

**Alberta Women's Institutes Provincial Convention 2023**  
**"Strengthening Families & Community Relationships"**  
**June 6, 7 and 8, 2023 Norsemen Inn, Camrose, Alberta**

The annual Convention of the Alberta Women's Institutes was held at the Norsemen Inn, Camrose, Alberta on June 6, 7 and 8, 2023. The theme of the Convention was "Strengthening Families and Community Relationships."

The following abbreviations were used throughout these minutes: AWI – Alberta Women's Institutes; FWIC – Federated Women's Institutes of Canada; WI – Women's Institutes; ACWW – Associated Country Women of the World.

There was one Pre-Conference Tour-cost \$10 with 4 participants held on Monday, June 6, and two workshops in the evening, the first at 6:30 pm Cro-Hooking – Cost \$10.00 was presented by Fern Killeen, Associate Member. There were 10 participants. The second was Junk Journals – Cost \$15.00, presented by Linda Toews, President-Elect. There were 5 participants. On Tuesday morning at third workshop on Resolutions, presented by Linda Toews and Elizabeth Rushton was held at 9:30 am. There were 3 participants.

**Tuesday, June 6, 2023 –Afternoon**

Opening Ceremonies began at 1 pm on Tuesday, June 7, the 2023 Conference opened with the Parade of Flags. All the flags came in together, followed by the parade of dignitaries.

Welcome by President Diane Dammann.

O Canada was led by Fern Killeen, followed by a moment of silence in remembrance of past members. *The Flag Salute* was led by Linda Toews. Mary Stewart Collect was recited, led by Marilyn Wattenbarger, Handicraft Coordinator.

President Diane Dammann introduced the Flag bearers, and Council. Geri Ferner brought greetings from the Norsemen Inn.

President Diane Dammann introduced our Keynote speaker MLA Elect Jackie Lovely. Jackie introduced her student guest, Stan from Ukraine. She talked about a million-dollar program to be used to set up an education program to support rural healthcare workers to deal with victims of Rural Sexual Assault Support Project (RSASP). The Government will cover the cost of the course for healthcare professionals working in rural areas. Northwestern Polytechnic in Grande Prairie has been selected to deliver this course. There is also 1 million dollars provided for women to study in S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.) Following her talk, Jackie Lovely took questions. Is there a starter program to train nurses? Answer: It has already started at Lethbridge. Jackie encouraged us to write letters to our MLA's and MP's. Is there a phone number to access our own billing and medical records? Answer: They are available online.

FWIC Greeting: following the Keynote address, there was a virtual greeting from FWIC President Margaret Byl.

## Coffee Break

After Coffee Break the first Door prizes were drawn, winners were Marilee Kosik and Lena Toews.

The business session began with the announcement of voting strength as 38.

Minutes of 2022 read. District 5 Director Linda Mason objected to the portion about her report. There was much discussion.

**Moved** by Faye Mayberry, seconded by Dorothy Ungstad to delete 2 sentences from the 2022 minutes from District 5 Director Report. **Motion #01-06-2023 Convention**

This motion must be discussed later and voted on next year.

The Financial Report for the long year Sept 1, 2021, to August 31, 2022, was reviewed by Leanne Gordon and Yvonne Erickson.

**Moved** by Ina Webster, seconded by Grace Scheffelmair to accept the Financial Report as presented for the fiscal year September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022. Carried **Motion #02-06-2023 Convention**

The short year from Sept 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, was presented by Bernadette Logozar. The dues to ACWW that are paid from the Mrs. Alfred Watt account were \$400 and then lowered to \$300 and next year will be \$50 for the next year. When Saskatchewan WI dissolved, the Alfred Watt Funds were divided up among the remaining provinces. Bernadette deposited Alberta's share in a GIC because the renewal date of the Watt Fund was not near. Bernadette explained that the bank purchased a GIC for \$50,000 instead of \$5,000 in one account, as we did not have the \$50,000; they then pulled the balance needed from our Community Spirit account, which resulted in overdraft interest charges. This was all-in error. It has since been corrected but at the close of fiscal year, and related statements needs to be reported as still outstanding. She will get the last penny of charges back.

**Moved** by Linda Mason, seconded by Ina Webster to appoint two (2) independent financial reviewers for the short fiscal year ending March 31, 2023 and every year in the future. Carried **Motion #03-06-2023 Convention**

Wendy Reister and Angela Bazuta will review the short year financials.

## Tuesday Evening

Handicraft room open 4:30 to 6:15pm.

District meetings were held in various locations. The Associates also met.

Table center pieces were made by Mae Deans. The dinner of pork cutlet, rice, mixed vegetables was served. Lunches were buffet style. Grace by Faye Mayberry.

Following dinner, a night of games took place.

## Wednesday morning, June 7, 2023

The convention continued with the voting strength of 43. Early Bird games were done by Districts 4 and 5.

Registration for the convention was handled by Fern Killeen and voting registration by Bernadette Logozar.

Door prizes won by Cathleen Thurston and Ina Webster.

Mae Deans was introduced by Diane Dammann. Mae Deans gave us an update on the work she does at the Provincial Archives. She gave us tips on what to include in scrapbooks and put names on a separate paper with pictures.

Resolution guidelines were read. Timer was Lauren Beaudoin, Parliamentarian, Linda Toews, scrutineers, Fern Killeen, Faye Mayberry, Elizabeth Rushton.

