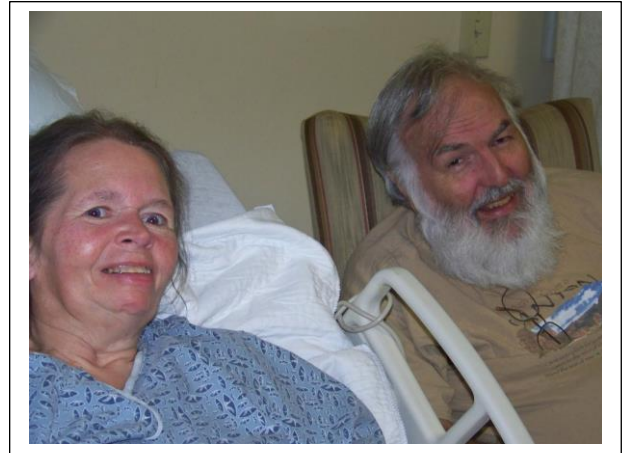


Rideability Can Change Your Life

When James and Ann Albert married 39 years ago. ‘Til death do us part’ meant just that. When Ann had a stroke in 2009, life got more difficult, but the two remain inseparable.

James, who no longer drives, said, “Ann had to move to a facility to receive the nursing care she needed, but I still spend three days a week with her.”



In the time Ann has been at the facility, she and James went on activities outside the facility about four times. “A friend would transfer Ann from her wheelchair and into their car,” James recalled. “Then he threw his back out while helping, and was unable to do it any longer.”

Then James heard about Rideability, and the world has opened up again.

Rideability is a program of the Stevens Center, funded by NC Department of Transportation. People of any age who live in Lee County that have a disability of any age or disability can ride COLTS vans after their typical nine to five operating time.

Currently rides are provided Thursday and Friday evenings from 5 to 10 pm, and Saturdays from 9am to 2pm. Cost is one dollar per one way trip. An assistant can accompany the rider at no charge if required for health or safety reasons.

Service is door-to-door pickup. Passengers are picked up at their home or other location in Lee County, and taken to their desired location in Lee County. The ride can be for work or recreation.

Riders are required to complete a short application, get a free photo ID, and provide proof of disability prior to scheduling their first ride. The disability can be of any type and onset, including at birth, due to health, accident or injury, or due to loss of ability based on aging.

Proof of disability includes living in a licensed group home or facility, receiving a disability check, or attending a specialized program based on disability. People can

also provide a letter from their doctor or clinician, on letterhead, simply stating, “(Name) has a permanent disability.”

With Rideability, James and Ann see the walls of her facility coming down. “We are looking forward to going to a park, sitting in the shade and watching kids play,” said James. “Ann also wants to go see one of the new movie releases. Now we’ll be able to do both.”

They are also looking forward to more extended-family time together. “We will be able to meet our daughter and grandkids at a restaurant or some other place, and just have a good time.”

