Mission Statement:

“To provide a collective and unified voice to support and strengthen shelters for abused women and families.”

April 1, 2000 – March 31, 2001
PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT by Lana M. Wells

Dear ACWS members:

It is hard to believe a year has gone by as President of ACWS. This past year has seen big changes with the organization. Arlene Chapman, ACWS Provincial Co-ordinator for seven years, left us to take the exciting position of Executive Director for the Edmonton Social Planning Council. In her place, on February 12, we welcomed our new Provincial Co-ordinator, Jan Reimer who has brought a wealth of experience and skills to the position. Jan has a deep knowledge and interest in women’s issues and has been extraordinary at championing shelter issues and supporting ACWS in the restructuring process.

Over the last year, ACWS has worked hard to implement the recommendations from our November 2000 restructuring meeting. These recommendations were implemented with the principles you developed that included: Valuing Diversity, Enhancing Accountability, Respecting the Mission, Mandate, and History of ACWS, Maintaining a Unified Voice and Continuing to be a Shelter-Driven Organization. I truly believe the fantastic work that has been accomplished in the last year was because we worked on the changes together, as a team. I would like to thank the Muttart organization for funding this initiative and Toni Lashbrook for her time and expertise in supporting us to meet our vision.

I believe the change in how ACWS operates will benefit our members because it will see a much smaller board (from 37 to 11) thus giving us more time to concentrate on shelter needs. I would encourage the membership to contact myself and/or the ACWS office for continued support, networking opportunities and to continue our open dialogue on the activities of the organization.

I would like to congratulate ACWS and all the shelters on their hard work in the past year to address the inadequate level of income support the province provides to women leaving abusive situations. Our report, “Supports for Independence (SFI) and the Cost of Living in Alberta: Regional Differences” was well received in government and the community. In addition, during the income support review, we challenged the MLA’s to an “SFI Survivor Challenge”, where we asked them to live on SFI and gave them real life situations that women face daily in this province. The kit brought about much debate among government officials and bureaucrats. ACWS will continue its work on this issue until women have better access to this program and higher income rates to live on.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the provincial co-ordinator, Jan Reimer for all her hard work. In just seven short months, Jan has become a leader in the shelter movement and has proven to be a strong advocate for the shelter movement. I would also like to thank Flavia Bourne for all her hard work and dedication to the organization. Flavia has been with ACWS for five years and has been a pillar of strength and support for the organization. I would also like to thank the restructuring committee and the executive who have worked hard in the last year to shape ACWS into new ways of working; where we will be more efficient and effective. Lastly, I would like to thank the membership for your vision (and patience) for making this organization a strong voice.
for women and children.
In February of this year I was delighted to join the Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters (ACWS) as their new Provincial Co-ordinator. It is a privilege to be part of organization that is so dedicated to the issues surrounding family violence and breaking the cycle of inter-generational violence.

Annual reports give us an opportunity to reflect on ACWS’ accomplishments and challenges. In the last year ACWS has been a powerful voice in Alberta with respect to gun control, women’s issues and social supports.

On a daily basis, front-line shelter workers see the devastating effects of firearms in the context of domestic violence. ACWS successfully intervened in the Supreme Court Challenge on the gun control legislation. It was ironic that the province of Alberta led the legal challenge against the law, when Alberta has one of the highest rates of gun death and injury in Canada.

The report on Supports for Independence: Regional Differences was prepared by ACWS, assessing the difficulties of low income people in areas where the cost of living is higher than the provincial income support programs. The study showed that this held true for every region in the province. This makes it particularly difficult for women leaving abusive situations, whose financial resources are so limited.

ACWS is growing as well, welcoming four new members in this fiscal year. With an increasing membership, one of our challenges is to look at effective governance of the organization, while maintaining the networking and linkages that are so valuable to ACWS members. ACWS members got a good start on this challenge with their restructuring meeting last November.

