

**Alberta Women's Institutes
Annual General Meeting
September 28, 2021
Virtual Via Zoom - Minutes**

The following abbreviations will be used throughout these minutes:

ACWW – Associated Country Women of the World

AWI – Alberta Women's Institutes

FWIC – Federated Women's Institutes of Canada

WI – Women's Institutes

AGM – Annual General Meeting

AWI President Diane Dammann called the meeting to order shortly after 9:00 am by welcoming all of the Alberta Institutes Women and honored guests.

President's Opening Address:

It is a great pleasure to be able get together with you this morning we have certainly had some ups and downs with planning this convention and in our life in general with this COVID situation but we will preserver and while it is disappointing that we could not meet face to face and had to put the Handicraft Competition on hold, I think you will find it is an interesting day. The Council and I would like your opinion on some subjects at this virtual meeting today and hope that we can do that.

Fern Killeen led us in the singing of "O Canada" and Yvonne Erickson led the Flag Salute while we all recited our beautiful Mary Stewart Collect.

AWI Council was introduced:

President-Elect, Linda Toews, AWI's Executive Director - Bernadette Logozar, District One Director - Wendy Pimm, District Three Director - Yvonne Erickson; District Four Director - Colleen Bianchi, District Five Director, Financial Officer, and Alberta's FWIC Representative - Linda Mason.

FWIC President Margaret Byl sent her greetings congratulating AWI on their 112th. year anniversary and mentioned some of Alberta's WI accomplishments including the "Famous Five" -first known as the 'Alberta Five' . Margaret thanked FWIC's Past President, Joan Holtle and FWIC's Treasure and Alberta's FWIC's Representative Linda Mason for all their work on the Federated Board. Margaret included her congratulations to AWI President Diane Dammann on her third place winning in the Cultural Competitions.

AWI President Diane thanked Margaret for her kind words.

President Diane Dammann then called for the Voting strength, noted as 32 and informed everyone that the voting was to be done via the 'chat box' and would ask for only the 'nays' to speed up the voting process.

Diane introduced and thanked Linda Toews for her hard work in organizing the Convention and Linda thanked all of the people who had helped her in making it possible for us to have this virtual Convention. Linda informed everyone that there would be two speakers in the afternoon as well as the Resolutions and a Closet Fashion show and asked everyone to please give feed-back on today's entire events. President Diane also mentioned the Online Silent Auction of twenty items with active bidding

being carried on throughout the day.

2020 AGM Minutes - errors noted were Motion #01-09-2020 was moved by Linda Mason not Donna Henderson, Motion #02-09-2020 was moved to ratify the Council's Motions not Discussions and Motion #05-09-2020 Amendment Failed. Various spelling of words and names need to be corrected. President Diane Dammann moved the Minutes approved as corrected.

Linda Toews, Auditor of AWI's 2019-2020 financials explained various items throughout the Financial Statements and noted that some income that had not been expensed in the year was carried forward on the Balance Sheet to be recognized as income in the following year when it is expensed. Linda T. stated that the reason why there was an Income Loss was due mostly to not being able to have Convention income.

Motion #01-09-2021: Linda Toews moved the Financial Statements be accepted as presented, second by Yvonne Erickson. **Motion Carried**

Motion #02-09-2021: Yvonne Erickson moved that Council appoint two people to audit next year's Financials, seconded by Beverly Holland. **Motion Carried**

AWI President Diane noted that by increasing AWI membership the deficit could be decreased.

Linda Toews explained the Resolutions guidelines. There was a phone call that the Voting Strength increases to 34.

RESOLUTION #1: Be it resolved that the Alberta Women's Institute urge the Provincial and Federal Government to support the "Maple Leaf Project" to eradicate human trafficking in Canada.

Motion #03-09-2021: moved by Grace Reister, Argyle WI, seconded by Dorothy Ungstad, Halfway-Grove WI to accept Resolution #1. **Motion Carried**

*****Break*****

Memorial Service was a very well done video presentation.

HANDICRAFT COMPETITION

A discussion was held and due to COVID Restrictions and that we were unable to hold the handicraft competition for two years it was therefore decided that the next handicraft competition would allow members to enter two years' worth of entries with two entries per categories in the following year's competition to be held in Red Deer. Handicraft Coordinator Marilyn Wattenbarger noted that she had been notified by six branches' that they had entry's ready totaling 229 articles.

