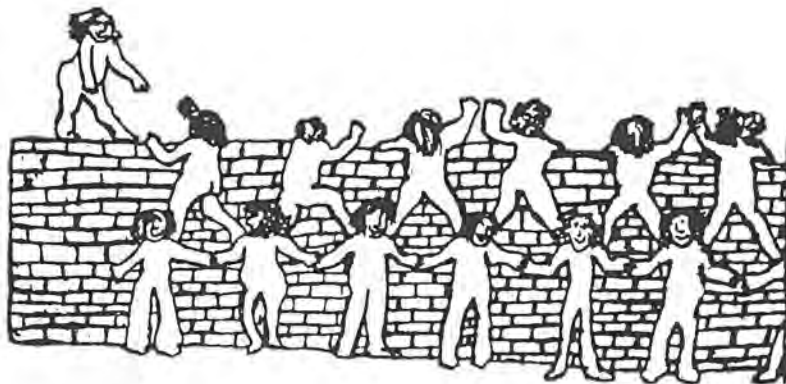
ASWAC

Alberta Status of Women Action Committee

Newsletter

Volume 9, Number 7
Calgary Edition

Women Against Poverty



Inside:
Stories of
the Year 1987-88



1987/88 Board Members

Michèle Butot - Calgary
Helen Greaves - c/o Edmonton Office
Jane Haslett - Edmonton
Deborah Hollins - Calgary
Margaret Johnson - Edmonton
Anne McGrath c/o Calgary office
Nancy Miller - Lethbridge
Valda Roberts - Edmonton
Marilyn Seelye - Calgary

1987/88 Regional Reps

Annette Arbo - Edmonton
(h) 437-4938; (w) 432-3359

Gerry Bailey - Westeros
(h) 586-2983

Elin Harlev Barlem - Innisfail
(h) 227-2927

Lori Crocker - Innisfail
(h) 227-1141; (w) 227-3881

Lois Soderstrom - Westeros
586-3535

Linda Stoddard - Lethbridge
(h) 328-6206

Denise Wood - Fort MacMurray
(h) 791-4634

Joan White Calf - Camrose
(h) 672-2210

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

All members are welcome to attend the board meetings in their area. Come to the community report session on the Saturday afternoon, or take the plunge and attend the entire meeting as an honorary board member. If you would like to see a board meeting held in your community, contact your nearest regional rep or board member.

ASWAC's mailing address is Box 1573, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2N7. The Edmonton office has moved to its new home at 9930 - 106 St., lower floor, with the rest of the Edmonton Women's Building. Phone 421-0306. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 10 - 4.

ASWAC Lethbridge lives at the Women's Resource Centre on top of Woolworths in downtown Lethbridge - #202, 325 - 6 St. S. Phone 329-8338 and leave a message if no one answers.

The Calgary ASWAC office is located in the Old Y Centre for Community Organizations, Room 303, 223 - 12 Ave. S.W., T2R 0G9. Phone 233-0731 and leave a message if no one answers.

Since May ASWAC has gratefully accepted donations from the following women:

Kim Jones, E. Scheerschmidt, Melody Burton, O. Belcourt, Judie Moynihan, Gail Homer, M. Hall, Marie Laing, L. Ayre-Jaschke, Barb Janzen, Anne LeRougetel, Olga Shklanka, Hope Olson, Jean Kuijt, Lyn Morelli, Marilyn Assheton-Smith, Grace Poesco, Dayna Daniels, Evelyn Stymest, Helen Raycheba, Sylvia Krogh, Genys Milson, Ceinwen Cumming, Heather Anderson.



This newsletter has been produced in Calgary. Many thanks to the Newsletter Collective: Marilyn Seelye, Brian Dyson, Jane Haslett, Anne McGrath, Valda Roberts, Annette Ruitenbeek, Marg Johnson, Gerry Bailey, Lyn Morelli, Shelley Scott. Special thanks to Syntax Arts Society for the type-setting and layout.

Eighteen Hours at a Glance

The following is the record of our last board meeting, Lethbridge, Nov. 5.

Shelley Scott, Marilyn Seelye, Valda Roberts, Debbie Foster, Nancy Miller, Anne McGrath, Marg Johnson, Joyce Green.

1) Review of Minutes. The minutes of Sept. 10-11 were reviewed for further action. We will apply to Secretary of State for funding a policy/procedure manual in the new year.

2) A News Conference is scheduled today at 2:00 to publicize Women Vote Day. Anne McGrath has prepared a news release stating the issues of free trade, reproductive choice, child care, violence against women, poverty, and the importance of women participating in the political process - voting for the candidate of their choice in the federal election.

