



## In Memoriam: Vi Morgan

by Jamian Logue

Griff and Vi Morgan (left and right) are pictured with Council of Canadians National Chairperson Maude Barlow at a past Council of Canadians event.

**On Sunday, June 21, in her 100<sup>th</sup> year and with loving family at her side in Guelph, Ontario, Vi Morgan peacefully passed away.**

The measure of one's life can be made in any number of ways: by the love you've given and received, by the difference you've made in the lives around you, and by the actions you've taken to make your community and the world beyond a better place.

By these and every other measure, Vi's was a life richly lived.

She once said that the values of social justice, education and equality were instilled in her from a very young age by her mother. She was taught to read voraciously, think critically, and challenge injustice – principles that would become a driving force throughout her life.

Before the age of 30, Vi was already the celebrated author of the novel *A Better Harvest*. She went on to author numerous short stories and poems, published in *Chatelaine* and *Toronto* newspapers.

It wasn't until later in life that she met Dr. Griff Morgan, a renowned psychologist with a specialty in child development. And it was love at first sight. Over the next 30 years, Vi and Griff were loving foster parents, then grandparents, and then great-grandparents.

They also emerged as outspoken activists in their hometown of Guelph. From challenging municipal, provincial and federal policies that harmed communities, to standing up to corporate abuse that put profits ahead of people and nature, Vi and Griff were an activist power couple to be reckoned with.

It was the hotly debated NAFTA talks of the mid-90s that brought Vi and Griff to the Council of Canadians – and it was the start of a beautiful friendship.

The two travelled to Ottawa in the spring of 1998 to meet with Council of Canadians National Chairperson Maude Barlow. They came to discuss how they could better help the Council's efforts to build a powerful cross-Canada civil society movement to counter regressive governments and growing corporate influence.

They returned home and immediately began forming the Guelph Chapter of the Council of Canadians, which would grow to become one of the Council's strongest chapters, as it is today.

In 2004, Vi, Griff and fellow chapter members led a massive local campaign to stop Wal-Mart from bringing its "high cost of low prices" to Guelph. The global retail giant was planning to purchase a huge parcel of land adjacent to the local Jesuit cemetery, against strong public

opposition. Later that year, at one of their final protests and alongside fellow community activists young and old, Griff passed away.

Vi said that it was her deep faith and eternal optimism that carried her through losing the love of her life. In the years that followed, she was emboldened to continue learning, teaching and fighting to make her community and the world beyond a better place, right up to her final days.

The Council of Canadians family across the country pauses to mourn the loss of our dear friend.

Vi, we thank you for your tireless work and generous spirit. We will miss your fierce mind, courageous heart and sharp wit. But we are heartened by the indelible stamp you have left on this organization and grateful for the enduring legacy you're leaving.

One of Vi's favourite expressions when speaking of her relationship with Griff was: "We were closer than two coats of paint."

It makes me smile to think they are once again together.

---

Jamian Logue is the Director of Development for the Council of Canadians.