

How politics affects the candidates' wives



DEANNA REED relaxes with a cup of coffee in the kitchen of her 157-year-old Norval farmhouse which she jokingly refers to as "Grand Central Station." In recent years, Mrs. Reed has renovated several rooms in the old house and has restored some of the antique furniture, as well. The hutch behind her is an example of her handiwork.

MPP in the family means politics at dinner table

Until two years ago, Deanna Reed and her three children were only mildly interested in things political.

But today Mrs. Reed, sons Christopher, 16, Robert, 13, and daughter Melonie, seven, open both eyes and ears wide at the mention of the words "Queen's Park", "Liberal Party" and "election."

Because ever since papa Julian Reed was elected MPP for Halton-Burlington in September 1975, day to day activities at Queen's Park have taken on a new and exciting dimension for the Norval family.

Conversation at the Reed supper table inevitably turns to some aspect of the political scene — and when "The Great Debate" between the three provincial party leaders was aired May 24, Mrs. Reed said the two boys were as engrossed in what the candidates were saying as the adult Liberals in the room.

"The children and I have absorbed a great deal about politics — especially on the provincial level — in the past two years," Mrs. Reed said. "Politics is happening all around us, but no one is pushing it at the children. They just seem to enjoy learning about it now."

Having a father in politics on a full-time basis also means increased responsibilities for the Reed children at the family's 157-year-old, hundred-acre farm on Town Line in Norval.

"When the House is sitting, Julian is away from 7:30 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. five days a week," Mrs. Reed said.

"And most of Julian's weekends are booked up with social engagements in the riding, so he hasn't time for farm chores anymore. Consequently, Christopher now looks after the Jersey cow and calf, Robert takes care of the beef cattle and everyone shares the chores of gathering the eggs," she said.

Mrs. Reed noted that Christopher has also taken over the

chore of spring plowing for his father this year. (The Reeds grow corn and hay to feed their animals.)

She said the family recently sold four of their six half-Arab horses because it was too much work to look after all of them.

"I sometimes think being in politics would be a lot easier if we didn't have the farm to look after, but we like to be self-sufficient as far as our basic food needs are concerned," she said.

Born in Toronto, Mrs. Reed spent most of her youth in the Inglewood-Caledon area and graduated from high school in Brampton.

She was an elementary school teacher in Georgetown from 1957-1969. She has made television commercials "off and on" for several years, but feels her children are more deserving of her attention than a job in the work force at this point in time.

"I believe it's important for mother to be there when the kids come home from school," Mrs. Reed said. "And I think it's especially important now that I spend time with them during the day because Julian and I must attend so many social functions in the evenings."

"I could be out every night with Julian if I chose to," Mrs.



BEV GRAY arranges some flowers for a table in her Georgetown home. The former registered nurse is active in the local Red Cross and enjoys interior decorating and the arts. A Tory long before her marriage to PC candidate George Gray, Mrs. Gray is taking an active role in her husband's campaign.

a friendly face in the audience.

She added that she sometimes chauffeurs Mr. Gray to engagements while he gets his notes ready in the car.

"He's always gone by 8 a.m. and comes home around 11 p.m. or so," Mrs. Gray said, "but he's always been a busy person and that's the way it is. He doesn't like wasting time."

Does she think life will change for the family if Mr. Gray is elected MPP next week?

"I don't know how George could possibly work more than he's doing now," Mrs. Gray said.

"And if he loses, it certainly won't be because he didn't try. George is a very hard worker, and he's devoted to his party."

Grants to parks

Twenty-one Conservation Areas under the Grand River Conservation Authority have been given a provincial grant totalling \$560,000 for improvement and development works.

Proposed work to most Areas includes ground development, forestry and wildlife improvements and purchasing of conservation equipment. Erosion control, beach development and improvements to roads and parking facilities will be carried out in specific areas.

Conservation Areas affected are Rockwood, Guelph, Hantsville Lake, Belwood Lake, Brant, Byng Island, Chesney, Chicopee Hills, Conestoga Lake, Doon, Elora Gorge, Elora Quarry, LaFortune, Laurel Creek, Luther Marsh, Pinehurst Lake, Puslinch Lake, Shade's Mills, Taquanayah, Woolwich, and Caledonia.

Second time on campaign trail easier, NDP wife says

Though not as outspoken publicly as her NDP candidate husband Bill, Mary Johnson is as concerned about the issues facing this province as he is.

"I think we're going to leave a terrible mess for our kids if we don't do something about cleaning up and preserving our environment soon," Mrs. Johnson said during a recent interview at their Rockwood home.

"Canada is a gorgeous country, and I don't want to see it spoiled with garbage dumps and pollution," she said.

"I'm also very concerned about the problems of housing and unemployment — and I'm not just saying this because it's election time. These are things Bill and I are serious about year-round."

Born in England, Mrs. Johnson came to Canada in 1952 with her husband and their two children — Malcolm (now 29) and Lynn (now 26.) She joined the NDP together with Mr. Johnson in 1961, but remembers, "We weren't too active at the time because we were busy building our house and making a living."

"But," she smiled broadly, "Bill was always a great writer of letters to the newspapers and to government officials even then."

