

a good start in life," Allan said.

She talks to the parents and smiles at the babies, which is her reward for volunteering.

She is a familiar face at the Red Cross office on Front Street, too, where she volunteers as a receptionist. That involves various duties, including answering the telephone and taking bookings for first aid courses. She averages about four hours a week and has been a Red Cross volunteer for a year.

Then there is the Girl Guide Trefoil Guild (the trefoil is the proper name for the three-leaf clover of the Guide insignia).

It's for adults only — current leaders and past (Allan was a Brownie leader) — and has 25 or 30 members in her Belleville group. There is another group in Belleville, as well.

"We have fun," she said. Members also support Guiding and do research on new badges to be passed along to current leaders.

There is a lodge in Waupoos that serves the Trefoil Guides and the "fun" comes from things such as this past spring's Harry Potter weekend, when members portrayed various characters.

When she is not out in the volunteering ranks, reading and comforter sewing for babies are on the agenda. The sewing is with an Arrow machine.

"I've had it since I was 16," she said, choosing not to divulge her age. As well as using them for fundraising prizes, Allan also sews them for friends who have young grandchildren.

Her late father, an IBM employee, raised Allan and her two brothers. She has one brother left and he lives in Toronto.

"It gets busier and busier," she said of her hometown.

She is happy she traded the Big Smoke for The Friendly City.

"I actually meet people I know in ... places (here)," she said. "That never used to happen."

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Betty Allan