3) Women's Show: Edmonton Oct. 21-23. Many women came to the Women's building booth. Information about Women Against Poverty, NAC Shocking Pink Paper, newsletter etc. was handed out. Also a t-shirt "I'm Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired" was sold. Contact was made with various women's groups. Profits from the sale of t-shirts at the Women's Show will be given to women's building collective.

4) Banking. Our banking account will be transferred from Capital City Trust to Wild Rose Trust for logistical reasons. Wild Rose is very near our ASWAC Edmonton office. Shelley will arrange this transfer.

5) Printing. Shelley will order 5000 copies each of letterhead, envelopes, and membership cards.

6) Subscriptions. Shelley will or-

der a copy of *Edmonton Journal* to be delivered to the ASWAC office. A letter will be sent to newspapers and magazines at renewal time requesting an exchange of newspaper instead of payment. Since we don't have funds available for newspaper subscriptions Shelley will bring important requests to future board meetings. Next year's budget should include funds for newspaper/library acquisitions. ASWAC will rely on the Other Alberta Report and the Legislative library. Shelley will write a thank you note to Sheela Edington who has been doing a great job at newspaper clipping for years.

Afternoon

1) Winning Women: Anne attended a planning meeting for this upcoming conference at Mt. Royal College. Conference organizers requested a letter of support from ASWAC, which we would have provided, since the goals of the conference are positive. BUT AFWUF is also being included and involved. Anne will send a letter saying ASWAC will not participate in any way in an event including an anti-woman group, and will encourage other groups that are involved to take a similar stand.

2) Advisory Council: positions on the council may soon be opening up. Helen is working on a brief on our relationship with the council.

3) Newsletter: a) newsletter collective must be established in Edmonton to put out next newsletter - article will be printed in this newsletter and questionnaires consulted for possible collective members. b) the collective will both put together actual newsletter and develop policy re: purpose and vision for the future.

4) WAP UPDATE: Edmonton:

committee is active, mail out has been done on upcoming iymts:

- film night Nov. 17 including panel discussion

- rally on the 25th at the Leg.

- on-going PoverTeas and information evenings with community groups.

Valda will look into getting a copy of "The Poverty Game" from Dawson Creek.

Calgary: contacts at Grace Hospital and Canadian Mental Health.

- June Callwood of Globe & Mail has agreed to participate in hearings.

- also some media coverage in Calgary

- discussed WAP as our priority campaign for next year (possibly more than that), and getting "economy kit" from Vancouver Research Centre to use at orientation of new board.

- also some discussion about community organizing possibilities around this campaign in Calgary.

Lethbridge: "No Way Not Me" was shown and Anne spoke at film forum, generated new membership

- out of this came a lengthy discussion of how to create committees around specific issues, how to increase volunteers/members, etc. This will be dealt with under recommendations.

5) Personnel Committee: one meeting has taken place, between Marg, Helen, and Shelley

- purpose is implementation of personnel policy - does not consider hiring or grievances.

- personnel committee will look at evaluation models and recommend an evaluation process for the staff, as soon as possible.

6) IWD: we have heard about a plan that has come out of the Black Women's community to bring in Faith Nolan and Angela Davis, but

about \$4000 is needed. Valda will join that committee as the ASWAC rep. and application for funding will come directly from that group.

7) Press Conference: Karen Lea-Cox of Lethbridge read a statement, then members of lethbridge media asked questions on women's political involvement. Also present were Joyce Green of the NDP, and Louella Chronkrite of the World Citizen's Centre. Announced election forum Nov. 8.

Sunday, Nov. 6 Morning

1) Video: a video collective from Calgary wants to film the board meetings next year, to explore the collective process. A lot of concerns were raised from technical concerns to the effect on the new Board members. We have requested a written proposal to be presented to the second board meeting next year.

2) Advocacy: it was reinforced that ASWAC does not have the capabilities or mandate to do personal advocacy work for individual women. When women call in needing that kind of help, they are referred elsewhere.

3) AGM: a) child care - Jim O'Dell runs a network of childcare workers and will provide us with women workers.

Friday night: 7:30 - 11:00 (3.5)

Sat. 8:30-11:00 (14.5)

Sun. 8:30-5 (8)

\$10/hour for 2 workers = 25 hours x \$20 = \$500.

- keep trace of number of pre-registered children in case there are lots and we need to hire another worker.

- kids under 12 come free and need to be provided with cots.