**Moved** by Dorothy Ungstad, seconded Cathleen Thurston that we bypass the approval of 2022 AGM minutes to be dealt with at the 2024 AGM when corrected. Carried **Motion #04-06-2023 Convention**

**Moved** by Elizabeth McPhee, Stony Plain WI seconded by Carol Brown, Associate Member to have a policy change to allow all members in good standing, who are attending an AWI Conference or Convention have a vote on all issues. Carried (23 in favor. Opposed 13, abstained 4) **Motion #05-06-2023 Convention**

**Moved** by Joan Bogner, seconded by Linda Mason to allow all members and associate members in good standing to have a vote for President Elect and all matters known before AGM, whether by mail or in person, all members have a vote. Defeated **Motion #06-06-2023 Convention**

Nomination Committee report and President Elect candidates, chaired by Past President Cathleen Thurston presented three candidates for President Elect: Colleen Bianchi, Gloria Coates and Marilyn Wattenbarger.

Coffee breaks featured cookies donated by Constituency Convenors. Coffee was supplied by Round Hill Branch and prepared by the Norsemen Inn.

Door prize Merla Richards

Voting took place just before lunch. Confirmation of voters and ballot issuing was the responsibility of Jean Lavoie

**Resolution #1:** Be it resolved the AWI urge the government of Canada to remove the “gold-digger clause” Section 31(1) from the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act to allow the spouse of a Canadian Forces Retiree marrying after 60 to be eligible for the Survivor’s benefits without reducing the superannuation payment. Moved by Merilee Kosik, seconded by Betty Milne. Carried. **Motion #07-06-2023 Convention.**

**Resolution #2:** Be it resolved that the Alberta Women's Institutes petition the Alberta Government, and in particular, the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General, and Alberta Premier, to maintain support of the 62 Victim Support Units currently in the province, and any future units. Moved by Faye Mayberry, Ridgewood, seconded by Merla Richards. Carried **Motion #08-06-2023 Convention.**

**Resolution #3:** Be it resolved that the Alberta Women's Institutes urge the Alberta Government to reinstate cursive writing into the Department of Education curriculum for grades 3-5. Moved by Betty Milne, seconded by Merilee Kosik. Carried, with 3 opposed. **Motion #09-06-2023 Convention**

Our next speakers were Reese and Trish James of the Camrose Boys and Girls Club. They were excited to speak to us about the programs they have for their members.

Handicraft Coordinator, Marilyn Wattenbarger asked that handicraft be picked up right after the banquet, so we did not have another day's cost for the room.

Lunch at 1:15: We marched to deposit our donations for the new Rural Women Empowerment Fund which is in support of ACWW projects \$123.45 was collected.

Mae Deans spoke about the AWI panels that were made for the 100th anniversary of AWI. She would like to make a panel for the president since 2009. She said that this display is the most requested of the Archive collections.

Eunice Horte spoke about the book Many and Remarkable that was compiled for the 100th anniversary of WI by Catherine Cole and Judy Larmour, Elizabeth Rushton, Chair of History Book Committee. Eunice gave us an overview of the history.

Members put on all their WI regalia and then strutted their stuff. A vote was taken and the winner was Faye Mayberry.

Diane Dammann and Gloria Coates talked about some of the tours they took at the ACWW Conference in Malaysia.

New President Elect is Marilyn Wattenbarger.

Banquet grace was given by Marilee Kosik. Yvonne Erickson gave a toast to Past Presidents. Linda Mason gave Sponsor recognition. Joan Bogner was an enthusiastic 50/50 salesperson.

Door prize winners were Pat Scott. Marilyn Wattenbarger, Linda Toews,

Following dinner, the Creative Writing and Handicraft awards were presented. Photographer Lena Toews photographed all the winners.

Linda Mason presented Carol Brown with the award for her entry to the ACWW contest.

Faye Mayberry was officially presented with her Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Woman of the Year award by President Diane Dammann.

Cash raffle \$400 was won by Margaret Nielsen and \$600 won by Zuhey Alarian Brown  
Silent auction was managed by Ina Webster and District 2. The proceeds were \$844.

The Jewelry/ Scarf table managed by Merilee Kosik netted \$114.50, which goes to Travel Fund.

Recognition of Branches for new members, Argyle 5, Stony Plain 1, Wildrose Go-getters 2,

Marilyn Wattenbarger and helpers were thanked for the job well done.

Banquet entertainment was Diane Dammann about the ACWW Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### **Thursday, June 8, 2023**

Thursday morning Early Bird Game was a puzzle of Alberta town names.

Districts gave their reports. President-Elect Linda Toews gave a report.

The table centerpieces were auctioned off. Diane Dammann was auctioneer. Some silent auction items were left over so they were auctioned off too.

Coffee Break

Door prize winner Grace Scheffelmair

Speaker from Camrose Women's Shelter, Judi Beebe, was introduced by Bernadette Logozar. Judi said there are 31 shelters in Alberta. Women go in and out of shelter 17 times before they leave an abusive relationship.

President Diane Dammann thanked all for the experience.

Cathleen Thurston conducted the installation ceremony to install President Elect Marilyn Wattenbarger; she presented each outgoing Director with a carnation and each incoming Director with one also. Diane Dammann received the Past President pin.

Diane was presented with a lovely basket of succulents, and then Incoming President Linda Toews addressed the meeting. The flags were marched off.

Convention Closed at 11:30 am.

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Vickie Cloakey, Secretary

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Diane Dammann, President

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Linda Toews, President Elect