

## Campaign asset

# Dark horse candidate's wife a plus

By LYNN ORR

Although he's running behind in the polls, Fred Harris, an ex-con from Oklahoma who's campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination, has a definite advantage in the field. He's married to Lathonia Crawford Harris, an outspoken African American who has long been involved in the struggle for human rights.

Between a fund raiser in Troy last Monday night and a speaking engagement in Saginaw Tuesday night, Lathonia managed to meet with members of the Michigan statewide steering committee for Fred Harris for President, do a radio interview and give a press conference.

This kind of heavy schedule is nothing new for a woman who is the director of Americans for Indian Opportunity, a Washington-based advocacy group, and serves on the boards of directors for such groups as the National Organization of Women, Common Cause and the Urban Coalition.

LATHONIA HARRIS is a tall woman with beautiful long black hair who might

one day be living in the White House. Proud of her Comanche heritage, she wore an abalone shell necklace given to her by an Indian tribe in northern California.

At the home of Ms. Annette Miller of Huntington Woods, one of the co-chairmen of the steering committee, Lathonia informally discussed her role in her husband's grassroots campaign, her intense commitment to the New Popular political philosophy and their children with equal enthusiasm.

"CHILDREN CAN become very hostile toward politics if taken a great deal of their parents' time. You have to let the children be involved," she explained.

Katherine, 23, a graduate of Stanford Law School, is not only Fred's liberal conscience and the second best speaker in the family, according to Lathonia, but a member of the Indian Policy Review Committee and the most active campaigner of their children.

Nineteen-year-old Byron lives in New York and wants to be a film director. Although he speaks to local groups, he's the least political of the family.

"WE DON'T LIKE the way he treats his girlfriend," says Lathonia, in reference to the family's attempt to sway him toward a more feminist philosophy.

Although being 11 is almost a full-time job, Laura manages to get away from high school in McLean, Va., the Harrises' residence, to help her parents campaign. "Being a member of a family that has always been involved in minority causes, it's not difficult to see why Laura is referred to as their radical Comanche," said Lathonia.

The Harrises grew up as depression babies across the creek from each other in Cotton County, Okla., but never knew each other until high school because they "lived in two different worlds."

ALTHOUGH FRED'S family were sharecroppers, the started migrant work at the age of 13 and put himself through law school at the University of Oklahoma where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa. It was through Lathonia that he began to understand the frustrations of belonging to a minority in America.

Married for almost 27 years, the Harries are a political team.



LATHONIA HARRIS

page is the number of volunteers. Lathonia said, "Our staff only receives live stands which allows us to be equally as effective as those candidates with more money."

Leonard Edwards, an Allen Park resident and steering committee co-chairman, was in Fred Harris' A man in the White House who can respond to a problem—the dark side of the coin. Fred Harris has said that he has the same kind of common sense approach as George Wallace with out the racial issue.

AND LATHONIA TAKES a common sense approach to urban problems, which she and her husband experience through work in the Civil Disorder Commission and Mental Health for Minor Children.

We saw first hand the central city problems touring Detroit after the 87th orders she said. If Congress had paid attention to that report the problems might have eased.

Sadly about housing, Lathonia replied, "If your school board does not take care of segregation, you have to abide by the court rulings. The school boards did not carry out their responsibilities and the courts have had to try to do it. There are all kinds of methods to achieve desegregation, it's a failure on the part of local communities not the courts."

Entering almost all the state primaries which is necessary to build a constituency involves a fulltime commitment.

Betty DeLorenzo, an aide to both the Harrises, has nothing but praise for Lathonia's tireless efforts. Lathonia explains easily that "It's all in hopes of getting votes for Fred and what he stands for."

ONE MAJOR difference between the campaign and the disappointment of the first is the faith their volunteers and the Harrises have.

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## m.m.memos

By MARGARET MILLER

I couldn't believe it until I checked the date on the clipping, but it was six years ago that I filed this spot with some comments about the "chattered and crumby and absolutely delicious" season when the Girl Scout cookies arrived at our house.

I looked up the past column, you see, because a fellow worker who has ordered cookies from us for 10, these many years, tried to put in his annual request for some of those good sandwich cookies.

And I had to turn him down. Not a single cookie salesman remains in our house.

Girl Scouting, with its meetings and campouts and badge earning—and mountains of cookie boxes once a year—is now

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