



NICKI KOHL • *Telegraph Herald*

Janice Zirker (right) assists Jean Kilby this week before taking her to Clarke University through DuRide.

## Nonprofit **DRIVEN** to succeed

DuRide provides its 75,000th ride in its 9-year history.

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Jean Kilby and Pat Udzielak are prime examples of people who depend on DuRide, a program that on Wednesday provided its 75,000th ride in its nine-year history.

"I go to physical therapy twice a week, and it's a set time," said Kilby, 88, as she rode to Clarke University with seven-year volunteer Janice Zirker. "So with this pro-

**TH** video  
Greg Orwoll discusses the program, [TelegraphHerald.com](http://TelegraphHerald.com)

gram, I don't have to worry. I call in at the beginning of the month, and I have this to look forward to."

Udzielak, 77, described a helpful experience while on a ride to her Rotary Club meeting with volunteer Glenn Lichti.

"I had to catch an airplane early Sunday morning," she said. "They picked me up and brought me there, then picked me

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DuRide stats			
Year	Rides	Members	Volunteers
2008.....	57.....	34.....	16
2009.....	1,067.....	93.....	78
2010.....	4,702.....	145.....	106
2011.....	6,987.....	186.....	120
2012.....	9,364.....	208.....	125
2013.....	9,255.....	216.....	132
2014.....	11,396.....	233.....	148
2015.....	12,505.....	243.....	163
2016.....	12,717.....	274.....	172
2017.....	.....	291.....	176

# RIDES: Program keeps growing in members, rides

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up when I got back. When I've needed them, they've been there for me."

DuRide is a nonprofit service that provides residents who are at least 65 years old with a safe, personalized transportation option. It is available in Dubuque, Asbury, Iowa, and East Dubuque, Ill.

During its first year, in 2008, it provided 57 rides. Today, it averages 1,100 per month.

"It's all organic growth," said Executive Director Greg Orwoll. "Somebody talks to somebody else. Senior residents talk about it. Public transportation doesn't work for everyone."

Zirker had never met Kilby, who uses a walker, before picking her up at her home this week. By the time she helped her out of the car at Clarke, they were like friends.

"I love meeting the people," Zirker said. "I love being able to help them get to where they need to go, that they can't get to on their own. It's kind of like bringing them a little joy in their life."

Lichti agreed.

"I got to know two World War II veterans real well," he said. "Another man I'll take to his doctor appointments and bring a book with me to read in the waiting room. When he's done, I'll drive him home. I enjoy helping people, and this is just one way to do it."



Greg Orwoll

Riders pay an annual membership fee of \$45, plus \$4 per leg of each ride. Orwoll said DuRide is committed to keeping these fees affordable.

"Our operating budget is \$148,000 this year and is growing every year in proportion to growing membership and rides," he said.

Member fees contribute about 40 percent to that budget. Individual and business contributions account for 31 percent; City of Dubuque, 15 percent; and foundations and grants, 14 percent.

"We will need to expand staff, space and capacity significantly in the next two to three years if demand continues to grow at the current pace," Orwoll said,

noting that the organization projects an 8 to 10 percent increase per year.

There is a waiting list to become a member. More volunteers are needed.

"A couple friends of mine decided to stop driving," Udzielak said. "I asked them, 'Are you a part of DuRide?' They said, 'No,' and got on the waiting list."

The program also was recommended to Kilby about three years ago after she had a car crash.

"The drivers are very dependable," she said. "They're the kind of people who want to donate their time, so they're generous people and fun to visit with."

Orwoll said it can be tough for those who can't drive anymore.

"Our drivers try to make it a lot less traumatic for them," he said. "It's a big deal losing their independence."

Vounteering is a big deal for Zirker.

"Everyone is just so grateful. Every time, they thank you so much for providing this for them. It really brightens my day."