

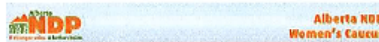


Women's Caucus

Newsletter



October 2010



1st Annual Olga Blondheim Fundraiser

An evening of networking as we enjoy a delightful sampling of hors D'oeuvres, refreshments, a silent auction and a cash bar as we raise funds in support of women candidates for the next provincial election.

Join us as we work toward assisting women candidates achieve their goal of representing the issues and concerns of Alberta voters. All proceeds will go to the "Olga Blondheim Fund".

Thursday, October 21, 2010 at 7:00 pm
At the Halo Restaurant
13226 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary
Tickets are \$100 with a \$50.00 tax receipt
Deadline for tickets is October 8th, 2010



FOR TICKETS OR INFORMATION CALL
Beth Wiwchar
403.282.0463 or
Rh'ena Oake
403.616.4184

PROVINCIAL CONVENTION November 5-7, Red Deer Lodge & Conference Centre, 4311-49 Ave.

ND Women's Caucus Annual Meeting - 7:30 a.m. Piper Creek Room - Continental Breakfast available.

Olga Blondheim Lunch in the Piper Creek Room at Noon_-vegetarian soup, sandwiches and wraps

Shannon Phillips will be guest speaker. She will be talking about **Women's Economic Inequality in Alberta**. Shannon is the research officer for the Alberta Federation of Labour, and has previously worked as a freelance journalist for Albertaviews, Al-Jazeera English, and CBC Newsworld. Many years ago, she was at the Alberta NDP caucus as the communications director and previous to that was an organizer for the federal NDP.

Tickets \$30; Low Income \$20. If you cannot attend please buy a ticket for someone who cannot afford one. Tickets will be available before Convention by mail in Edmonton and Calgary and at the Women's Caucus display table at Convention.

Calgary Area Women's Caucus

We continue to do the little things that, at times, become bigger than we planned. We collect aluminum (foil) and donate to the Heritage Lions' Club in Calgary. The aluminum is sold and the proceeds go to supporting kids with Juvenile Diabetes to attend a camp with their peers. We make sure they know our donation is from the Calgary New Democrats. We also continue to collect pennies for the Olga Blondheim fund and it is amazing to think our donations have reached the \$200 mark. We purchased piggy banks at Dollar Stores and have several members filling these at home. We also continue to maintain a small food bank and will be working with the Calgary Labour Council to promote it, hoping to reach a wider number of people in need.

It was extremely disappointing to those of us in Calgary to have absolutely no ND representation at the Calgary Labour Council's Labour Day BBQ. Rachel was to attend but, after attending the Pride Parade the day before, was called back to Edmonton. There were a lot of upset people, particularly those from labour.

We will be working with the Calgary House Society to hold our annual Christmas Open House on Saturday, November 27. We're going to try holding the event in November this year as December is such a busy month for so many of our members. A bake sale and turkey raffle will be held with proceeds to the Olga Blondheim Fund. From those of us who make up the Southern Area Women's Caucus it's an exciting time as we finalize our plans for the big Olga fundraiser in October.

Our best to you and yours.

-Beth Wiwchar

Letter to the Lethbridge Herald re Cytology Lab Closures

Editor:

Stephen Duckett, President and CEO of Alberta Health announced that the Cytology Labs at Lethbridge, Red Deer and the University of Alberta will all be closed on May 31st. He gave three main reasons for closing these labs and centralizing the pap smear testing:

The first reason he gave is to provide the Liquid Based Cytology (LBC) testing across the province to all women. Poppycock! The Chinook Regional Hospital in Lethbridge has had Liquid Based Cytology (LBC) testing since 2007, and Red Deer and the U of A also have LBC.

The second reason was to save money. No cost analysis has ever been presented and there are likely to be extra costs when tests must be labeled, packed up, and couriered to the centralized labs in Calgary (quasi-private Calgary Lab Services) and Edmonton (DynaLife—fully privately owned and which will want a margin of profit).

The third reason given was faster turnaround time. Duckett indicated that the current wait time is five days. He indicated that with the new centralized system, 95% of the time the tests would be completed in three days from the time of arrival at the Lab (in Calgary or Edmonton). It is now five days turnaround from test to result. The proposed three days from the time it reaches the centralized lab does not include packaging and shipping times nor computer entry time: the computer systems of both CLS and DynaLife are incompatible with those of Alberta Health. All results will have to be entered into each computer system increasing time and errors. Turnaround times will certainly be much longer.