Motion #04-09-2021: Moved by Cathleen Thurston, Darwell WI, seconded by Carol Brown, Associated AWI member that an entry fee of \$1.00 per item entered in the AWI Handicraft Competitions be paid up to a maximum of \$25 per person. **Motion Carried**

Handicraft Coordinator, Marilyn Wattenbarger, due to COVID, has been researching various ideas in order to find ways that we might be able to have a Handicraft Competition [before 2022]. One suggestion she made, in order to reduce AWI's costs, was to hold the competition using the Red Deer Clubhouse for a fee of \$50.00 instead of the Norseman Inn whose fee is \$300 per day. Other thoughts

were to produce a YouTube presentation or have a judge for in-house judging then display the handicrafts entries for people to view via zoom. Marilyn W. knows a judge who is open to doing this last suggestion.

AWI President Diane Dammann talked about AWI Council providing virtual lessons or courses and more virtual gatherings, with members giving their thoughts. Some of the membership suggestions were to have a virtual lesson in creative writing or other such training. Could also have speakers present virtually on topics such as seniors' issues, wills, holistic care, funeral planning, etc. Courses could be provided by anyone wanting to teach via virtual means and that we should consider doing a Virtual Activity each calendar quarter, possibly in the afternoon or whenever would best suit those who would like to attend these sessions.

REPORT BOOK

Additions to the report book (received after book was printed) are: FWIC has developed a new program called "WI Canada Leadership modules" which will communication teaching program for tomorrow's leaders, the goal is to create and help new leaders and teach them about W.I. and W.I.'s future in Canada. There will be 10 modules which will be delivered to about 45 participants. If anyone is interested please contact Alberta's FWIC Representative, Linda Mason or AWI President Diane Dammann.

Round Table discussion groups have been developed and are open for anyone who would like to attend via Zoom. The first discussion will be about 'Membership' on November 15th at 5pm Alberta time, there will be another one with the topic 'Advocacy' which is planned for March 7th, and 'Climate Change' on April 20th.

If any member is interested or has any input they would like to share, even if not able to attend, it would be greatly appreciated if you could pass them along to FWIC Rep Linda Mason. FWIC is looking for fundraiser projects and ideas of how to help FWIC celebrate 125 years. One suggestion was to have a calendar with Provinces having their own page to provide information/history or anything else that we would like to share.

AWI President Diane Dammann shared that she has been online with a group from England called "Hawthorn Cloud" who do presentations every couple weeks on Friday afternoons.

"A CHALLENGE"- from Berwyn W.I.

President Joan Bogner put out a "challenge" to all other Branch's across the province. Joan has donated \$100.00 to the AWI Office Fund and is challenging all other branch's to do the same.

AWI President, Diane Dammann introduced District Directors.

DISTRICT #1 Wendy Pimm

In attendance were Wendy Pimm, Frances Bogner and Joan Bogner from the Berwyn Branch as well as a few from the Valhalla Busy Bees Branch. Wendy P. has not been able to meet with the Valhalla ladies as of yet. Wendy P. informed everyone that members been meeting mostly virtually and most members are vaccinated but everyone is being very careful. Wendy works at a school so everyone is being careful.

DISTRICT #2 is with no Director

Cathleen Thurston reported that the Darwell Branch has met when they can, in branch members' homes but keeping their distance from each other so no close contact. Elizabeth Rushton reported that Stony Plain Branch has had casual meetings, but unfortunately without full membership attendance, at the

Stony Plain Retirement home. Their branch met in September and they did a 'bake less' bake sale as a branch fund-raiser. Creighton Branch reported meeting last fall and members stay in contact by phone. Since many of their members are not computer minded so would be hard for them to meet virtually. They are hoping to meet in October but concerns with COVID may prevent this from happening.

DISTRICT #3 - Yvonne Erickson

Yvonne Erickson reported that Diane Campbell stepped down as Constituency Convener for Ohaton, so at this time there are no Constituency Conveners in District 3.

Marilyn Wattenbarger reported that a group of the Ridgewood Branch members did a mystery tour to "Painted Warriors" (south of Sundre). They also did a presentation on native plants, how the plants react with nature and how to make soaps and ointments.

DISTRICT #4 - Colleen Bianchi

Westoe Branch had their summer barbecue. Bow Valley Branch has not met yet. Barbara Stuart has stepped down as Bow Valley Constituency Convener and Colleen Bianchi is the Chinook Constituency Convener. Irvine Branch has been doing their branch duties for their community. International Wild Rose Branch has been meeting virtually and is doing short video teaching classes, such as sprouting seeds and member, Anne Marques, taught card making. Anne made some cards and donated them for the AWI 'online auction'. Not much activity in this District. International Wild Rose has not met for the fall yet.

