**Life, mother and full-time business partner to Tom Cochrane, Kathleen Cochrane’s life really is a highway.**

Born into a family of six in St. Boniface, Man., today Kathy has had little time to pause, let alone take in the New Year.

“It’s been a very busy time since the Junos in March,” she says. “Tom’s induction into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame was a great honour. Then the SOCAN National Achievement Award and the SOCAN Classic Award,” the latter paying tribute to his 1991 single, Life is a Highway, which earned more than 100,000 spins at Canadian Radio.

It all comes down to a form of balance that the Cochrane have tried to perfect over the years. Putting the fame aside while raising their two daughters, Cody and Evanne, balance has been a constant focus for this woman. A duty she’s taken great privilege of while maintaining the ongoing role of wife and partner to one of Canada’s most internationally renowned music artists.

Kathy’s sentiment softens as she recalls her initial interaction with Tom.

“I moved out to Vancouver in ’79 and became the assistant to Bruce Allen, Tom’s former manager,” who’s also responsible for the likes of Loverboy and Bryan Adams. “Tom was living in Toronto at the time and working with Red Rider. We spoke via telephone for close to a year before actually meeting.”

Without hesitation she elaborates, “He had a sincere quality to his character and a genuine approach to life.”

Not long after their initial meeting they were hooked. The early ‘80s had Kathy join Tom here in Toronto and the true test to this partnership came on Jan. 6, 1983. Kathy was in labour awaiting the arrival of their first child, Cody. Ironically, the same day Tom’s Nenada album was launched.

“The reporters were almost sharing the labour room with us,” she laughs.

It was at that point that Kathleen realized sharing her life with a successful musician would at times, require strength and compromise — a role she’s continued to take on with impeccable style and grace.

While the couple took a brief “time apart” in 1994, both saw it as a time to rejuvenate their union. “Issues have a way of working themselves out,” Kathy explains. “We became lost in the euphoria and the public demands that often come with success. While I was fully aware that I had married a musician, writer and poet I had underestimated the demands and compromises such a role would take on.

Nothing tested this duos dedication more than 1999. Kathy lost her mother Denise to a brain aneurysm. The genetic factors to such a condition had Kathy quickly undergo an MRI, an initiative she dedicates to her sister Sue who had researched the causes and effects of the often-deadly condition.

Kathy underwent surgery March 27, 2000, and today holds a new respect for life. “Facing your own mortality is an enlightening experience,” she says. “You suddenly feel fulfilled and it’s the little things in life that take precedence.” She feels very fortunate for all that her life has encompassed and her efforts to “give back” have never wavered.

Tom’s affiliation with World Vision in 1988 and a subsequent trip to Africa in 1989 quickly turned into a mutual dedication for both Tom and Kathy and they travelled to Africa together in 1991, forever changing their commitment to this wonderful organization.

During Tom’s frequent trips with World Vision, Kathy holds down the fort here at home — as was the case in his recent trip to Afghanistan to greet the troops and film Christmas in Kabul, a TV Special, with Rick Mercer.

Closer to home, Kathy’s efforts support the social services offered within their community and she lends a hand where there is need.

“My focus has shifted to the HIV/AIDS crisis globally and Canada’s ability to implement change through Bill C-56,” she says. “Amendment to this bill would allow generic medicines to reach people suffering with HIV/AIDS.

This would allow them access to affordable medicines in high-risk areas worldwide, enabling an entire generation of families to effectively care for their children until they are fully self sufficient.

Kathy’s father Vic is the person she credits most for her constant need to “do for others.”

“He is such an inspiration and I am proud to have inherited those qualities.”

Cochrane’s advice to other women trying to juggle the balancing act? Never underestimate the power of a good deed and always keep 10% for yourself.

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**ONE MILLION**