

# 'IT GIVES YOU A LIFT'

## Cycling Without Age takes Hebron resident on trishaw ride

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Dolores Roti was all smiles Tuesday afternoon as she headed down the road in front of her apartment toward the Hebron Trail, perched on the passenger seat of a bright red trishaw.

The 68-year-old Hebron woman was the first person to ride a trishaw through McHenry County's chapter of Cycling Without Age, an international nonprofit program that allows elderly persons to relive the feeling of being on a bicycle.

Greg Glover, president of Cycling Without Age, McHenry County, said the organization received its first trishaw in June, after working for more than a year and a half to get it going.

Trishaws are three-wheeled bicycles with an up-front seat and footrest that can fit up to two passengers, as well as a rear seat for the pilot.

Roti called the ride exhilarating.

"This is one of the most beautiful things to do," Roti said. "It gives you a lift. It takes you out of yourself and makes you feel good."

At first, the Glover said, he wasn't sure if they should even try to give a trishaw ride during the COVID-19 pandemic or if there'd even be anyone interested.

But then Roti contacted Cycling Without Age thrilled to get the opportunity to have a ride.

So, while following strict COVID-19 protocols, including the use of masks, gloves and a plastic shield between the pilot and passenger, Cycling Without Age made Roti's wish come true.

Glover said all these procedures were reviewed by the McHenry County Department of Health.

A couple of volunteers from the Cycling Without Age "piloted" the trishaw and helped Roti see all the fauna, trees and other nature scenes along the Hebron Trail.

"I can't tell you how happy it makes me to see this," Glover said.

Too often, senior citizens like Roti, are isolated, Glover said, and Cycling Without Age aims to alleviate some of that loneliness.

"We too often forget that we have these wonderful people and amazing lives and amazing stories," Glover said, adding that studies have shown that loneliness leads to depression.

Roti said she doesn't get out a lot, which is why she wanted to get a trishaw ride.

"Everybody goes on vacation," Roti said. "This was my vacation."

Right now, Glover said, trishaws like the one Roti rode are only available in Europe. Theirs was made in the Netherlands and then shipped from Rhode Island to McHenry.

The Bike Haven in McHenry has agreed to do maintenance on the trishaw for free, and the McHenry County Conservation District, as well as the Crystal Lake Park District, have allowed them to store the trishaw in one of their facilities.

Cycling Without Age now hopes to expand the program as soon as it can raise additional money



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Dolores Roti of Hebron waves Tuesday as she embarks on a ride through Hebron on a trishaw operated by Cycling Without Age member Peg Bolm of McHenry (back left), while Cycling Without Age President Greg Glover uses his phone to record the first ride for the organization. The organization plans on offering more rides to seniors in McHenry County to give them a sense of joy and allow them to experience the outdoors in a new way.

for another trishaw, as well as its own trailer, as the one used Tuesday was from one of their volunteers.

A little less than half of the cost for this trishaw – which with delivery, totalled \$11,600 – was funded by the Full Circle Foundation, which concentrates on helping nonprofit organizations in McHenry County.

To get a ride or learn more about the organiza-

tion, those interested can visit Cycling Without Age's website or email them at McHenry County@cyclingwithoutage.com. Because of COVID-19, seniors with certain preexisting conditions are not able to get rides at this time.

Roti enjoyed her ride so much, she hopes to do it again sometime.

"I wish to see this again in the fall, with the different color leaves," she said.