

## **OASW Northwestern Branch Annual General Meeting for 2007-08**

Date: Thursday, November 13, 2008  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Thunder Bay District Health Unit – Auditorium

### **AGENDA**

1. Approval of Agenda for today's meeting
2. Approval of Minutes of 2006/07 AGM – October 9, 2007
3. Report of Co-Chair on Membership – Teresa Legowski
4. Report of Co-Chair on Provincial Picture – Julie Voit
5. Report from Student Representative – Myliece Tirschmann
6. Report on Political Action – Gail Linklater
7. Financial Report – Ember Trochimchuk
8. Acceptance of Annual Report for 2007/08
9. Motion to continue Working Group Model for 2008/09 – invitation to join – Cathy Farrell
10. Other Business
11. Motion to Adjourn

*To be followed by presentation of awards to winners of First Annual Poster Contest this year's theme "Social Workers Making a Difference in the Lives of People"*

**AND**

*Performance by Joanne Waytowich "Stand up with Ivanka"*

**OASW Northwestern Branch  
Annual General Meeting  
2006-07**

**Date:** Tuesday, October 9, 2007

**Place:** Victoria Inn, Thunder Bay, Ontario

**Members Present:** Teresa Legowski (chair); Cathy Farrell (recorder); Julie Voit; Ruth Cummins; Rosemarie Sdao; Jon Thompson; Myliece Tirschmann; Ember Trochimchuk; Gail Linklater.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

Agenda and reports were distributed. No additions to the agenda. Approval of agenda moved by Ruth Cummins, seconded by Rosemary Sdao. Carried.

**2. Approval of Minutes of 2005/06 AGM**

Minutes of the meeting of September 30, 2005 were reviewed. Approval of minutes was moved by Cathy Farrell, seconded by Gail Linklater.

**3. Report of Co-chair on Provincial Picture.**

Julie Voit spoke to her written report on the provincial picture. Teresa Legowski moved acceptance of her report, seconded by Gail Linklater. Carried.

**4. Report of Co-chair on Membership.**

Teresa Legowski spoke to her written report on membership.

**5. Report from Student Representative**

Myliece Tirschmann spoke to her role as a student representative and encouraged other students to participate in the association.

**6. Financial Report**

Ember Trochimchuk spoke to her financial report. Ember moved acceptance of the financial report, seconded by Cathy Farrell. Carried.

**7. Acceptance of Annual Report for 2006/07**

It was moved by Julie Voit and seconded by Teresa Legowski that the Annual Report for 2006/07 be accepted as presented. Carried.

8. Cathy Farrell proposed that the Northwestern Branch continue to operate by working group model for the upcoming year. The motion was seconded by Julie Woit. Carried.

**9. Move to Adjourn**

Gail Linklater moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was followed by a presentation by Marshall Fine on a part of his research entitled, "Ethics in Social Work: Believers and Skeptics".

AGM Report from the Chair of the Northwestern Ontario Branch  
of the Ontario Association of Social Workers

November 13, 2008

Our membership increased between September, 2007 and September, 2008. The chart below is an analysis of our current membership.

**ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS  
NORTHWESTERN BRANCH  
MEMBERSHIP COMPARISON SEPTEMBER 2007 TO SEPTEMBER 2008**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>Sept 2007</b>	<b>Sept 2008</b>
Full-time	48	49
Part-time	5	12
New Graduate – 1 <sup>st</sup> year	3	3
New Graduate – 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3	2
Unemployed	8	5
Retired	0	0
Graduate Student	1	1
Student	3	3
Parenting Leave	0	0
Non-Resident	0	0
Honourary	0	0
Life	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>75</b>

We recruited a new member to the working group, Allyson Shpirko. We are very happy to have her on board.

Our full-page advertisement in the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal for Social Work Week was quite well received. This is the second year of running the ad. We had to find some new sponsors, but the newspaper staff assisted us with our efforts. Also we sent our membership a Chapter's gift certificate again for Social Work Week. Our student representative, Myliece Tirschmann, helped organize a huge and quite successful event in the Agora at Lakehead University. There were many displays that were made by the

Social Work students on the topic of violence. The displays were up during Social Work Week.

