



**Janet Parsons** is a dairy farmer near Cache Bay, Ontario. Janet runs the farm with the help of one full-time employee, Leona Verrette. Her three sons also help out, when they have time; her husband, John, works full-time as an Accountant.

"When John and I started farming, we decided that I would represent the farm at any meetings. ... One of my first projects was to set maximum terms of office for the local Milk Committee members so more farmers could benefit from the experience."

For years, Janet has remained active in a number of organizations in the West Nipissing/East Sudbury area, including the Federation of Agriculture, the Agricultural Society, the Milk Committee, and the Soil and Crop Improvement Association. She was also the Charter President of the Veuve River Branch of the Women's Institute in 1983, and later Secretary/Treasurer and President of the Nipissing District WI.

At the provincial level, Janet has been involved with the Federated Women's Institutes, the Farm Family Advisor Program, the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, and the Federation of Agriculture. In 1986, she was appointed to the Farm Products Appeal Tribunal and the Farm Debt Review Board.

In 1988, Janet was presented with the Padre Young Award, Outstanding Young Farmer for Central Region, and the W.R. Motherwell Award, Outstanding Young Farmer of Canada.

When people comment that she should run for Parliament, Janet responds: "Three things stand in the way... my family comes first, my farm comes second, and then, I like a little time for myself."



**Joyce Anderson** lives with her two daughters, near Brigden, Ontario. She runs a cow-calf operation and a 125 acre cash crop farm.

Today, Joyce is involved in a variety of organizations. She is a 4-H Leader and a Regional Representative for the Lambton 4-H Leader's Association.

Joyce has served at all levels of the Women's Institutes, and is a former Provincial Board Director for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO). Presently, she is District Delegate and Area Auditor, sits on both the FWIO Centennial Registration and Agriculture Committees, and is the FWIO Representative on the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA).

During the past year, Joyce has also served as Director of the Lambton Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute. She attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture annual meeting as an OFA delegate and participated in the Canadian Farm Women in Decision-making Conference last April.

Joyce cites three different incidents that stirred her to take more direct political action in the late '80s: the threat of a new power line on her property; the proposal to dump Toronto garbage in her area; and, the plan to build a couple of incinerators in Lambton County. "I realized that the "they" who should do something [about it], should be me."

These encroachments on her home and county initiated many visits to local councils and Members of Parliament. And in the past two years, Joyce has participated in demonstrations to force action on both environmental issues and the farm crisis situation.



**Lorraine Lapointe** claims that politics entered her life in 1984, after her decision to buy her father-in-law's share of the family dairy farm near Martintown, Ontario. Because Lorraine was the spouse of an existing farmer, a government assistance program refused a reduction of the interest rate on her bank loan.

Lorraine believed the program's criteria - stating that "spouses and children under 18 are considered as an entity" - was archaic. She challenged this, arguing that women are separate entities, and it was changed. Today, the Ontario Human Rights Commission is investigating her complaint.

Lorraine has since prepared and presented briefs to government task forces, and has participated in a Public Inquiry on Growth Hormones in the dairy industry.

"Being politically awakened has changed my life and that of my family. I never let a challenge go by," she said. And added, "Being involved is the only way to make constructive changes in our society." She is a member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union, Women for the Survival of Agriculture, and La Femme et la Gestion de la Ferme.

Lorraine is also the Francophone Director for the Ontario Farm Women's Network. She is anxious to "sink her political teeth" into their recent study of the participation of farm women on regulatory boards and agencies.

She concluded by stating: "The Suffragettes gave us the vote so we could pursue our individual strengths which can empower us..., let us not waste their fight."