- childcare workers get free accommodation and meals (1 room)

- we have to pay for meals by plate, so women with children will be asked to share one plate with their

kids, or pay for the kids' meals (this will be explained at registration)

- Marg will be in charge of childcare
b) display tables: sales - sick and tired, more than a label, EWW buttons, women & poverty t-shirts

Display: Helen will be contacting groups for displays in Edmonton, Marilyn in Calgary. Need to determine whether we will have to provide/pay for tables. Shelley will find out and phone Marilyn.

c) early registration: Nov. 10 remains the deadline. Shelley will devise system, possibly on computer.

d) volunteer schedules: Valda will get display table volunteers. Shelley will get registration volunteers. Please contact them if you can help.

e) Workshop reporting: minutes will be recorded in each workshop and then available at the ASWAC office - a 3 minute report will be given on each workshop at the final business meeting.

f) prospective board members: we will each encourage women to stand for the board.

- if more than 12 women stand, we will have an election (i.e. put a check beside 12 women's names - keeping in mind the importance of regional representation)

- Valda and Marg will be in charge of the whole balloting/election process

- we will also really encourage regional reps, and after her maternity leave, Anne will work on the whole rep structure

g) Staff/Board fees and accommodations: it was decided that Board and staff do not have to pay registration or accommodation, but they can choose to do so if they want

- board and staff will all register separately and sleep where they want

- board meeting will be held on Thursday, Nov. 24 at 8:30 p.m. at the Nisku Inn

- there will be a "board room" in the "executive suite" for on-going

meetings.

h) Board recommendations: we read Anne's draft proposal, made some changes, and put in our recommendations (see details elsewhere in this newsletter)

4) Membership: discussion around issues like fees for groups vs. individuals, men being members, etc. Much of this needs to be dealt with as by-law changes, which we have recommended for next year.

- the first newsletter next year will include notice that 1987 and less will cease to receive newsletter and cease to be members unless they renew.

- will have a questionnaire in registration kit for women to volunteer their time in areas of interest.

- card file in Edmonton office is redundant (once lists get put on computer)

- Valda will look into getting business cards printed for the board members

5) Board position sharing - it's come up that some women were considering sharing a board position, going to alternate meetings.

- we agreed that we do not want this, for reasons of continuity, and instead would want to encourage these women to adopt the extremely important committee work that we would like to see resuming in every community.

6) Business Meeting at Assembly: Facilitator: Cathy Bray; Secretary: Helen Greaves

1. Board Report

2. Board Recommendations

3) By-Law Changes (that come in by mail by Nov. 10 or from the floor)

- prospective board members should identify themselves to Marg and Valda throughout the weekend; will be introduced Saturday noon and dinner. Sunday noon is the deadline to announce your

intentions, and then selection/questions etc. will take place at the final business meeting.

7) AFWUF Conference: Anne will write to Health and Welfare Canada and Secretary of State, protesting the funding of this conference, particularly the AIDS workshop, on the basis of misleading "facts" and information presented.

EDMONTON WOMEN

Do you have any interest in forming a newsletter Collective to put together and put out the ASWAC Newsletter? The next newsletter will be coming out of Edmonton, sometimes in early February. The Collective will do the technical work of production, as well as developing policy and an editorial vision.

Please phone Shelley Scott at 421-0306.

FIRST MEETING WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 3:00 p.m. at Women's Building (please call if this time is not possible for you).

SOLSTICE DANCE and CELEBRATION

Friday, December 16

• Women's Music! •

Riverdale Comm. Hall
9231 - 100 Avenue
8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

All Women Welcome
Smoking in the fireplace room

Sponsored by the
Edmonton Women's
Music Collective

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE WOMEN VOTE! DAY

- Saturday, November 5, 1988 -

Hundreds of women in every province and territory took part in Women Vote! day on Saturday, November 5th.

Member groups of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) took part in activities in more than 30 communities across the country. Women talked to women about the major election issues - Free Trade, Reproductive Choice, Child Care, and Violence Against Women - and urged women to vote in the federal election.

The Alberta Status of Women Action Committee (ASWAC) is working to increase women's participation in the election and highlight the issues. As part of our ongoing campaign on Women and Poverty we will be working with other concerned groups to make women's voices heard.

In this election women's issues are at the top of the agenda and we believe that women can make a difference. There has been a marked increase in the number of women candidates and in the numbers of women participating at all levels of

the political process. We are no longer the coffee makers and stamp licklers.

Women Vote! Day activities called attention to the unprecedented involvement of women in shaping Canada's future. Across the country women talked to women about the issues in shopping malls and markets, door-to-door in targeted ridings, at rallies and an all-candidates meetings. In Alberta there were Women Vote! Day activities in Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Canmore, Medicine Hat, Calgary and Lethbridge.

ASWAC - Lethbridge and other local community groups co-sponsored an all-candidates meeting on women, peace, development and the environment at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8th. The Lethbridge candidates were asked to make specified commitments to address these issues. All Candidates agreed to attend and make their positions and that of their parties known.

It is critical that as women we are aware of the issues and that we vote to support our interests. A strong, informed vote by women can make a significant difference.



