

# Women's strike supported in spirit if not practice

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"Don't it always seem to go, . . . That you don't know what you've got till it's gone"

—Joni Mitchell

That was the original idea behind today's "Alice Doesn't Day," a national women's strike organized by the National Organization for Women (NOW).

"Alice Doesn't Day," named after the movie *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, is intended to increase awareness of the value of women and their contribution to society, said Susan Newcomer, president of the Ames Chapter of NOW.

NOW literature from San Jose,

Calif., the city where the idea originated, encourages women not to work at their regular jobs or spend money today.

Alternative options for women who feel they cannot take the entire day off were suggested at an open discussion at the YWCA on Thursday, Oct. 16. These options included taking the afternoon off, working a full day but not spending money, wearing a black armband, or doing anything else to celebrate being a woman.

A total women's strike would bring many businesses to a temporary standstill because the paper work usually done by female clerical workers would go unattended. In addition, the absence of women at the market place would show storekeepers

how much women contribute to the consumer force, say strike organizers.

But "Alice Doesn't Day" also would have an effect on individual women, said Rosi Gowdey, a publicity worker for the project.

"I'D RATHER focus on what happens to the women who participate, than on the number of participants. If only one or two women get something out of it, then that's great, and we've accomplished our purpose," Gowdey said.

A poll of 40 Ames women, including 20 student and 20 non-student (housewives and working women), indicated that 13 from

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each group do not plan to participate in the strike day, but instead will carry out their usual activities.

Seven students and five non-students said they will observe the strike and two students remained undecided at the time of the poll.

Most of the women who said they would participate hadn't decided how to observe the day. Most said they couldn't miss their jobs or classes, but they probably would refrain from spending money today. "I don't feel I can miss my classes. I have tests tomorrow, and school is more important than my ethical views," was a frequent comment.

FACULTY and staff members may request time off from their direct supervisors, according to University policy.

Wilbur Layton, vice-president of student affairs, said he has heard rumors that his office workers will get time off. "I guess I'm not giving time off, mainly because the only woman working directly for me is my secretary, and I think she plans on working. I think it would be impossible from the standpoint of the University to have that large a segment of women take the day off."

At least two local statements on

"Alice Doesn't Day" have been issued. On Oct. 21, the Government of the Student Body (GSB) passed a resolution endorsing the protest day, and on Oct. 23, Ames Mayor William Pelz issued an official statement proclaiming today "Alice Doesn't Day."

Several special activities have been planned for women who are taking time off today. The YWCA will sponsor seminars on women in health from 9 to 11 a.m. and on practical consumerism from 1 to 3 p.m. Other programs on women and the law, and personal maintenance also were planned, but their scheduling is uncertain, Gowdey said.

Only men will be answering phones at the YWCA today, said Broxann Keigley, of the YWCA. And males will provide daycare and babysitting services at the Ames Cooperative Daycare Center, Collegiate Presbyterian Church, Sheldon Ave. and West Street.

So far, public reaction to women planning the protest day has been either positive or neutral, Gowdey said.

"Most of the reaction I've had from passing out leaflets has been positive. A lot of women hesitate at the idea of a strike, though," Gowdey said. "I guess the worst reaction I have gotten from other women has been a neutral one."