I would like to acknowledge ACWS’ dedicated staff: Flavia Bourne for her enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment. She was a great help with the transition to a new provincial co-ordinator. Her efforts also need to be singled out for ACWS’ successful casino!

I would also like to thank the Board members and shelter staff who support ACWS, sometimes on a daily basis. It is their voices that make our organization strong!
MEETING THE OBJECTS OF ACWS:

1) To act as a liaison between women’s shelters and all levels of government.

- responded to requests for information on issues relating to the gun control legislation and the gun registry
- worked with shelters and CFSA’s on regional issues
- assembled provincial data to prepare the annual “Alberta Provincial Accommodation Statistics” Report
- worked with the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence to develop shelter standards

2) To encourage community groups desiring to form a women’s shelters and to assist wherever possible.

We welcomed the following shelters between April 1, 2000 – March 31, 2001:
(a) Brooks & District Women’s Safe Shelter Society
(b) Eagle Women’s Shelter
(c) Mikisew Cree First Nation – Paspew House
(d) Sonshine Community Services

3) To initiate and/or participate in research relating to issues affecting battered women.

- participated in both the Transitions Project which looks at housing issues and PVAC which is assessing the impact of regionalization

4) To make recommendations relating to remedies for the problems of battered women.

- commissioned a report on Supports for Independence (SFI) which made recommendations which would help women to leave abusive situations by ensuring adequate financial support

5) To initiate and/or participate in public awareness programs relating to battered women and act as an information resource.

- launched the Violet project, which provides legal information to women in abusive situations via the internet (www.violetnet.org)
- provided educational programs for shelter workers
Executive Committee:

Members:

Chair
Lana Wells, President

Robin Krause, Vice-President
Pat Carter, Treasurer
Lise Blanchette, Secretary
Jean Langdon, Past President

Purpose:
The Executive Committee oversees the development, implementation, and coordination of ACWS policies, goals and objectives.

Social Issues Committee:

Members:

Chair
Lise Blanchette, YWCA Sheriff King Home

Bonita Bourlon, Pincher Creek Women’s Emergency Shelter
Gerry Carter, Phoenix Safe House
Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place
Carolyn Goard, YWCA Sheriff King Home
Kathleen Nakagawa, Crossroads Resource Centre
Kathy Sheppard, Odyssey House

Purpose:
To research, propose policy, educate and recommend on social issues.

Highlights:
Worked on the following issues:
- Supports for Independence (SFI) Issue
- Unified Family Court
Personnel & Policy Procedures Committee:

Members:

Chair
Robin Krause, Phoenix Safe House
Lise Blanchette, YWCA Sheriff King Home
Nadine Casey French, Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter
Jean Langdon, Discovery House
Sister Lucinda May Patterson, Lurana Shelter

Purpose:
To ensure current and appropriate policies with respect to ACWS operations and human resources.

Highlights:
- Updated the position description for the Provincial Coordinator
- Began a review of the “Conflict of Interest” & “Code of Conduct” for Board Members
- Initiated Bylaw review

Aboriginal Issues Committee:

Members:

Chair
Bonita Bourlon, Pincher Creek Women’s Emergency Shelter
Brenda Brochu, Peace River Regional Women’s Centre
Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place
Heike DeGraff, Pincher Creek Women’s Emergency Shelter
Lisa Dorazio, Awo Taan Native Women’s Emergency Shelter
Sandra Ermineskin, Ermineskin Women’s Shelter
Janet Gladue, Bigstone Cree Nation Women’s Emergency Shelter
Doreen McCaw, Lloydminster Interval Home
Kathleen Nakagawa, Crossroads Resource Centre
Bernice Wright, Sucker Creek Women’s Emergency Shelter

Highlights:
- Began project to address needs of aboriginal women entering shelters
Finance Committee:

Members:
Chair
Pat Carter, A Safe Place

Moriah Boyd, Central Alberta Women’s Emergency Shelter
Joie Dery, Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre
Brenda Hill, Kerby Shelter
Pat Kulscar, Safe Home High Level

Purpose:
To coordinate financial resource management of ACWS and address funding issues for member shelters.

