



## Why I Give

### Spotlight on Marge Kennedy, ABUW Donor and Volunteer

By Pat Flanagan, ABUW Volunteer

Acton resident Marge Kennedy served on the ABUW Board of Directors and as a donor and volunteer for many years. She spoke recently about the trends she has observed over the years and the importance of giving to help our neighbors.

#### **Marge, why did you first become involved with ABUW?**

I wanted to find out more about the needs in our community, the different agencies providing help to local citizens and the remaining gaps for services.

#### **When did you join the Board of Directors and in what capacity did you serve?**

I served on the Board of Directors from 2005 – 2008, as chair of the Outreach Committee in 2007-2008 and on the Budget and Allocations Committee all three years. Anne McNeece and I organized a Volunteer Committee after serving on the Board, so we could elicit help from interested volunteers to do various tasks to assist the Board.

At an ABUW Forum we identified the need for a local social worker. As a result, several of us ABUW members with other community representatives asked residents to vote for and fund the hiring of a Social Services Coordinator for the Town of Acton.

#### **What trends have you observed over the years about the needs of the people ABUW serves?**

Residents have many different and interrelated challenges. There is now a greater demand for transportation for those without access to cars or public transport. Requests for fuel and food assistance have risen. Also there is a need for local referral services for a growing number of residents who require support finding and navigating ways to secure social services.

#### **Has identifying and securing funding resources for ABUW been a challenge?**

Finding funding sources whether from individuals or businesses is always a challenge, but it seems to me that up until the most recent economic downturn, resources from donors have remained fairly stable. Promoting greater awareness of the many struggles our neighbors face in Acton-Boxborough has helped, especially through the efforts targeting youth and through events such as the Day of Caring. But even more visibility for ABUW would help.

#### **Why do you think it's important to donate time and/or financial support to ABUW?**

I appreciate that ABUW supports with due diligence a wide range of agencies providing social services. Those many different agencies serve a variety of needs in Acton-Boxborough and depend on the volunteer efforts of a great number of caring people. I find that incredibly impressive. I like the fact that my donation to ABUW goes to support those agencies in ways I could not provide on an individual basis. In addition, giving time makes me more cognizant of what is happening in our towns and suggests ways to respond as I am able.