Back in August, 2007, we conducted a survey of our membership regarding their interests and involvement in the Branch. Seventeen members completed the survey, using Survey Monkey. The results indicated that association with the profession and province-level advocacy for the social work profession were the most important reasons for joining the OASW. As for getting together at a local level, the respondents indicated lunch time was the most preferable, about four times a year.

Our working group participated in a few teleconference discussions with other branches on the issue of restructuring the OASW. We look forward to continuing in the efforts to make the OASW more efficient and reflective of its members' needs.

Currently, the working group members are: Ember Trochimchuk, Gail Linklater, Myliece Tirschmann, Cathy Farrell, Julie Voit, Allyson Shpirko and Teresa Legowski.

Respectfully submitted

Teresa Legowski, Chair of the Working Group  
November 13, 2008

## Update from the Provincial Office

This is the final year of my second term as Vice President of Branch Affairs. The following are a few of the many, many activities of the provincial office staff and OASW Board of Directors. First, I'm pleased to announce that our membership base continues to rise. Last year we had 3533 members and this year we are at 3615.

The provincial office, located at 410 Jarvis Street, Toronto, is staffed by Joan Mackenzie-Davies, Gillian McLuskey, Rita Mascharin and Christine Stibor. The office publishes an on-line Newsmagazine which highlights ongoing association initiatives. Membership with OASW entitles individuals to important services and benefits. These include participation in virtual interest groups, e.g., private practitioners and francophone social workers. Other important benefits include the ability to register on the Find a Social Worker web site; a group retirement savings plan; membership discounts to various clubs/services, and reduced rates for professional liability insurance.

The staff of head office, along with members of the Executive, are actively involved in committee work. We have a Child and Youth Committee, a Mental Health Advisory, Government Relations Committee, and Student Outreach Task Group. It had become very apparent that the profession needed to maintain vigilance on ensuring its visibility and viability. Bill 171 certainly brought this to our full attention. In response to this need, OASW has retained the services of Policy Concepts, a government relations firm. One of their many goals is to assist OASW in establishing meetings with politicians and ensuring the profession is well represented.

At present, OASW is engaged in several initiatives. The first relates to student recruitment. A Power Point presentation has been completed that will be made available to all Branches as a way of reaching out to social work students in their region. Branch representatives will be able to use this comprehensive high quality tool when they present to classes of social work students across the province. OASW also offers free membership to 12 social work students across the province each year.

The second initiative is a review of the existing Board and Branch structure. A Task Force has been reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure and has received approval from the Board to propose a new model that might better serve the needs of the organization and its members. More on this will be forthcoming.

In May, 410 Jarvis organized and presented the CASW national conference, held in Toronto. The conference was co-sponsored by CASW and the Schools of Social Work Educators. It was a sold out conference, and was extremely well received. Social work practitioners, educators, and students from across the country attended this exciting and empowering conference.

I am sure I have missed areas of activity, but have hopefully highlighted the incredible dedication of head office staff, Board directors and OASW members. OASW truly is our professional voice! We are facing the ongoing challenges of ensuring social work's presence in the health arena and including our social workers with doctorates in the list of professionals allowed to use of title DR. within a health care setting, as well as facing a potential new challenge with the development of the new College of Registered Mental Health Workers and Psychotherapists.

I am proud to be a member of the executive of OASW and remain grateful to all for their ongoing social and professional advocacy.

Julie Woit. R.S.W., PhD.

## **Report on Student Activity- OASW by Myliece Tirschmann**

### **Social Work Week 2007**

Social Work Week 2007's theme was "Social Workers: Making a Difference in the Lives of Children and Families". In celebration of Social Work Week, the 4<sup>th</sup> year class prepared a series of workshops on diversity which was presented to a variety of groups of children and adolescents. The children were then invited to create a poster rendition of what diversity meant to them, which were then entered in a contest with prizes donated from various businesses in Thunder Bay. The posters were displayed during Social Work Week in Lakehead University's Agora. Participants, parents, interested parties, professionals, and the general public were invited to tour the poster display, receive OASW information, and be wished a "Happy Social Work Week." This initiative is an example of the branch between OASW and Lakehead University, and the creative ways that such linkages can promote social work as a profession, as well as promoting the ideals that social work espouses.