Highlights:
- Ethical fundraising guidelines adopted by ACWS
- Daughter’s of the Eastern Star fundraiser for ACWS
- Casino fundraiser generated record return
Adhoc Committees:

Crisis Intervention Worker’s Workshop Committee

Members:
Flavia Bourne, ACWS
Ione Challborn, Edmonton Women’s Shelter
Arlene Chapman, ACWS
Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place
Pat Garrett, Wings of Providence
Karen Pease, Wheatland Communities Crisis Society
Kathy Sheppard, Odyssey House

Highlights:
- 81 Crisis Support Workers in attendance
- Topics covered included:
  i) Aboriginal Issues  ii) Boundaries
  iii) Diversity  iv) Group Facilitation
  v) Research & Resources  vi) Resistance
  vii) Self Care  viii) Solution Focused Counselling
  ix) Vicarious Traumatization  x) Working with Abusive Partners
  xi) Women and HIV

IODE Child Support Worker’s Workshop Committee

Members:
Flavia Bourne, ACWS
Brenda Bruchal, A Safe Place
Debbie Doyle, Edmonton Women’s Shelter
Sylvia Fleury, Lurana Shelter
Kate Hynes, Edmonton Women’s Shelter
Velma Laverty, IODE
Maija Mullen, A Safe Place

Highlights:
- 30 Child Support Workers in attendance
- Topics covered included:
  i) Battered Woman as Mother
  ii) Attention Deficit Disorder
  ii) Care for the Care Giver
  iv) Validating the Resilience of the Aboriginal Family
Board of Directors (As of March 31, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Shelter/Center</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lana Wells, President</td>
<td>Brenda Strafford Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Krause, Vice-President</td>
<td>Phoenix Safe House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Carter, Treasurer</td>
<td>A Safe Place</td>
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<td>Lise Blanchette, Secretary</td>
<td>YWCA Family Support Centre &amp; Sheriff King Home</td>
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<td>Jean Langdon, Past President</td>
<td>Discovery House</td>
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<td>Joyce Badger</td>
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<td>Jeannie Dumont</td>
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<td>Nadine Casey French</td>
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<td>Cecile Lavoie</td>
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<td>Annette Lee</td>
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<td>Lesley Regelous</td>
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<td>Mariella Sneddon</td>
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<td>Kim Taylor</td>
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<td>Solomon Yellowknee</td>
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### Member Shelters

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<tr>
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<td>A Safe Place</td>
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Associate Member

Mountain Rose Women’s Shelter Association

Rocky Mountain House, AB
We would like to extend a special “Thank You” and recognition to our Donours who partner with ACWS.

Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission
Supported our Aboriginal Liaison Project

Clifford E. Lee Foundation
Supported National Organization for Victim’s Assistance Conference

Edmonton Community Foundation
Supported Crisis Intervention Worker’s Workshop & the National Organization for Victim’s Assistance Conference

Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire
Sponsor for IODE Child Support Worker’s Workshop

Muttart Foundation
Supported ACWS Restructuring Process and Provincial Voices for Action & Change Project

Office for the Prevention of Family Violence
Supported ACWS to continue our work in partnership with OPFV

Status of Women Canada
Supported ACWS to continue our work

We would like to recognize the efforts and support received from our Volunteers. Your support is sincerely appreciated.

Henry Baldt          Corey Hanf
Art Beliveau        Catherine Hedlin
Casey Boodt         Kevin Hendricks
Dave Bourne         Emrich Hladky
Arlene Chapman      Mike Jacobs
Linda Churchill     Connie McBride
Anita Cochrane      RoseMarie McCarthy
Jim Cregan          Myrna Peets
Peggy Dick          Marjorie Rous
Dora Francis        Darlene Saunders
Don Goldie          Rob Squire
Pat Garrett         Mary Anne Warren
Carla Hanf          
