

# REPORT OF THE AFL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

## INTRODUCTION

The AFL Woman's Committee has played a vital role by bringing awareness about women's issues to the labour movement. The committee continues to be active within the greater community to support the many socio-economic and quality of life issues facing women.

## COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVISM

### *International Day for the Elimination of Poverty*

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Poverty, the Committee organized luncheons at the Boyle Street Community Cooperative in Edmonton in November 2007; and at the Calgary Urban Project Society in October 2008. In both cases, members of the Committee and volunteers from affiliated unions helped prepare and serve lunch to women, children and men.

### *AFL/CLC School & Caucuses*

Women's caucuses were held during the AFL/CLC schools in Jasper in 2008 and 2009. AFL Women's Committee members lead the discussions in the caucuses.

### *International Women's Day & AFL Women's Day Award*

Members of the committee participated in events to celebrate International Women's Day. The Committee

amended the award selection criteria for 2009; reviewed nominations submitted and made recommendations for the International Women's Day Award to the AFL Executive Council. The AFL IWD Award recipients in 2008 were: Elisabeth Ballermann (HSAA) and Karen Kennedy (CUPW). The 2009 award recipient is Sister Beryl Scott (UNA) who will receive the award at this convention.

### *April 28<sup>th</sup> Day of Mourning*

April 28th International Day of Mourning activities were held in both Edmonton and Calgary, in 2008. Members of the committee supported these events.

### *December 6<sup>th</sup> National Day of Remembrance*

To mark the December 6th National Day of Remembrance, members of the Women's Committee participated in ceremonies held in Edmonton. In 2007 the event was held at Canada Place; and in 2008 during the roundtable/public dialogue on violence against women sponsored by the AFL Women's Committee.

### *First World Conference of Women's Shelters*

The First World Conference of Women's Shelters, "*Discovering the Common Core: Practical Framework for Change,*" sponsored by the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS)

held in Edmonton in September 2008 was attended by over 800 delegates from 51 countries.

The Women's Committee raised \$4,674 for the conference; the AFL provided matching funds of \$4,000 and a donation of \$1,000. Total raised by the Committee and the AFL was \$9,674. An additional \$5,000 donation from UNA came through the committee raising the total to \$14,674.

These funds contributed to the Adopt-a-Shelter Sponsorship Program for the World Conference; with support from affiliates and the AFL.

The Great Human Race fundraising netted an additional \$731 for United Way agencies dealing with issues affecting women and children.

Four members of the committee attended the global conference. They came away from the conference with knowledge and ready to do more to mobilize in the struggle to end violence in our society.

### ***Public Dialogue on the Prevention of Domestic Violence***

On December 6, 2008, the Committee organized and facilitated a roundtable/public dialogue in Edmonton. The event was billed "***A Public Dialogue on the Prevention of Domestic Violence in our Lives.***" The purpose of the discussions was to determine how we, as members of our unions, workplaces, neighborhoods, communities and society at large, can best support individuals in these different contexts. The result of the dialogue is the frame work that will be used to develop an AFL policy paper.

The keynote address was from Jan Reimer, Provincial Co-coordinator, Alberta Council of Women's Shelters. The closing address was from Elisabeth Ballermann, President, Health Sciences Association of Alberta.

### ***CLC Equality Campaign***

Activists in the Edmonton area participated in a workshop sponsored by the CLC on March 8, 2008 which launched the "***Equality: Once and for All: Women's Economic Equality Campaign.***" This was a year long campaign geared to raise awareness and mobilize for pay equity for women. Visit the CLC website at [www.clc-ctc.ca](http://www.clc-ctc.ca) for more information.

## **DISPOSITION OF 2007 CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS;**

### ***Res. No. 701 – Child Labour***

A pamphlet was developed to raise awareness on the issue of child labour in Canada, and specifically Alberta. This pamphlet will be used at AFL events, distributed to affiliates and is available on the AFL website.

### ***Res. C-702 Domestic Violence***

Resolution dealt with by hosting the public dialogue on December 6, 2008 and by participating in the first global conference of women's shelters.

### ***Res. No. 703 – Policy Paper on Violence against Women***

Policy paper presented to this convention for adoption.