Stories of the Year

I can hardly believe the year is nearly over! Much has transpired this year. Both for ASWAC, and for all of us who committed ourselves to the work that was to be undertaken.

The beginning was I must admit ROUGH. I am hesitant to speak for others and capsize the reasons. I will dare to say that the stages we went through though difficult, are not new or unique to ASWAC or any organization for that matter. The process of board involvement is and will be ever changing, as each member brings in her own experiences and hidden agendas. Humourously coined "the board from hell."

An enormous amount of work was accomplished this year. A portion of our time went directly into process development and organizational review. Our recommendations are here in this issue for all to view.

My individual activities were so many and varied I am unable to list all, but a quick review of them is as follows: attended approximately 150 meetings/forums/symposiums/luncheons etc. Sat on WAP committee Edmonton. Spent about 100+ hours in Edmonton office picking up admin. work in lieu of staff (my crash course in ASWAC). Helped organize conference print t-shirts, etc. etc. Doesn't look like a lot put this way, but sure felt like an amazing amount.

I've learned so much!

It's with some sorrow and some relief that I've decided to end my term. I have returned to school in solidarity with my daughter Gaelyn. This requires much time and energy as you can understand.

I will continue my work on WAP Edmonton and you'll see me around!

Love to my sisters,
one and all
Valda Roberts

For me this year has taught me that things are not always as easy as they seem. The Board this year has struggled and grown and I have grown along with it.

Many times I felt we had no direction and then just as often watched as we conquered seemingly insurmountable problems. Truly this year has been one that I will remember - the good and the not so good. In the end we are a group of wonderful women that "can" get the job done, no matter what. Thanks again to all of you for a most rewarding experience.

Lyn Morelli
(Lyn resigned at the last Board meeting for medical reasons.)

My ASWAC year has been eventful, intense, frustrating yet satisfying to see that ASWAC will continue to grow and change in responding to our commitments and demands. As a provincial feminist organization ASWAC has an important role to play furthering women's rights and issues.

During this past year the Board has worked and struggled with internal issues and concerns. Given the change over of Board members and staff we accomplished a great deal. My particular areas of involvement have included preparing and bringing forth a budget and proposal to Secretary of State, discussions with Sec. State about ASWAC, about our role, and feedback about our role, hiring a project co-ordinator and administrative co-ordinator for Edmonton, preparing a computer data base system for the membership questionnaire, planning for the assembly, representing ASWAC at the Women's Advisory hearing, finalizing a personnel policy plus other...

My major commitment has been and will continue to be the Women Against Poverty cam-

paign. At this point we have a good cohesive working group that has developed and implemented a series of programs which included poverty teas, film night, community information presentations and a rally. While I will not be on the board I intend to continue being an active member of the WAP Co-ordinating Committee this coming year.

I would like to encourage my Edmonton sisters to join us on this campaign which one way or the other affects us all.

Thanks to my sister Board members for their energy and efforts this past year. I know that our bonds will not be broken in our future struggles.

Marg Johnson

My story of the year is brief. I worked on the Board. I loved it, hated it, was exhilarated, was frustrated, was comforted and strengthened, was angry and hurt - and in turn handed out all of the above to others. It was a most interesting and intense experience, as I always find working with women on women's issues to be. And I want to do it again next year.

In sisterhood,
Jane Haslett

One of the best years ever. It started with the best 65th Birthday present ever - a life membership in ASWAC. I was so stunned (surprised) that I couldn't say thank you properly. So a belated thank you to all the dedicated, enthusiastic women of ASWAC.

During the winter I met with feminist groups in the Phillipines and Sarawak. IWD was spent in Hainan, South China, trying to communicate with friendly young working women. We did work out that Canada was cold and beautiful and China was old and beautiful - or something.

April to November has been incredibly busy. Some activities have been handing out materials and chatting at summer fairs, rallies, political meetings, and women's club meetings, everywhere but street corners, which we don't have. I attended meetings of our Board, Planned Parenthood, CUSO, and presented seminars to the Canadian World Youth Congress. There was also volunteer work to be done in the office - always a pleasant chore.

The regional reps had 3 meetings. These are very necessary for discussion and support. If anyone would like to take my place, I am game to become a vintage regional rep emeritus.

The Board meeting at the farm is always a high point of my year. It gives me a reason to contact individuals and groups in the area - from Wetaskiwin to Alder Flats. Even if they do not take advantage of our invitation, I do have an opportunity to discuss our campaigns. They often contact me for further information. So please plan on a farm meeting for next spring or summer or fall.

I am off to help set up a street health clinic, in tents, for women in Tondo, Manila, financed partially by CIDA. So have a wonderful, warm, busy conference and send me some greetings and hugs on the almost full moon.

