

Two daughters and a son later, the family moved to Belleville in 1972 after Ron purchased the Dunlop tire franchise and also started a swimming pool business.

"It's when we came to Belleville that I became involved in a lot of different ventures with volunteer organizations."

She started off with the local Cancer Society.

"Someone asked if I was interested in canvassing door-to-door...I'm still canvassing for them," she smiled.

Dath is also canvassing door-to-door in east end Belleville for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Kidney Foundation and, in past years, for the United Way, Ontario March of Dimes and the Arthritis Society.

"I enjoy doing it and it's my contribution to the work of these agencies," she said. "I also like to feel I'm benefitting someone by collecting valuable dollars for research and programs."

Her involvement with the cancer society has extended beyond canvassing. She's been a team captain, ward chairman and served on the executive for two terms.

Her fondest memories are of assisting in staging the first five Terry Fox runs in Belleville.

"I never met Terry Fox but I admired him for his courage and I was honoured to be a part of his legacy," said Dath.

She's also been involved with the Moira Division of the Girl Guides of Canada for the past 27 years.

She began as an assistant Brownie leader when her daughter joined the 14th Belleville Brownies. Two years later, Dath became its leader. (Her daughter, Sharon, is now its leader).

Dath went from Brownies to starting the 9th Belleville Pathfinders unit, the only

such unit for girls 12 to 15 years old in the city at the time. She later joined Girl Guides to help train new Guiders, spent another five years as east district commissioner and then moved on to the division executive in charge of public relations.

She joined the 5th Belleville Sparks unit (for girls five and six years old) five years ago and is continuing to lead the unit today.

Dath acknowledged her heavy involvement in Guiding was to benefit the girls "and help them become better citizens. But Guiding has also benefitted me personally in becoming more self-confident and a better public speaker."

Her volunteering spirit also took her on the executive of the Belleville Minor Hockey Association for six years. She spent a decade manning the crisis telephone line and serving on the executive of Telecare (an organization that folded last year) and even organized a program for children for the two weeks their teachers were on strike in 1998.

She belongs to St. Columba Presbyterian Church and is an active elder.

"My main thrust right now is the church. We are celebrating 40 years this year," she said.

And what did Dath get from almost three decades of volunteerism?

"Sore feet, especially from canvassing door to door, the joy of meeting many wonderful people and a real sense of satisfaction in helping others in the community," she answered without hesitation.

But, she quickly added, "I don't intend to quit volunteering. But I am slowing down."