

The couple had three children, Richard, Dave and Patricia, who died of a brain tumor in 1979.

Colden started on the road to volunteerism with the Moira Division of the Girl Guides of Canada. She spent more than a decade as the southeast district commissioner for Brownies and Guides.

"My dad was on the library board and when he retired, he asked me to take his place. So when I left Guiding, I submitted my name to Belleville city council to serve on the library board," she recalled.

Council subsequently approved her appointment to the library board and she served her constituents for almost four decades until poor health forced her to resign last year.

"I enjoyed my 29 years with the library board. They were interesting years and I even fundraised personally for the automation of the library," she said.

Colden was on the board during the only strike by library workers and sat on the special committee that hired the chief librarian. She also served as the board's budget and finance chairman several times as well as the property and long-range planning committees.

Colden once said that libraries are much more than books — they are learning centres and they have to change constantly to keep up with an increasingly technological world.

And throughout her time on the library board, not once did she believe she was a censor.

"That is not a library's function, to tell someone what they can or cannot read," she said. At the same time, Colden said board members had to make sure that they did not put on library shelves any material that does not adhere to Canadian obscenity laws.

Colden also spent a decade with the Belleville General Hospital Auxiliary, including two years as president. As auxiliary president, she sat on the hospital's board of governors for those two years.

She also spent six years on Larry Grossman's community advisory boards for psychiatric hospitals.

"That was certainly a learning experience too," she said.

Another of Colden's passions was golf. She played the game as often as she could, but is now resigned to selling her clubs.

Colden maintains a positive spirit and is buoyed by the number of activities offered by the Belmont.

"In fact, every day I have to read the bulletin board to find out what's going on."

She vows to continue her life with books. "so that I'm not shut off from the world."

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Born in Selby, she moved to Belleville at a young age. Her father, Gordon Anderson, was principal of Queen Alexandra and Queen Elizabeth Schools in the city.

After graduating from Belleville Collegiate Institute, she worked for the Bank of Montreal for a few years.

She married Tom Colden, an insurance adjustor, in 1942.

"He didn't want me to work, so I did volunteer work," said Colden, a widow for the past eight years. "I was raised that way that if you have time, you volunteer... I worked hard but I didn't get paid for it."