

AWLE 2002
Conference

10th Annual Atlantic Woman in Law Enforcement Conference

~
Fredericton



"Managing our Future"

You were invited...and you came. One hundred and twenty-eight to be exact. The Fredericton Police Force hosted the 10th Annual Women in Law Enforcement (AWLE) Conference from October 15-18th and agencies from the Atlantic Provinces, Ontario and Maine participated in a forum offered to them that hoped to educate and motivate as well as provide some much deserved fun and recognition. From the tremendous feedback that we received, it was a fantastic success featuring interesting and captivating guest speakers, a uniform parade, reception at the New Brunswick's Lieutenant Governor's residence and the second annual Awards Banquet.

As you may remember, the Opening Ceremonies featured dignitaries entering the conference site to the native drumming and chanting by the St. Mary's First Nation musicians, one of whom Cst Frank Paul, is a member of the Fredericton Police Force. Conference delegates were officially welcomed by Her Honour Marilyn Trenholme-Counsell, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick.

Key note speaker Ottawa Police Deputy Chief Susan O'Sullivan was inspiring, dynamic and very well received. She encouraged us to reach for the pinnacle of our careers and offered

excellent and timely advice to those would be police managers. Vali Stone, author of “Cops Don’t Cry”, was a huge hit. Her experience as a police spouse of 20 years provided practical solutions for surviving and coping within police families. Ms Stone commented that in her travels throughout North America she had not encountered a more interested and attentive audience. It appeared as though we were listening intently to Ms Stone’s stories and words of wisdom.

Participants were also offered seminars in Officer Safety, Myers-Briggs Personality Testing, Women Working in Criminal Justice and Youth at Risk.

The City of Fredericton was host to the first ever AWLE uniform parade. Agencies were well represented in a proud moment by their members who marched for 25 minutes downtown, past the New Brunswick Police Officer’s Memorial to Old Government House where they were welcomed by the Lieutenant Governor.

Later that evening the second annual Awards Banquet was held and besides a fantastic meal, eight special women were honoured for their contributions to Women in Law Enforcement.

Cpl. Leanne Fitch, Fredericton Police Force, was awarded “Officer of the Year” for “leading with insight and integrity”, demonstrating “creativity in work related problems and strengths in all aspects of organization and planning”. She was recognized as a mentor and being a “knowledgeable, well spoken individual”.

Cst Lisa Jackson, Halifax Regional Police, was presented the “Mentoring” award for her consistent commitment to improving the circumstances of women in law enforcement through her active involvement with AWLE (currently as President), research, writing and participation in various conferences as well as forums focusing on women’s issues.

Cst Paula Murray, Fredericton Police Force, received the “Community Service” award for her dedication to improving the safety of children within the school system. Her innovation has developed new school lecture series on bullying for grades K-5 and she continues to educate students, teachers, parents and politicians on the topic of school violence. As an aside, she is the first female member to receive her 25-year service medal from her department.

Cst Chris MacNaughton, RCMP St. John’s Newfoundland, was recognized for her outstanding work in the Major Crime Unit and for the sharing of information with other officers through training sessions. For this she received the “Excellence in Performance” award.

Cst Sara McElman, Fredericton Police Force, was awarded the “Leadership” award for inspiring others to become involved and her work on many committees within and out of the police community. She was also recognized as a driving force behind the negotiation process between the Fredericton Police Association and the City of Fredericton.

Three officers were received the “Medal of Valour” for their acts of heroism, overcoming the unthinkable and surviving a shooting. Cpl Pat Fox of the Codiac RCMP saved a woman from the Peticodiac River in Moncton New Brunswick without hesitation. Cst Patcy Williams, also of

Codiac RCMP, was the primary responder to a horrendous homicide/suicide of a father and his two young sons and ultimately played an intricate role in the crime scene preservation and follow up duties. She went beyond the call of the first officer on the scene. Last but certainly not least, Cst Susan Foster of the Halifax Regional Police survived being shot through the leg and hand by an irate male who was upset by his sister's arrest. Once fully recovered, she plans to resume a full and active career.

Throughout the conference, delegates were able to network and discuss issues, on a more personal level, that affect us as women in law enforcement. The conference welcomed members from the Military Police, Customs, Immigration and NB Department of Natural Resources who helped police officers better understand their respective roles within the law enforcement community via this face to face interaction among the delegates.

Highlights included the unveiling of the AWLE logo which was designed by Cst Janet Smith of the Fredericton Police Force and CO-OP student Adam Stacey. Cst Dale Carruthers, also of Fredericton, a well known Canadian Artist, presented the host committee with an original sketch to commemorate the 2002 Conference. This sketch is available for sale. For more information please contact Cst Sara McElman at (506)460-2300 (506)460-2300 .

The Conference Committee carefully reviewed your critiques and would like to inform you that your suggestions/ideas will be past on. We heard your opinions on shorter seminars, different topics and probably most importantly, the opportunity for non-police agencies to speak about their roles in Law Enforcement in Atlantic Canada. By all accounts you seemed to enjoy yourselves and are looking forward to convening in Truro.

Next year's conference will be held in Truro, Nova Scotia and if this year is an indication of what the future holds for Atlantic Women in Law Enforcement the future is very bright indeed. The Conference Committee wishes to thank all that helped make this year's forum such a success and was honoured to host a group of exceptional, dedicated and loyal women who bring a great deal of integrity and respect to the job. It was our pleasure to meet you and remember, manage your future, because women change the world everyday!

Cst. Bobbi Simmons, Fredericton Police Force