Far Out in Westeros,
Gerry Bailey



Now Available:
WOMEN BREAKING THROUGH.

a guide to AV resources for women's studies across the secondary school curriculum

Women Breaking through, a guide to National Film Board AV resources for women's studies across the secondary school curriculum, was prepared in response to the 1986 NFB/Educators' Forum on Women's Studies in Secondary School, hosted by the Film Board.

Educators who participated in this event stressed their need for strong audio visual resources for the classroom that depict women in positive roles, and reflect women's concerns, actions, and perspectives on current social and world issues. They also emphasized that if attitudes towards women and equality are to change, young men must also be engaged in discussion about roles, rights and values in an evolving society.

The resources in this collection encompass a wide range of topics: Women's historical struggles and victories; political feminism today; the arts; human rights; peace; the environment; science; comparative social studies; contemporary issues; health and sexuality; careers; self-image; and changing family patterns.

The guide **Women Breaking Through** was designed to complement the growing initiatives on the parts of Ministries of Education and of individual school boards to integrate women's concerns and contributions into all areas of the curriculum. The guide also offers a clear thematic organization for Women's Studies courses or units.

Copies of **Women Breaking Through** can be obtained by contacting Jo Ann Harrison, Education Coordinator, The National Film Board, D-5, P.O.Box 6100, Montreal, P.Q. H3C 3H5

At each year's Assembly the outgoing Board makes a report to the membership on its major activities over the past year and presents specific recommendations for consideration.

This has been a difficult year for ASWAC. Since the last Assembly there have been several Board resignations and almost a complete staff turnover. The Board resignations came early in the year for the most part and Jane Wiley and Luanne Armstrong resigned as staff early in the summer. The Board resignations were for a variety of reasons; some personal, some political, some organizational. This year's Board spent a considerable amount of time and energy on the dynamic of process and task, definition of priorities, community perceptions, membership involvement, etc.

Despite these difficulties we have managed to accomplish a significant amount of work and we have several proposals for next year. We hope that the new Board will approach the work in a unified and constructive way.

PRIORITY CAMPAIGN

Last year's Assembly launched a campaign on Women and Poverty. The Board worked to establish Women Against Poverty (WAP) committees in several centres and agreed to 6 major demands that would form the basis of the campaign. The 6 demands are aimed at the provincial government:

1. Double Alberta's minimum wage to \$7.60/hour and extend it to include farm and domestic workers, and youth.
2. Raise welfare benefits to the poverty line.
3. Extend the Widow's Pension to single and divorced women.

4. Develop a publicly funded, universally accessible, quality child care program.

5. Reverse the health care cuts - provide safe, accessible services including abortion and contraceptive counseling.

6. Extend benefits to casual and part-time workers.

These demands were to be promoted through a combination of lobbying, organizing women, public education and work with other organizations in informal and formal coalitions on all or some of the demands.

The tactics to be employed by the WAP groups included a post-card campaign, public hearings, work with coalitions, public events, kitchen table discussions (called 'povertas') and a rally organized by the Edmonton WAP Committee to be held in conjunction with this year's Assembly. The individual WAP groups managed to achieve parts of these objectives to varying degrees. A mass lobby was considered but abandoned because of organizational difficulties but there were several "povertas" held across the province, postcards were signed and collected, information pickets and public hearings were held and the campaign achieved a fairly high profile in the media.

Major factors in the campaign have been the implications of the Free Trade Agreement and the introduction of the National Child-care Strategy. It has been very important to tie these issues into the campaign against the feminization of poverty. ASWAC worked hard to relate the Women and Poverty campaign to these federal election issues, through all-candidates' forums, the NAC Women Vote! Day, Pro-Canada Network activities and other events promoting women's participation in the

federal election and the feminist position on the issues.

As well, over the last year governments at all levels have begun to champion "family" issues and talked of the need for policies to strengthen the family. The question for feminists, of course, is what kind of families the government is looking to strengthen. Is it the traditional family of husband breadwinner, wife homemaker and 2.2 ideal children? Since only 1 in 6 families fit this formula it is important to point out the changes in families and the real needs of women in families. Obviously, the issue of women's poverty must be linked to any discussion about our role in families.

In order to more effectively deal with the campaign and get our message out, the Board has adopted a media policy and are considering a lobbying proposal. These should introduce a more systematic and organized approach to our priority issues.