### **Student Outreach**

In the last year, student engagement at the university has revolved around making connections with students with a focus on education. Presentations to classes are currently in the process of evolving; for the 2007 school year, a basic presentation on what OASW is and benefits of joining was provided to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year social work classes. The presentation is now expanding, including a one-hour presentation this year to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year class, with a definitive focus on social justice within OASW. This new presentation was very effective with the students, who responded with many questions. To date, no new members have joined, but strong interest has been expressed by 2 students.

There are also initiatives happening on Jarvis Street (Toronto), including the process of finalizing a PowerPoint presentation for students. OASW is working with a student marketing group at Ryerson University. Two presentations to students at Lakehead University- the 1<sup>st</sup> year class, and a 4<sup>th</sup> year class- have been scheduled to receive this presentation, once it is finalized.

Another important student initiative this year is one we can see by looking around. Social work students at all year levels were invited to participate in a poster/creative rendition contest. There are many benefits to this, including: raising awareness of 2009's Social Work Week Theme, a focus on creativity in social work, facilitating an easy linkage between students and OASW in a public forum where all are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The common theme in evidence during the last year has been links between students, their associations, OASW, and to greater social issues. Informing students of what is out there, and creating more user-friendly ways for them to participate, will be an integral part of raising student involvement in OASW, and therefore, in getting their voices heard.

# SOCIAL WORKERS ADVOCATING FOR SOCIAL WORK

Submitted by Gail Linklater

One of the themes at the recent OASW Board meeting in Toronto clearly was that **the role of social work is being diminished by government legislation and eroded by other professions.** As professional social workers we need to advocate on behalf of our profession. I heard a number of social workers talking about other professions taking over the social workers job (or the parts of the job that the others wanted.) If another profession can take over it implies that social workers have no area of expertise. Furthermore I heard comments of social work tasks being downloaded to social service workers so the workers could be paid less.

We received a presentation by a lobbyist hired by the OASW on how to approach our MPP's. Part of the approach is being clear about the issues affecting social work and social workers. Did you know?

- Social workers employed in services funded by the MOHLTC do not have access to funding for continuing education under the Allied Professional Development Fund?
- Social workers are not included on the ODSP list of professions that have transportation costs covered when appointments are held with people on disability benefits?
- Social workers employed in health care and regulated under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* are treated differently and less equitably than professions in health care regulated under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*?
- Social workers with a PhD cannot use the title "Doctor" in a health care setting

Be aware that as the role of the social work profession gets diminished, individuals and communities will suffer by missing out on all the services and expertise that we provide.

All social workers are encouraged to talk to their MPP.

If you want some pointers as to what to include when you do that, don't hesitate to get in touch with me at [glinklater@aids.thunderbay.org](mailto:glinklater@aids.thunderbay.org).

## OASW Northwestern Branch

### TREASURER REPORT

July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008  
Presented at the AGM in Thunder Bay, Ontario  
November 13, 2008

#### **Bank account balance:**

Balance in Account on July 1, 2007: \$1,007.76

Balance in Account on June 30, 2008: \$1,264.31

Balance of OASW bank account on October 17, 2008: \$1,607.56

#### **Revenue:**

Revenue paid out by Provincial office from membership fees during Income Statement period July 2007 to June 2008 was **\$2,156.75**

Lakehead University co-sponsored Marshall Fine's presentation which coincided with our AGM in October'07. We received **\$500.00** from the Social Work Department to help cover the costs of Marshall Fine's plane fare, room rental, etc.

#### **Expenditures:**

The largest expenditure each year is related to National Social Work Week activities:

- The working group agreed to thank OASW members in the region for their contribution to the professional organization by mailing out a \$10.00 gift certificate from Chapters bookstore (78 X \$10 = \$780.00) + mail out expenditures of \$50.44 (Total of \$830.44)
- Our branch ran an advertisement in The Chronicle Journal to celebrate Social Work Week in our community (\$131.25)

#### **Other expenditures include:**

- The Annual AGM and Marshall Fine presentation on October 9/07 at the Victoria Inn. Costs included: travel, hotel accommodation and a gift for Marshall Fine (\$882.98); banquet room rental and banquet food (\$183.94); and a gift for the recipient of the Amethyst award (\$16.51)
- Professional Development Fund of \$200.00 given to OASW member to help cover expenses from attending the Social Work National Conference in May 2008
- The remaining expenses cover bank charges, office supplies and incidentals (i.e.: flowers, give-aways)