

A Day in the life... Mike Chong Continued from page 1

Mr. Chong has deliberately chosen this lunch spot: He wants to support local businesses such as Steen's, one of the few independently owned dairies still operating in Ontario. The business, which opened in 1944, celebrated its 60th anniversary on June 5th of this year.

Before ordering, he talks briefly with Steen's owner, Fred Steen. Fred, will be turning 92 on August 13, and is something of a fixture at the place. Marie Maltby, who has worked as a waitress at Steen's for 28 years, says Mr. Steen is up at 6:30 a.m. every morning to tend to business.

Mr. Steen recognizes his local MP and begins asking him some questions before he can order lunch. There's talk of the opening of the riding's new constituency office in Fergus. There's mention that Parliament will resume sitting on October 4.

THE OFFICE...IS SET TO OPEN EARLY THIS MONTH...IN FERGUS

Mr. Chong has been busy since his election meeting with local politicians and working with his staff to set up locations for his constituency offices. The office in the Wellington area of the riding is set to open early this month at 200 St. Patrick St. East, at Unit 5, in his hometown of Fergus. And he says there's a search on for suitable locations for another office in Halton Hills.

Mr. Chong said he hopes to keep in touch with his constituents by returning to the riding each weekend from Ottawa. He also plans to hold a series of town hall meetings in September to address the needs of people in his riding. For him, some of the concerns uppermost in his mind are ensuring that Georgetown Hospital's obstet-

rics and paediatrics unit remains open, after a decision was reversed in the spring to close the unit at the hospital. During the interview, he touches on the pressing need for more family physicians in the Acton area, noting that he's to meet with Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette and local councillors to discuss the shortage of doctors.

...THERE'S A SEARCH ON FOR SUITABLE LOCATIONS FOR ANOTHER OFFICE IN HALTON HILLS...

As a Conservative MP, he emphasizes the need to hold the ruling Liberal party to account, particularly over its promises to transfer five cents of gas tax revenues to municipalities. But this isn't Ottawa, and the bells are not ringing for him to take his place in the House of Commons.

He's finished eating his favourite hamburger from Steen's, one that includes "the works," all the toppings that waitress Marie Maltby can offer him. His life, too, is quite full these days. Mr. Chong will be dedicating himself full-time to his riding. He recently announced his plans to leave his position as an information technology executive. And during his first term in office, he'll be learning his role as an MP at the same time that he assumes a new role as a father. He and his wife, Carrie Chong, are expecting their first child at the end of the year.

Mr. Chong doesn't seem fazed by any of this, and as the interview comes to an end he says simply, "When it rains, it pours."



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

MP Mike Chong pictured with Fred Steen and Marie Maltby outside Steen's Dairy.

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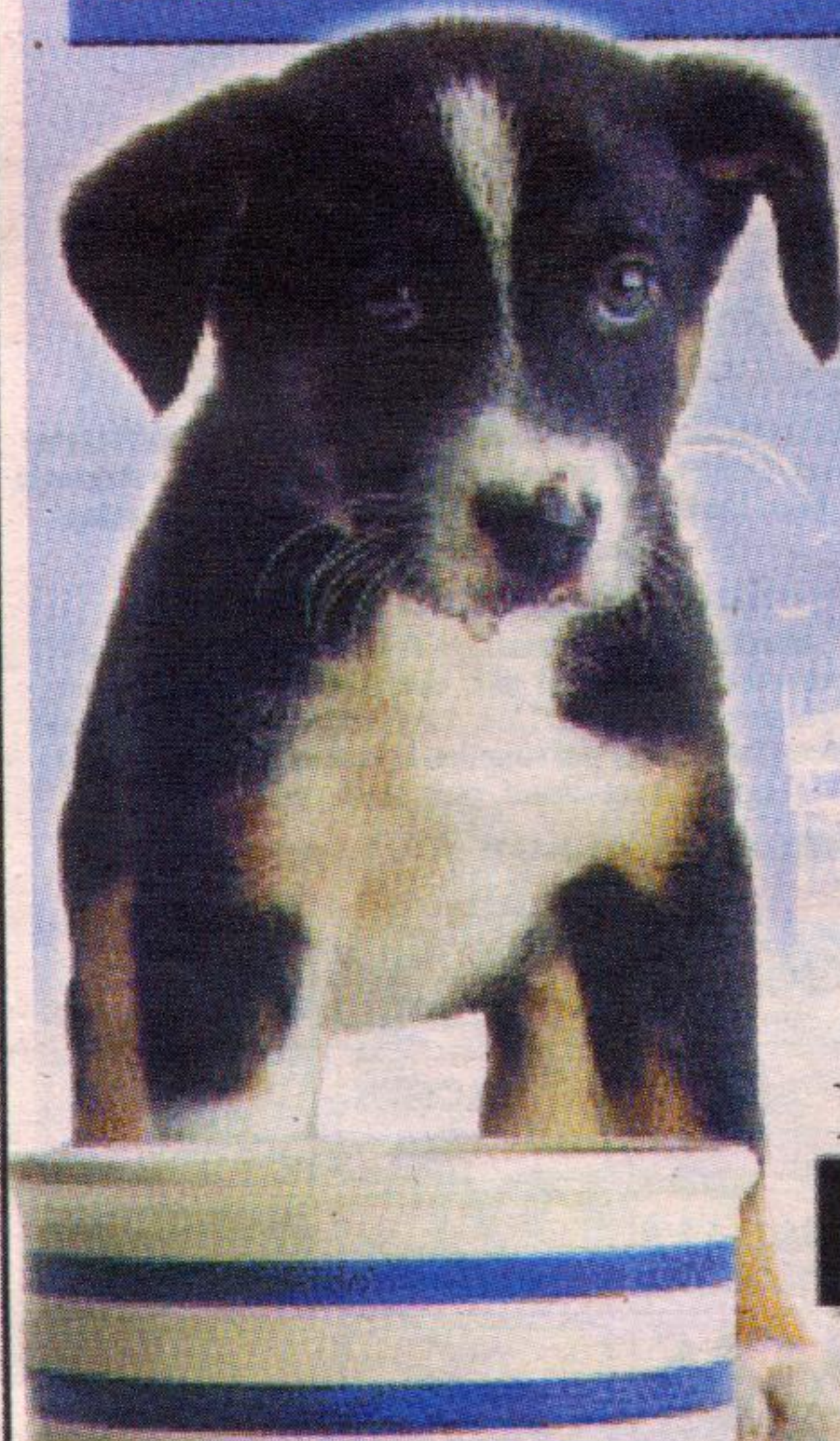
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