Outreach has been a central part of our campaign strategy. We have worked with women and women's groups from Olds, Vulcan, Rimbey, Camrose, Crows' Nest Pass, Fort McMurray, Canmore, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Carstairs, Airdrie, Edmonton, and Calgary. The number of other organizations we have worked with are too numerous to mention here but a list is available from the office.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We strongly recommend that we continue with the Women and Poverty Campaign with a look at long term planning and a strategy to continue over the next few year.
- We recommend that the Board continue the work of developing and adopting a lobbying proposal.
- Ongoing membership development should take place with the More Than A Label project, the development and strengthening of the regional representatives struc-

ture, the development of liaison between the Board and regional representatives, committees and caucuses and continued outreach.

- We recommend that the Board review and make appropriate changes to the campaign demands and establish priorities that include childcare and attention to wage discrimination.

- Issue committees should be struck and ways should be found to support ongoing committees.

ORGANIZATION

The ASWAC Office, along with the other members of the Edmonton Women's Building Collective, moved to new and better space this year. Job descriptions for ASWAC staff were reworked and Shelley Scott was hired as an administrative co-ordinator, Helen Greaves as a part-time project co-ordinator and Anne McGrath is continuing on as the provincial project co-ordinator. Anne will be on maternity leave from January 1 to March 31. Fiona Mitchell is the new book-keeper. During the time that the job descriptions were being revised and the hiring completed, the Edmonton Board members took on many administrative functions to keep the organization functioning. The Board has also ratified the personnel policy and it is now in place.

The lawsuit we were faced with has been settled. Conditions of the settlement allow us to say no more on this issue.

ASWAC has been involved in ongoing consultations with the Secretary of State Women's Program about our mandate, role in the community, organizational matters, etc. We organized and participated in a successful "shop-talk" weekend with other western Status of Women groups from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Vancouver and Victoria.

A significant amount of work has been done on membership. Membership questionnaires have

WOMEN AND POVERTY CALGARY by Marilyn Seelye

been mailed out, received back and are in the process of being organized into the computer. The membership lists have been updated and categories of membership (associate, organizational, etc.) have been considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend that a policy and procedures manual be compiled.
- A policy should be established to determine appropriate ASWAC representation at conferences.
- Organizing for next year's conference should begin in January and a conference committee should be struck at the first Board meeting.
- A personnel committee should be struck to look at evaluation models and monitor the personnel policy. The committee should be comprised of one Board member, one staff person and one community member. Grievances and hiring should remain the responsibility of the Board following the procedures in the personnel policy.
- The by-laws should be reviewed with changes recommended to next year's AGM.
- Membership categories should be reviewed, defined, and presented to the next AGM.
- We should encourage another region to hold a second annual shoptalk weekend.

'THE HOMESTRETCH'

On a Friday afternoon, Oct 7/88, CBC listeners were introduced to Joy Jessie and Renée Stark. Kathy Jessop and Sharon Edwards made a great connection from our campaign. Both women spoke with honesty and dignity.

Renée spoke about how difficult grocery shopping was when one couldn't buy what the children needed or liked and how there was never any money at all during the last ten days of the month. Joy spoke of how desirable even fast foods become when one couldn't afford them. They talked about a sense of powerlessness, a concern for their children's future, and of having a damaged self concept and self esteem.

Thank you Joy and Renée for having the courage to share your struggles over the airwaves.

'WOMEN'S HEALTH '88'

The Women's Health '88 conference "Pursuing the Best" sponsored by the Grace Hospital had 530 women in attendance. The workshops covered the entire range of wellness; psychological, physical, spiritual. The keynote address

by June Callwood and a workshop presented by Peggy Webb and Margaret Osborne for Canadian Mental Health effectively confronted issues of women and poverty.

Peggy Webb and Margaret Osborne dialogued with women and presented facts about the standard of living women can look forward to. In Alberta a woman earns 59 cents for every dollar a man earns and that Canada has 11% of the licensed day care spaces needed for 2 million preschool children. The dialogue was an effective way to present in that it encouraged involvement of women. Peggy Webb says that depressive illness is 2 to 6 times higher in women than in men and that our society values its members through how much it pays them; minimum wage legislation (\$1.20 to \$2.50 under the poverty line), and pay equity. The fact that society sustains women and children in poverty reflects how little value is placed on women and the work they do. Women pick up this message and consequently mental health and self esteem damage can be profound; a reality Joy and Renée expressed on their "Homestretch" interview.

MARIE GORDON is committed to...

- affordable, quality child care
- affirmative action
- reproductive choice
- fair wages for women

**On November 21st,
vote for Marie Gordon
In Edmonton Northwest**

Campaign Office 452-0111



THE NEW DEMOCRATS
LES NÉO-DÉMOCRATES



On Friday evening June Callwood gave the keynote address. Her first sentence was "I am a feminist". She went on to describe through her life experience how we would not want to go back to any identity or societal assumptions about women's roles. A women's role that encourages not taking a stand or responsibility or having value in just being adorable is not desirable for anyone. She went on to talk about women in poverty. I approached June, spoke to her and gave her all our campaign materials. Since the conference she has written and says: "I'm delighted that the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee is concentrating on women and poverty." and "The material you gave me is terrific and I'm going to show it around as an example of how to go about raising consciousness". Hopefully she can be on a panel in the spring.