"That's why they call him 'Wicked Willy', you know. He's always stirring things up and he won't back down when he believes he's fighting for a just cause," she said.

Yet, in spite of his interest in politics, Mr. Johnson never ran for public office until the 1975 provincial election when he was chosen as the NDP candidate from his riding.

"At the time Bill was asked to run in 1975, I didn't really know if I wanted him to, because I wasn't sure if he could do it or not," Mrs. Johnson recalled. "You see, Bill likes to win, and I was afraid of how he would feel if he lost."

As it turned out, Mr. Johnson did lose the election, but not his fighting spirit.

"Even though Bill didn't get elected to Queen's Park, he was pleased with the results of the last election because it proved to him that people were interested in the environment and other issues that have long been concerns of ours."

"This meant a great deal both to Bill and to me," Mrs. Johnson explained.

She said she had no hesitations when Bill announced he was going to run for provincial office again this year.

"I think the campaign is going a lot better this time around," Mrs. Johnson said. "For one thing we have more time (in 1975 the candidates had only three weeks to get ready compared with five and a half this year), and we know better what's expected of us and what we have to do."

"I think our campaign is a lot more organized now than in 1975, and things are running a great deal smoother," she noted.

For example, Mrs. Johnson said, in 1975 she had no way of getting in touch with her husband during the day, so people often had to wait until late in the evening or the next morning for him to return their call.

"This is a terrible situation to be in," she said, "but now Bill has his headquarters, and if I can't contact him personally during the day, I can pass the phone message along to someone who will be seeing him. This is a great help to us."

Unable to go door-to-door campaigning with her husband because of polio, Mrs. Johnson makes a valuable contribution to his campaign instead by taking calls at home, keeping his appointments straight and

accompanying him to public meetings and social engagements whenever possible.

"Bill's enjoying this campaign like you wouldn't believe," Mrs. Johnson laughed.

And judging from her tone of voice and glowing smile throughout the interview, it would appear Mrs. Johnson is doing the same!

"I'm out and about quite a bit in this campaign, but then it's only 37 days and anybody could last that long," she noted.

"Anyway," she said, "I'm interested in the issues, and having a husband as a candidate has made me take an even greater interest in what's going on in the world."

Mrs. Gray pointed out that she's been a member of the Conservative Party for many years — even before her marriage to this year's PC candidate.

"You see, my father was a member of the party, and because he was a Conservative, I became one, too. But George is the one who really got me interested in politics and the issues of today."

Mrs. Gray said she's always been involved in past elections as a scrutineer or something in that capacity, but to nowhere near the extent she is involved in this election.

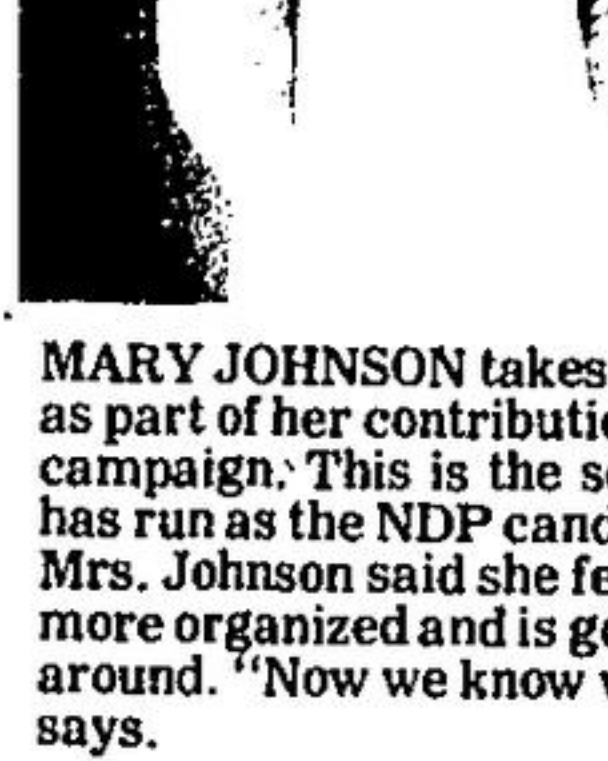
She said Cindy and Doug have also learned a great deal from working in this campaign — including how to get along with total strangers.

Cindy helps man the phones at headquarters while Doug does the "running around" and looks after the signs, Mrs. Gray said.

"They're so true blue to their father, they get upset reading the newspapers sometimes when the stories are critical of him," she said.

Mrs. Gray said she makes a special point of attending public functions with her husband because, in her words, "It doesn't hurt to see

MARY JOHNSON takes a message from a caller as part of her contribution to husband Bill's NDP campaign. This is the second time Mr. Johnson has run as the NDP candidate for this riding, and Mrs. Johnson said she feels the campaign is a lot more organized and is going a lot better this time around. "Now we know what we have to do," she says.



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To honour this land of peace and prosperity, this promised land of untold resources;

To honour this country which is ours, of which we all are proud. I hereby proclaim the week of June 25th to July 1st "CANADA WEEK".

Thus, I invite the citizens of The Town of Halton Hills to celebrate it by striving to know our country better, by flying our flag, by participating in CANADA WEEK and by promoting Canadian unity.

T. J. Hill, Mayor
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