DISTRICT #5 - Linda Mason

The only branch that Linda has heard from was the Hogadone Branch who faithfully sends their report every month. Wild Rose Go-Getters have not met since COVID 'hit' but did do a fund raiser in August. Linda M. is hoping to have a District 5 meeting soon but it may have to be having to be a virtual meeting as COVID is still lingering. Linda Toews is the Constituency Convener for Innisfail/Olds & Sundre. There is only one branch in the Constituency at this time. Lydia Bird and Jean Lavoie from the Ella Jane Branch told Linda M. that they will look into why she has not received reports from their Branch. Ella Jane Branch ladies have had a few meetings and catered for a couple weddings, so the group has been busy.

Carol Brown set up a little AWI display at the Sundre Museum and at 'Cultural Days' she handed out AWI brochures and ACWW bookmarkers to the younger women attending. These younger ladies told Carol B. that they are interested in the 'concept of women helping women' so might want to join W.I. or form their own organization that would be similar as they want to learn handicrafts, etc. Carol B. gave them Linda Toews information for them to contact for more information.

DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

Linda Mason sent out a request for all members to share the money they receive with AWI for the can/bottles they recycle as this is sort of like "found money" they would not be reaching into their own pockets but would help AWI immensely. Linda M. also organized with Value Village to bring boxes of "hard items" e.g. dishes, etc. and "soft items such as clothing, shoes, coats. These items will be taken to the Value Village located at the Sunridge Mall, 34th. St. NE, Calgary on Wednesday October 20th. COVID has made it difficult to gather these things together, so please contact your District Directors if you have any boxes and/or bags that you could gather up for this project. Total items gathered for this fundraiser has to be at least 2000 pounds but we are hoping to gather more to bring in at least \$500.00. If wanting to just meet at Value Village with your items please arrive by 2:00 pm. Ella Jane members are considering taking their boxes and bags directly to Value Village.

Remember the "Online Auction" happening and AWI 50/50 draw!

“CLOSET FASHIONS” Slide show presentation was shown.

AWI President Diane Dammann has been contacting various other Provincial members to find out how they are doing. Manitoba feels that all provinces have the same issues and problems due to COVID. Manitoba does monthly video presentations of which their last one was on how to split plants. They suggested that if you have the videos 'open' so that anyone can view then these presentations may bring new members to your organization. Donna Henderson from Ontario shared that the FWIC Connections is doing shared videos. Holly Hersey of New Brunswick told us that she tried to explain to her nieces what WI is all about, their history, and why they should join, but her nieces feel they need something that they can dig into, something they CAN DO - to 'improve' not wanting to just drink tea and eat scones.

A question was asked if AWI would be doing anything for the September 30 Indigenous Day? Answer was: it has not been discussed yet.

President Diane D. said hello to various members attending, Pat Scott who is 96 years young is still knitting. Ann Marques of International Wild Rose/Lethbridge introduced herself. Gloria Coates told us that Hogadone Branch was named after a man who donated land for a school. Fern Killeen, an Associate member, said that she would be very interested in being able to learn a craft once a month and hear speakers. Associate Members feel so isolated with no branches and as there are 19 Associated Members in Alberta maybe these ladies could meet virtually also.

Diane D. mentioned that Donna Henderson is 'our Quilt Person' who does wonderful work and has donated many pieces for AWI and ACWW, and now has a quilted table runner for AWI she will leave in Alberta.

Elizabeth Rushton suggested to members the \$500 they received in August from the Federal government to consider giving some or all funds to AWI or the FWIC Homestead. Suggest this idea to your branches, your Districts and members, if these funds are 'not needed' by members. President Diane thanked Elizabeth for her suggestion.

There is a Pen Pal Program in Canada who stays in touch by email and the UK is always looking for more Pen Pals.

50/50 TICKETS -total \$187.00 winner is Lila Bird of Ella Jane \$93.50, ticket #861

AWI President Diane Dammann repeated the AWI Grace.