In Lethbridge we have a new cancer centre opening. Why wouldn't we also have the cervical cancer screening (pap smears) LBC tests done locally?

Albertans are upset. 2455 Albertans have signed the Cytology Lab petition (<http://www.gopetition.com/online/34765.html>) to keep the Cytology Labs in Lethbridge, Red Deer and at the University of Alberta.

Ironically, while the Superboard was announcing the definite closing of the Cytology Labs in the province, Rachel Notley, NDP MLA Edmonton-Strathcona, was presenting the above petition with around 1500 names at that time to be tabled by the Alberta Legislature.

Those who care are urged to call the Premier and the Health Minister (310-0000) to urge them to reverse the decision.

Bev Mündel-Atherstone, Lethbridge Health Care Advocate,
Box 21031, Lethbridge, AB. T1K-6X4 403-329-4746

Edmonton Regional Caucus

Olga Blondheim Brunch November 21 at 10:30 a.m. Murrieta's Bar and Grill - 10612-82 Ave.

Speaker - Kayla McCarthy, executive member of ND Women's Caucus on **Creative Fundraising**

Some activities of the Women's Council (formerly Participation of Women - POW).

At the Federal NDP convention in Halifax in August 2009, resolution was adopted by the convention, to change the name of the Participation of Women (POW) to Women's Council, as well as adopt new bylaws. One of the major changes in the structure of the Women's Council is the move back to have representation from all provinces, rather than regional representation (for example, one rep for Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). From now on each province and territory will have their own representative.

The Women's Council met for the first time since the convention at the Federal Council, January 31, 2010 in Ottawa.

Marianne Alto, one of the original co-chairs resigned, so there is currently search for a replacement. Mary Lou Cherway, the other co-chair, has asked for anyone interested in the position to put their name forward.

The discussion at the meeting centered on the almost complete invisibility of women on the Fed website. Suggestions floated about creating Women's Council website with links to it from the Fed website, as well as a link to fundraise for Agnes McPhail fund. Apparently this can be done by the Fed communications people, however it could take some time, as there are other caucuses already in the line up. The motion to do this was passed and will be forwarded to the communication people at the Fed.

The contact list created at the convention was somehow misplaced, so a new one was created at this meeting hoping that we will be able to keep in touch more often.

The next meeting has not yet been scheduled, but will be conducted by teleconference.

Hana Razga

News and Issues From the North

Doctors and Clinics

One of the problems we still face here in Grande Prairie and the surrounding area is trying to get an appointment with a Doctor. The wait for an appointment can be at least three weeks maybe more. Should you choose to go to the emergency room at the hospital, the wait can be as long as twelve to sixteen hours give or take a few hours. Should you be brought in by ambulance you will definitely be the first priority.

We still have a shortage of Doctors here. Also there is a shortage of walk-in clinics.

Another of the problems here are that the walk-in clinics are closed by five p.m. I feel they should be open till at least nine p.m. and even to eleven p.m. This would then take a great deal of pressure off the hospital. We also have a need for more clinics in the smaller towns in the surrounding area. For some people it can be quite a long drive to get to a Doctor let alone the hospital.

We are very grateful for the fact that Mr. Ed Stelmach has allowed the Beaverlodge Hospital to remain open. This I am sure helps to relieve some of the pressure off of the in Grande Prairie Hospital as people from Beaverlodge and that out-lying area use that hospital.

To list a few more of the problems in the north:

- Day care for single parents and teens and anyone else that needs it.
- Cost of education, over-crowded class rooms
- Shortage of ambulance staff

That is to name just a few of the problems here.

-Loretta Friesen

My Bio

I am 50 years old and live on an acreage outside of the Hamlet of Grovedale. I have been married to James Friesen for 16 years. We had (his and mine) 11 children, we have 9 children left; we also have 32 grandchildren. At the present time I am self employed. I also have a few registered standardbred race horses.

Convention Report Alberta ND Women's Caucus November 2010

The following outlines the yearly activities since Sept 2009

Executive

The Women's Caucus Executive has met about every two months by teleconference. Three of the current Executive members will not be standing for the next year.

Shirley Barg –**Edmonton Rep** Haike McRae-**Calgary Rep** Sheila McKay –**Secretary**

We have appreciated their assistance and we hope Shirley Barg will remain as the Women's Caucus website contact.

Kayla McCarthy joined as **Youth Rep** and Loretta Frieson as the **Grande Prairie Rep**.

