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Any charity or group that has ever used the Quinte Mall to get its message across or raise money to further its cause can thank Peggy Chisholm for her help.

The mall's administrative assistant books all the organizations into the mall and does what she can to make their stay a pleasant one.

And it's that kind of caring attitude that has earned the 51-year-old Tweed resident the affectionate nickname "Peggy Mall" by the dozens of user groups and employees of mall stores.

"That name has been with me for a while and I don't mind it one bit because it's really true," she said. "I've been at the mall so long that it's been a large part of my life.

"I enjoy every minute of it and everything I do," she said.

Chisholm has been with the mall since February 1974 and has served as administrative assistant for the past 15 years.

Earlier this year, she was nominated for the Random Acts of Kindness 'citizen of the year' by a merchant at the mall. She was thrilled with the nomination.

"I was proud of being nominated because it shows their appreciation for what I do at the mall," she said.

Chisholm said one of the most rewarding aspects of her job is dealing with groups and organizations who want to come to the mall not only to raise their community profile but also the money to carry out their work. The mall provides them with free space to achieve those goals.

All requests for mall space are handled by Chisholm — and there are many every week.

"A day doesn't go by that I don't speak to three or four different charitable organizations who are inquiring about mall space, fundraising, media launches and public awareness campaigns," she said. "It's my job to co-ordinate all the requests and accommodate the groups. The mall does not turn anyone away. Everyone is welcome."

Almost 380 groups used the mall to promote their cause over the 17-month period that ended in May. Everyone from Canadian Blood Services, United Way of Quinte and Heart and Stroke Foundation to the Canadian Cancer Society, Alzheimer Society and Christmas Sharing uses the mall for

stays ranging from one day to a full week.

Those organizations also managed to raise in excess of \$200,000 during their time at the mall.

"These organizations put a lot of effort into their work and help a lot of people in the community and I just feel

part of that by doing everything I can to accommodate them here. I also try to do a little extra for them to make their stay here easier and more enjoyable."

Chisholm said she even helps raise money for some of those groups. Earlier this summer, for example, she sold 500 Canada's Wonderland tickets on behalf of the Alzheimer Society, which received a portion of the proceeds.

The mall opened in 1971 and has been an integral part of her life.

Born and raised in Tweed, Chisholm graduated from Centre Hastings Secondary School in 1970. After spending four years with a financial institution, Chisholm joined the mall in February 1974. Later that same year, she married Harvey Chisholm, and they have raised three children.

"That was a good year for me," she laughed.

Chisholm has witnessed the growth of the mall from 60 stores in one wing 30 years ago to the current facility that boasts 125 stores and services as well as other major retailers on the mall property.

She has also worked with eight different mall general managers and 10 marketing directors over the past three decades. Fred Smith was her first general manager and her latest is Gil Small, but he is leaving later this month to manage the Upper Canada Mall in Newmarket.

"This mall has been a training centre for marketing directors for Ivanhoe Cambridge and I have worked with many of them," she said.

Chisholm said the mall's high profile in the community has made her job extremely interesting.

"There is never a day that is the same. There are so many things going on in the mall and we are always working on bringing community events into the mall."

But there is life outside the mall for Chisholm.

She enjoys doing a lot of gardening at her home on Stoco Lake.

"I'm also a runner," she said with a smile. "I started in 1992 and run two or three miles every morning."

Chisholm said the couple's retirement goal is to settle in the Yukon to be with their son, Blair, and his wife, Natalie, and help them run their proposed fishing, guiding and eco-tourism business.

"We have been to the Yukon and we fell in love with it. And we hope to be back there some day," said Chisholm.