Our campaign, June Callwood's address, Peggy Webb and Margaret Osborne's workshop, and Joy Jessie and Renée Stark's interview on the "Homestretch" confront the broad spectrum of issues that plague women and children's lives. If ASWAC's WAP campaign can facilitate women talking about their experiences governments and society must respond by making the essential changes that are necessary in Alberta and across Canada.

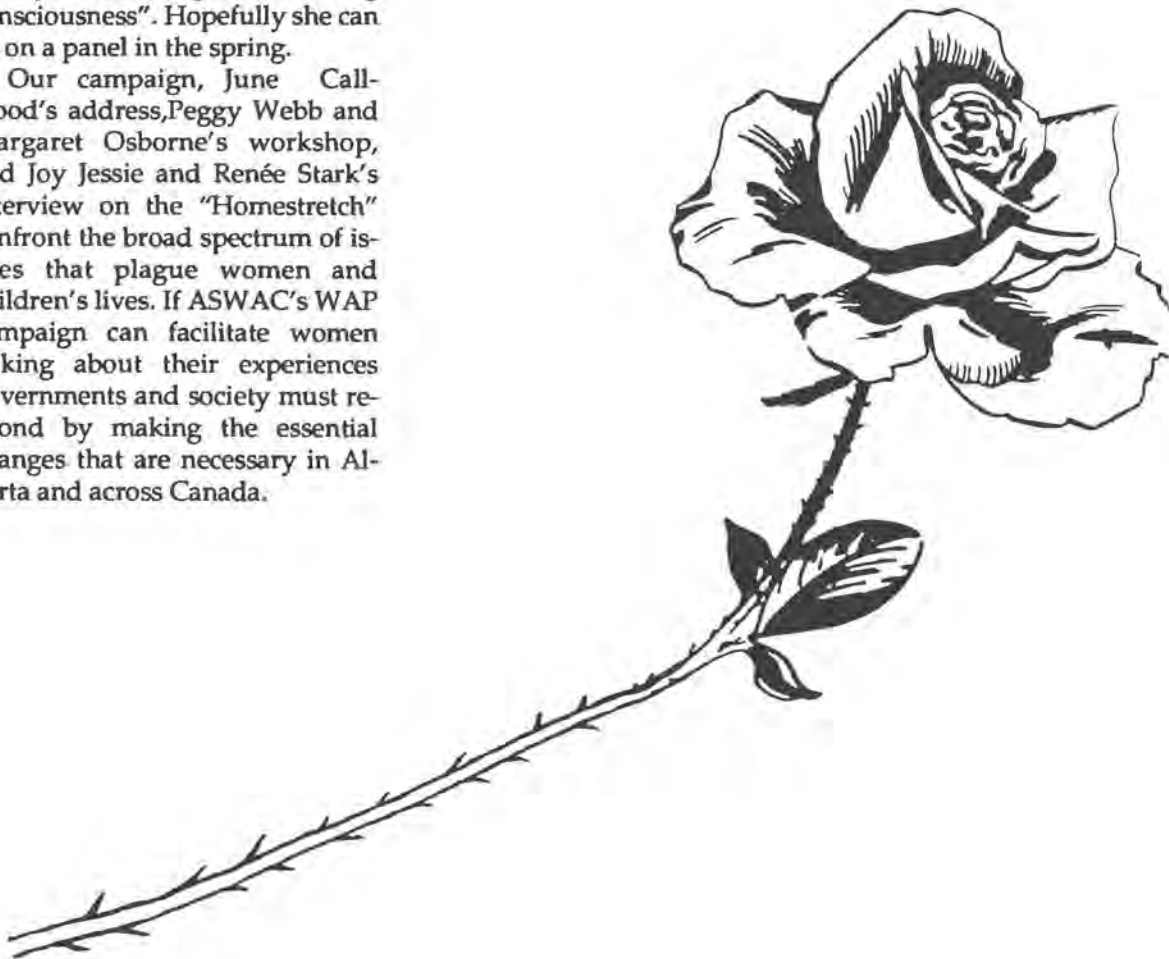
December 4 '88 David Suzuki will speak for the Lubicon at the University of Calgary. This event is co-sponsored by the University and the Committee Against Racism (aboriginal support group). C.A.R. are asking us to attend the forum and all candidates forums before the election and ask the conservative candidate questions like:

"The Fed Gov recently came to an agreement with the natives of the Northwest Territories on membership criteria. WHY is the Federal Gov unable (unwilling) to apply the same criteria to the Lubicon People, although the Lubicon

are willing to accept the same criteria."