Committee Representation

Starr Curry participates in the Convention Planning Committee

Hana Razga participates in the Resolutions Committee

Federal Women's Council Rep

The Federal Women's Council met at least once this year and Hans Razga is the Alberta Rep. Several of the main issues include more visibility of the Women's Council and the Agnes McPhail Fund on the Federal Party website. Hana attends the Alberta ND Women's Caucus meetings and is currently running for an aldermanic seat in Ward 8 in Edmonton .

Regional Caucuses

Calgary continues to meet every third Saturday (excluding July, August and December) and has a wine and cheese reception planned for October 21 to raise money for the Olga Blondheim Fund for Women Candidates. Other activities include providing lunch for Provincial Council June 19 and penny jar for the Olga Blondheim Fund as well as arranging an ND booth at the Labour Council's BBQ. .

Edmonton has had two meetings this year in February and June at Murrieta's Bar and Grill 10612-82 Ave, a handicapped-accessible location. Another meeting is planned for **November 21 at 10:30** with Kayla McCarthy (Executive member) presenting on **Creative Fundraising**. Please bring a friend with you . The Edmonton Olga Blondheim Brunch was held on May 2 and raised over \$3000 for the Olga Blondheim Fund. A garage sale was held on July 8-10 but the proceeds were not as good as other years so it worth thinking about other fundraising ideas.

Provincial Convention

Annual Meeting is being held Sat Nov 6 at 7:30 AM at the Red Deer Lodge, Piper Creek Room with a continental breakfast available. Four resolutions have been submitted on the right to care, post secondary issues affecting women, midwifery education and family violence and bullying prevention. The display table will be available for buying tickets for the Olga Blondheim Brunch, selling fundraising items and renewing and selling memberships as well as displaying brochures etc. Please volunteer if you have time during Provincial Convention especially on Saturday morning .

Olga Blondheim Brunch is in the Piper Creek Room across from Provincial Convention Hall with Shannon Phillips as the speaker . This is one of the major opportunities for funding for the Olga Blondheim Fund for Women Candidates.

Newsletter is published three times per year and is mailed or sent by email.

Starr Curry and Bev Muendel-Atherstone – Co-Chairs

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Edmonton City Council Candidate

Dear friends and neighbours,

Edmontonians will soon be going to the polls to elect Mayor, Councillors and School Board Trustees. **Election Day is October 18th**.

In September 2009 I declared my intention to run in Ward 8 for Council, and I have been campaigning ever since. Building on the momentum of our campaign in 2007, the response at the door and in the communities has been tremendous! Edmontonians agree that we need a council with vision: one that can deliver affordable, universal services and that is a leader in sustainability.

From environmental stewardship to City budgeting and planning, I have a vision that focuses on living within our means and leaving a positive legacy for our children. We need to protect the environment and support Smart Growth initiatives for our city, particularly in the areas of housing, public transit and parks, recreation and culture.

But I cannot do this alone. I need your help.

Campaigns cost money and I am writing to you to ask for your financial support. Together, we can make a difference on City Council. Please donate today - no amount is too small! A donation of \$50 will deliver leaflets to a neighbourhood. \$100 will put 20 signs on people's lawns, and a \$250 contribution will pay for phone lines or a week's office rent and help spread our message to voters.

Please make the cheques payable to **Razga 2010** and mail to Jim Rands, who graciously offered to manage the financial aspect of the campaign: #2106, 9909 – 104 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2G5

You can also donate online right now at www.hanarazga.com and find out more about what my campaign is up to.

I sincerely appreciate your help. Thank you very much.

Hana Razga

Edmonton Public School Board Candidate HOFFMAN RUNNING FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEE IN WARD G

After watching her school trustee vote to close five schools, Sarah Hoffman has had enough.

Hoffman, 30, who works as Director of Research for the NDP Caucus and has a Masters Degree in Educational Policy Studies, doesn't like the way the Edmonton Public School Board is handling community schools.

"The board has closed 18 schools in the last ten years," said Hoffman. "And they are looking at closing another seventy. It's crazy."

Hoffman pointed out that other school districts, like Edmonton Catholic, are not closing schools at anywhere near the rate of Edmonton Public.

Her message is catching on. She has support from MP Linda Duncan, MLA Rachel Notley, and even a few Liberals and Tories.

"When my Trustee voted to close community schools in our Ward, people were angry," said Hoffman. "We need to send the board a message and I hope to be that messenger."