## **CONCLUSION**

This has been a tremendously active period for the AFL Women's Committee with tangible results. The

committee members have contributed greatly to the work and have done some outstanding fundraising. We were fortunate to participate in the Global Conference and look forward to improving our networking with other women's committees of affiliates; the broader labour movement and the community in the future.

We are looking for new members to serve on the 2009-2011 term and urge interested activists to review the

attached Terms of Reference for the Committee. A brochure on the work of the women's committee was developed during this term.

We would like to thank the Officers and staff for consistently supporting us in our work. The committee would like to recognize Samara Jones, AFL Executive Staff; and during her leave, Sister Cherie Langlois-Klassen, for their tireless support.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

### **AFL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE, 2007 –2009**

Denise Palmer, Chair	UNA
Louise Yarrow, Secretary	HSAA
Tamara Kozlowska, Council Liaison	PSAC
Cherie Langlois-Klassen	USW
Linda Nyznyk	CUPW-Edm.
Pauline Klassen	CAW
Delores Pisl	TWU
Jody Trotman	ATU
Maureen Werlin	COPE
Cheryl Watamaniuk	UFCW
Samara Jones	AFL
Sue Gallivan (alternate)	UNA
Nancy Furlong (info)	AFL
Gil McGowan (info)	AFL

### **Committee members who served a partial term:**

Mary Bain	CUPW-Edm.
Linda Bourret	ATU
Betty Connelly	CEP
Wendy Renaud (alternate)	HSAA
Heather Senchuk (alternate)	HSAA

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Enclosure

## **WOMEN - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **The Women's Committee shall:**

- a) Be concerned with the rights of women in the work force who face discrimination, lack of equal opportunity, unfair treatment, and/or harassment in the workplace and union.
- b) Encourage involvement of women in union activities and other activities concerning women.
- c) Cooperate and liaise with other Federations and union committees in this common area of jurisdiction.
- d) Be concerned with facilitating discussion on the socioeconomic quality of life of women and the special circumstances and situations facing them. e.g., dual roles, spousal/partner/child/elder abuse, job sharing, pensions and child/elder care.
- e) Participate and/or initiate meetings, conferences, conventions and education courses where appropriate.
- f) Compile materials and monitor legislation concerning women.
- g) Promote and organize educational programs concerning women in the workplace, home and society.
- h) Conduct studies as necessary.
- i) Work with the Executive Council in promoting or assisting in the organization of women workers.
- j) Encourage formation of Women's Committees with labour organizations at all levels.

**Note: Affirmative Action representatives on the AFL Executive Council will automatically sit on the AFL Women's Committee.**

### **GENERAL – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Specific terms of reference have been established for each Standing Committee according to their specific jurisdiction. However, all Standing Committees of the AFL shall:

- a) keep abreast of and be knowledgeable in matters and developments related to their jurisdiction, and keep the AFL Officers up to date in these areas.

- b) review their mandate from convention and develop a plan of action for their term.
- c) deal with business referred to them by the Executive Council.
- d) carry out activities of the committee, and report in writing any recommendations to the AFL Executive Council meetings. *(Please see reporting in clear language.)*
- e) subject to Executive Council approval and in coordination with the AFL Officers, organize provincial or regional conferences.
- f) liaise with affiliated unions and labour councils in matters related to their respective jurisdiction and CLC committees where applicable.
- g) receive prior approval from the President or Secretary Treasurer before all correspondence, printed materials, public statements, etc. are produced.
- h) prior to adjournment of a meeting, establish, whenever possible, the next meeting date of the committee.
- i) communicate with other members of the committee. The AFL will supply the names, telephone numbers and email addresses of committee members.
- j) report biennially on its activities to the convention of the Federation.
- k) not have any authority to act or speak on behalf of the Federation.

The President and Secretary Treasurer shall be *ex officio* members of all committees. The Secretary Treasurer is the primary liaison for all Committees. AFL staff will be assigned to committees, when needed, to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities.

### **REPORTING IN CLEAR LANGUAGE**

All committee resolutions to Conventions and all recommendations to the AFL Executive Council will be presented to the AFL in clear language.

### **RESOLUTIONS AND POLICY REVIEW**

The AFL, through its committees, will review policies and resolutions for the purpose of:

- a) consolidating
- b) rewriting in clear language, or
- c) deleting or archiving those that are redundant or have been dealt with.