



Spotlight on Volunteers

Gilbert Deveer

If you see the Compassion Society van on Burlington streets Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, it is almost certain Gilbert Deveer is behind the wheel. Gil, as he is know by those of us who work with him, has been a Compassion Society volunteer since April 2011, and after four months

he became the regular driver of the van. He works every day the Society is open, which is currently three days a week. For Gil this is five hours a day, fifteen hours a week, which makes him one of our busiest volunteers.

Gil was born in Grand Prairie, Alberta, where and he and his sister grew up on a 500-acre cattle ranch that his father homesteaded. He later moved to Vernon, British Columbia, where he eventually began his own landscape maintenance business. In 2010 he and his wife, Louise, moved to Burlington, where she has family. When it was not feasible to continue in his trade in Ontario, he began seeking for some other way to use his time. He looked for a place to volunteer, learned about the Compassion Society, and chose to work here.

On a typical day with the Compassion Society van, Gil picks up about 100 pizzas from three Little Caesars, empties some of the Society's six donation bins, and loads up donated bread from Cobs. Some days there are special pickups – school food drives, commercial donors as far away as Milton or Stoney Creek, and, in the winter, donations of winter coats, Christmas toys, and other holiday items. Once he reaches Compassion Society, he does much of the unloading himself.

When asked why he likes volunteering at Compassion Society, Gil quickly mentions the camaraderie with the other volunteers. As someone who once ran his own business, he also appreciates the fact that those in charge of Compassion Society let him make his own schedule with the van.

Those who work with Gil find him congenial, cooperative, hard working, and with a gentle sense of humor. His hobbies include gardening, cooking, and spending time as a ham radio operator.