

Paul Biog. Bl.

September 8, 1982  
m.j.

McLeod, Julie

# A rewarding year for Miss Mississauga



By BILL DZUGAN  
Reclining comfortably on her living room couch, Julie McLeod radiates the professional flair she's offered completely to her year-long role as Miss Mississauga.

It's been a stepping stone in her career, a boost to her confidence and a crown she gracefully wore as the 1982 Queen, but it's always been a chance for her personality to shine through.

"At first I was really unsure and uneasy about what people thought of me," said Julie. "But they realize that I'm human like everybody else. Except at functions I represent Mississauga officially.

"I tried to make myself available for everything," she continued. "I felt I was only going to get out of the year what I put into it."

Throughout the year, Julie tried to portray the excitement she ex-

perienced and the satisfaction she's had representing a rapidly growing city where she was born and raised. "My image was probably that of someone who enjoyed it," she said. "I am never tired of smiling."

Before last year's pageant, Julie had fallen short in her previous attempt for the crown. All year, however, she looked forward to another chance. Ironically, she was the final contestant to enter the pageant because other commitments dominated her time. Immediately, though, she began preparing physically, by exercising, and dramatically, by learning her lines, for the role she'd play on the contest stage.

### PETRIFIED

Before the pageant, she admits: "I was petrified. I was a ner-

vous wreck. I just tried to relax myself by saying 'I'm glad I'm here' and 'It's something of benefit.'"

As a model working toward an acting career, Julie saw the pageant activity as "auditioning." Appropriately, she selected the role of a girl overcoming the terror of auditioning in the play *The Sign in Sidney Bernstein's Window* as the talent portion of the pageant. "It was a good choice," she recalls, "because it's exactly what everybody is going through in the Miss Mississauga Pageant. You only get a few minutes to sell yourself."

As one of the five finalists, she looked into the audience at her fingers-crossed supporters — "just on the edge of their seats" — and tried to overcome

that fainting feeling. "I really wanted to win. There's nothing else you can do but hope they pick you," she said.

Just as it did in the first pageant she'd ever entered, her number 11 proved successful. When she passed the fleeting moment from contestant to Miss Mississauga, she remembers a "big rush of excitement. I got the same feeling when I watched myself later on TV and when I saw Karen Baldwin (Miss Canada) in the Miss Universe Pageant. You kinda know what she's going through."

About three days after her triumph, Julie remembers passing the highway sign introducing Mississauga and its population. "I know it sounds corny, but I thought 'Wow! I'm representing this big city and all these people.'

It made me feel very good and I felt I should do the best job I could."

### PHILOSOPHY

Throughout her year as Miss Mississauga, Julie discovered more about herself and what she wanted out of life, while confirming her personal philosophy. "We're all just human regardless of what gifts we've been given. It doesn't make you better than anybody else because everybody has their own qualities," she observes. "But if you really want something you have to go for it."

While she reflects on her year of satisfaction, Julie looks ahead with some sadness to having to relinquish her crown. "I'm looking forward to meeting the girls this year," she said, "but I'm not looking forward to leaving. I just hope the girl who does win really wants it."

Besides being Mississauga's beautiful bundle of warmth, Julie McLeod also had to bundle up in her role as Miss Mississauga. Here she conveys her personable way to everyone who joined in the 1981 Santa Claus Parade. It was appearances like this that bolstered Julie's affection for her community. And, of course, the affection of the community for her. (Staff photo by Fred Loek)