Resolutions to Provincial Convention from Women's Caucus Right to Care

Whereas the privatization of services in Alberta has led to failures of service provision, including the loss of service through private provider bankruptcies; and

Whereas the privatization of care in Alberta has placed an increased burden on unpaid caregivers in the family and the community, the majority of which are women; and

Whereas chronic underfunding creates risks to and overburdens patients, staff, and patients' families; *Be it resolved* that the Alberta NDP will adopt the core principles of the Charlottetown Declaration on the Right to Care:

- The right to care is a fundamental human right
- The right to care requires access to a continuum of services and supports
- The right to care requires appropriate conditions
- The right to care requires the choice to receive or not receive or to provide or not provide unpaid care
- The right to care requires that there is no assumption of unpaid care
- The right to care requires access to reasonable alternatives and sufficient information
- Care should be equitable, available, accessible, continuous, responsive and transparent, incorporate diversity, participatory, enforceable, standards-based, publicly administered, and respectful.

Post secondary education funding issues affecting Women

Whereas 70% of new jobs require some level of post secondary education (Public Interest Alberta, Sept 2009); and financial issues continue to be the major reason that young people do not pursue post secondary education, (Public Interest Alberta, Sept 2009); and women are more likely to be impacted by these issues than men because:

1. The majority of single parent families are female led
2. Women who pursue postsecondary education tend to work part time as well as carry out child-rearing responsibilities
3. Women are overall paid less
4. It takes women longer to pay off their student loans; and scholarships are less likely to be obtainable, given the multiple demands faced by women students that may affect their academic performance, particularly for women in larger faculties

Be it resolved that the Alberta New Democrats, in opposition, pressure the government to be responsive to the financial problems facing female post secondary students; and *Be it further resolved* that the Alberta New Democrats in government, implement post secondary education fiscal policies that more adequately fund post secondary education (See University of Alberta Students Union Report, 2008); and

Be it further resolved that the Alberta New Democrats express their continued opposition to fees such as the 500 user fee called the Continuation of Security fee being instituted by the University of Alberta as a way to raise funds to deal with university financial deficits.

Midwifery Education

Whereas midwifery services recently became covered by Alberta Health Services; and

Whereas the majority of women who requested a midwife birth last year were turned away because of demand; and

Whereas it is important to have midwifery-assisted support that is appropriate for a full range of cultural perspectives; and

Whereas there is currently no full midwifery education programs available in Alberta;

Be it resolved that midwifery education programs be developed and operational at (a minimum of two) post-secondary institutions in Alberta by 2014.

Family Violence and Bullying Prevention

Recent Alberta government funding cuts have seen the loss of funding sources for not-for-profit, human services organizations, including funds such as the Wild Rose Foundation and the Community Incentive Fund for family violence and bullying prevention; and many of these organizations provide critical support to vulnerable persons in this province, particularly women and children; and

Whereas the suggested alternatives to these funds do not provide adequate supports or replacement levels of funding, place agencies in competition for smaller and smaller pools of resources, and in some cases are inaccessible to certain programs, leading to the elimination of projects and programs because of the lack of funding;

Be it resolved that the Alberta NDP will pressure the government to replace the lost funding dollars eliminated in past budgetary cuts to for not-for-profit, human services organizations, especially those providing critical support to vulnerable persons in this province, particularly women and children; and

Be it further resolved that the Alberta NDP will work to reinstate dedicated funding sources for violence prevention programming to ensure that all Albertans can live free of abuse in their homes, workplaces, and schools.



Did you know?

You can donate to the Olga Blondheim Fund and/or to the Women's Caucus? Send a cheque or money order to Treasurer, Elsie Ross, 224-3rd Ave NE Calgary T2E 0H2. (We do not have access to Mastercard or Visa.)



On your side.



Women's Caucus

Yes, as a member of the NDP, I want to join the Caucus and support its important work (membership includes newsletter).

Name _____

Address _____

City/Postal Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

I'd like my newsletter by email post

Please mail to:

ND Women's Caucus c/o I. Mather
10939-148 Street
Edmonton, AB T5N 3H6

Provincial Office Toll Free: 1-800-465-6587
Phone: 780-474-2415 Fax: 780-474-6138

Enclosed:

\$10 Caucus \$3 seniors or low income)

New Renewal

I am a member in good standing of the NDP _____; **OR**

_____ NDP membership: your donation or a monthly contribution by PAC (Pre-authorized Chequing. Contact Provincial Office or use www.albertandp.ca)

_____ donation for:

_____ Women's Caucus
_____ Olga Blondheim Fund

\$ _____ **Total enclosed**