*****LUNCH BREAK*****

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative Writing Coordinator Linda Toews announced:

Non-Fiction articles 1000-3000 words

Memoir - 1st place -Cathleen Thurston of Darwell

- 2nd place - Helen Andrews of Round Hill

-3rd place -Diane Dammann of Argyle
Essays -1st place Barbori Streibl/Associate Member
-2nd place Diane Dammann of Argyle

Fiction 1000-3000 words

Short Story -1st place -Barbori Streibl/Associate Member
-2nd place Barbori Streibl/Associate member

Fiction

Long story over 5000 words -1st place -Ann Teeuwsen of Halfway Grove [she 90+ years]
Over-All Winner - Barbori Streibl/Associate Member for her Essay "The Path of Life" -
highest points

Congratulations to ALL the 2020 winners!

Sponsorship Recognition - Linda Mason & Yvonne Erickson

Border Paving
Camrose Booster
Diane Dammann
Linda Mason
Joan Holthe
Faye Mayberry
Colleen Bianchi
Hass RBC Securities
Hog Wild Specialties
Wild Rose Co-op
Phoenix Gas Co-op
Round Hill and District Ag Society
Bowen and District Ag Society
Cottonwood-Gordon Ag Society
Beaumont and District Ag Society

Thank you to Our Sponsors

AWI President Diane Dammann thanked AWI Editor - Denise Campbell for all the great work she does for the Home & Country and The Report Book. THANK YOU DENISE!

FWIC TWEEDSMIRE COMPETITION

Federated History Collage won by Carol Brown/Associate Member
Federated Cultural Story -1st Carol Brown/Associate Member
-3rd Diane Dammann of Argyle

AWI AWARD OF EXCELLENCE - "Diane Smith" of Grimshaw - District 1
Diane Smith's Biography entry was read.

Cathleen Thurston introduced speaker -Sharon Anderson --"Caregivers"

Sharon Anderson explained what a Caregiver is and the issues for Caregivers. Loneliness, anxiety, stress, overworked e.g. over 20 hours a week, ignoring their own health, COVID has heighten all the problems for Caregivers. A Caregiver can find it rewarding, especially working with parents but there is a need to help/deal with issues of Caregivers.

What is needed to 'take care of the 'Family Caregiver': see them as a Partner in this role, communicate with them, include them in the Health System, see what the Family Caregivers 'needs' are by the System Caregivers. An assessment is needed for these people from "their" viewpoint of what do the Family Caregivers need.

There are two online modules as well as a 'COVID' module, to work/help/and support Family Caregivers. Researchers in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba are using these modules. You can contact "Center Intake" and "Seniors Centers without Walls". Their programs are to support the patients and Caregivers in Alberta.

Question Time: How are people able to get the information and support where there is no internet? 'PCN' is for Alberta wide help "Respite Time" for Rural Caregivers is not long enough especially when the homes are in the country and the travel time eats up the time to do their job. Edmonton home zone areas are trying to have flexible Respite time. There is huge savings when there is support for the home caregivers verses the System as there will be fewer patients in Alberta longterm beds.

*****REST BREAK *****

AWI TICKET RAFFLE WINNERS:

\$600 Ken Williamson of Peace River -ticket #199

\$400 Brenda Grainger of Chestermere -ticket #273

Rosemary Wickstrom introduced speaker - Sylvia Wold "Even Seniors Can Have Fun"

Sylvia Wold spoke on what Alberta Women's Institutes have done and their accomplishments. She told us of how Women's Right to Vote was achieved then compared the 'women views' of today as they now have their own funds and are multi-taskers. She explained the Generations and how these women can be what AWI needs. Sylvia W. told us who we are and to consider "New Beginnings" in order to rise to these Beginnings. Justice for women has been fought for and change has happened but the struggle for equality is never going to end.

These are the KEY issues faced by women through the world

- Access to education
- Employment opportunities
- Reproductive health and rights
- Unplanned pregnancies
- Maternal Health
- Gender-based violence
- Child marriages
- "FGM" - female genital mutilation
- Water and sanitation
- Gender inequity school - work - socially

Freedom of 'Speech', Freedom of 'Worship', Freedom to 'Education', Freedom to 'Vote', Freedom of 'Movement', Freedom of 'Health and Sanitation', Freedom of 'Property and Ownership',

Sylvia W. mentioned FWIC 's " MAPLE LEAF PROJECT" to Eradicate Women and Children Violence is needed. Alberta's singer, Paul Brandt is a spokesperson.

Question - Is there a copy of this Speech? Yes, Diane will receive it to pass on to AWI members.

SILENT ONLINE AUCTION will continue until the end of Thursday.

AWI President Diane Dammann "thanked everyone for attending" and asked Fern Killeen to sing "God Save Our Queen" to close the day.

Colleen Bianchi, Secretary

Diane Dammann, President

Linda Toews, President Elect