

## Volunteer Monthly Spotlight

**By: Betty Batten, Volunteer Resources Coordinator**

When Nancy Mitchell began to plan her retirement, a weekly volunteer commitment was on the list. At just the right time, an Alzheimer Society volunteer recruitment ad caught her eye and despite having no particular affiliation with the cause, she chose to apply.

News that an applicant has just retired from a management role in banking is a “dream come true” for most Volunteer Coordinators. Our minds immediately flood with thoughts of filling that elusive leadership role such as Committee Chair or Board Member position. Thankfully, reason prevailed, with Nancy being allowed to share what “she” was looking for and to “give” what she was ready to give.

Retirement brings freedom to pursue new interests and catch up on existing ones. I’ve since learned that a life philosophy of “Give what you can, when you can” was behind Nancy’s choice to volunteer one afternoon per week as front desk reception, greeting and serving clients while providing varied administrative support to staff. Approximately 18 months later, Nancy was ready to pursue a different type of volunteer opportunity elsewhere in the community, but this was not the end of her association with the Society.

She describes having observed the growing demand for services and the related funding inadequacies that limit our capacity. Recognizing how she could contribute to one particular fundraising initiative, she kindly offered her support. “But it’s the commitment of staff that keeps me coming back”, she stresses. She speaks from personal experience in saying that “people do not understand what it will be like to be a caregiver”. Although her caregiving relates to a different illness, she knows first-hand how acts of kindness and support affect the caregiver journey.

Three and a half years later and Nancy has accepted the challenge we secretly envisioned for her in the very beginning. Serving as Fundraising Committee Chair, she leads a highly skilled team working to increase revenue generation. When talk of a Face Off Against Dementia Hockey Game, began, Nancy joined an outstanding team to coordinate raffle sales. Meeting and being photographed with her long time hockey idol Johnny Bower was an exciting highlight for all her hard work.

Never comfortable in the limelight, Nancy emphasizes that it takes a team, whatever the project. Life transitions are ongoing, but for now, she has the time to enjoy being part of the amazing volunteer team that supports the work of the Alzheimer Society and encourages others to explore the possibilities.

To do so, please contact Betty Batten at 705-748-5131 or email [betty@alzheimersociety.ca](mailto:betty@alzheimersociety.ca)