

# New transportation service

John Curry

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EMC News - It's called "Wheels for the Wise."

It's a new chauffeured transportation and companion service aimed mainly at seniors but ready to serve anyone over 18 who has special mobility needs. The only exception is those with electric wheelchairs who have special taxis already serving them.

This new "Wheels for the Wise" service is the brainchild of entrepreneur Jana Mitchell who was exposed to the need for such a service as her mother worked in a long term care facility and her grandmother recently died with Alzheimer's.

"I recognized a gap in the services today," she said as she explained her new service to members of the Rotary Club of Ottawa - Stittsville at their meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 24.

She pointed out that safety and reliability are both prime focuses of her new service, explaining that reliability is a big issue with regards to ParaTranspo service which seniors and the mobility challenged use. ParaTranspo may not show up and while an apology may be forthcoming, this does nothing to help with the appointment that is missed.

Ms. Mitchell points out that Canada's aging demographics mean even more seniors will be impacting the health care system.

She feels that her new transportation and companion service will help keep seniors in their homes longer, thus reducing somewhat the strain on the health care system.

She says that "Wheels for the Wise" is not just about a senior getting a ride somewhere but also about making a friend.

Just after the service began last summer, she ran into opposition from Ottawa's taxi

union but this was quickly overcome as she had the paperwork from the city of Ottawa allowing the service to operate. Indeed, the resultant publicity helped the new service gain more recognition.

"We're nothing like a taxi service," Ms. Mitchell says, saying that while the services helps seniors run errands and attend appointments, the driver also serves as a companion and stays with the client throughout the outing.

"We never leave the client alone," she says, saying that all of the companions which she employs are retired people between the ages of 50 and 65 who are doing it because they want to do it, not because they need the money.

"It's more of a hobby for them," Ms. Mitchell says, while also noting that these companion/drivers give the senior someone close to their age to talk to during the outing. In addition, all of the companion/drivers have CPR training.

She says that her service also helps caregivers and children of seniors who now do not have to take a day off to accompany a person to a medical appointment. With her service, the senior not only has transportation to the appointment but also shows up there with a companion who stays with the person. "Wheels for the Wise" even offers a service where the appointment with a doctor can be tape recorded so that a caregiver or family member is able to hear what went on.

The vehicles used by "Wheels for the Wise" are all new hybrid vehicles with on-star service in case of the need for emergency service.

"Wheels for the Wise" charges \$40 per hour for its service. This includes all costs including gas, parking, mileage and the companion/driver.



John Curry photo

Jana Mitchell, right, founder of "Wheels for the Wise," a chauffeured transportation and companion service for mature citizens, presents a brochure about the new enterprise to Theresa Qadri, left, president of the Rotary Club of Ottawa - Stittsville, following her presentation to the Club about "Wheels for the Wise" at its Jan. 24 meeting.

She is so confident in her new service that she offers a 110 percent money-back guarantee for first-time clients.

"Wheels for the Wise" can

be contacted at 613-709-9473, via email at [info@wheels-forthewise.com](mailto:info@wheels-forthewise.com) or via its website at [www.wheelsforthewise.com](http://www.wheelsforthewise.com).

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