"When asked by a reporter about the Lubicon issue the Prime Minister described it as the bumbling mistakes of previous governments. Now that his government has the opportunity to rectify past wrongs, will he use his influence to let justice prevail after all those years of shuffling the blame and thereby making a settlement impossible?"

We can write letters directly to Brian Mulroney with these and other questions. For further info or update call 235-1339.



REPORT ON THE ASWAC LETHBRIDGE ALL-CANDIDATES
FORUM, ON WOMEN'S ISSUES NOVEMBER 8, 1988.

by Joyce Green

The large, echoing gym at the church filled quickly as 7:00 approached. The candidates milled around, pressing the flesh and touching base with their camp followers. Carla Wenman from CFAC TV prepared to moderate the forum, checking mikes and the stopwatch. ASWAC-ers scurried about, welcoming the public and laying out ASWAC and NAC materials for public consumption.

The five candidates shifted uncomfortably in their seats at the table on the stage. One grumbled about the lack of a podium. Another whined about the ASWAC-invited co-sponsors — the World Citizens Centre and the Lethbridge Nuclear Disarmament Coalition. The Tory advised us of his intent to depart by 8:00 (the forum agenda was 7:00 - 9:00) while the Reform candidate said he'd be leaving after his five-minute opening remarks. The Liberal candidate questioned the utility of continuing the forum after the Tory left at 8:00, and had to be convinced that the forum did not hinge on the presence of any one candidate.

The presentations began, the mike whining feedback in the anguished ears of about 100 members of the public. First up was Phil Connolly of the Reform Party. He noted that there are the REAL women and then "there is this other group, I don't know what their initials are ..." (Funny, our initials were on his invitation!). "Who is speaking for the ladies?" Connolly queried. "We want to know who is the majority." With that, he left the forum.

Don Ferguson for the New Democrats addressed the issues of fairness and honesty in government, and the need for tax revisions to share the tax burden more equitably between corporations and

individual income earners. He touched on defence and the environment.

Blaine Thacker, seeking reelection for the Progressive Conservatives, rose next. He asserted that the Tory government had done "more for the environment than at any other time in Canada's history." He noted that the Tories have created 6 new national parks, have passed an Environmental Protection Act, and made amendments to the National Parks Act to protect ecological integrity.

Liberal Bob Grbavac opened his five minute address with comments on the NAC Shocking Pink Paper. "It is shocking" he said, and went on to talk about how the Liberals would address childcare needs (national standards, flexible programs, not universal) and the need for more women in politics.

Charles Cavilla, candidate for the christen Heritage Party, stated that women and men were both created in the image of God; that they were complimentary, and this was intended for the rearing of children. He asserted that society has not respected this equality nor this complementarity. He stated that the CHP is pro-NATO and NORAD, and favours a "position of strength."

The opening remarks completed, the moderator opened the floor to questions. The audience clearly contained some single-issue, vocal contingents; nevertheless the range of questions was broad and no group dominated the mike. Questions covered free trade, environmental degradation, third world debt, women and poverty, violence against women, abortion (anti-choice), and women in the political and legislative process.

At one point Bob Grbavac (Liberal) objected to answering a ques-

tion on peace and disarmament: "I was invited to speak on women's issues... the agenda has been changed." Nancy Miller for ASWAC rose to state that ASWAC viewed the question as a women's concern. Later in the evening, ASWAC member Joyce Green commented that she thought any issues that touched women's lives, and that they wanted to talk about, were "women's issues," and invited the candidates to share their definition of women's issues with the audience. New Democrat Don Ferguson declined, saying "You tell me; it's not my place to tell you." Charles Cavilla (CHP) demanded to know why women had not raised the issue of pornography: that, he said, was a women's issue. Bob Grbavac (Liberal) held up the Shocking Pink Paper, and said he came prepared to comment on it, and it was a shame we had spent so little time on it. The Tory and the Reform candidates had left by that point.

At the conclusion of the evening, some things had become apparent. ASWAC has learned something about organization, and the next forum will be better as a consequence. For example, the absence of table mikes slowed down the candidates' responses. We also have learned that very few of the all-male candidates were well briefed on the issues women raised. Perhaps this says something about their lack of empathy, or about the priority that these issues have on political platforms. Perhaps men are simply uncomfortable commenting on matters that have been labelled "women's issues." We need to reflect on this, both for the benefit of future forums, and as matters relevant to men and women in the political process.

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Action Committee
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ASWAC memberships run from September to September with a grace period until the Assembly in November. That means that 1988 memberships are now due.

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