

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE



Cycling Without Age (CWA) – a non-profit organization – was established in 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is a 100% volunteer organization that takes the elderly and less able out for free bike rides in specialized bicycles called Trishaws. As of March 2020, this program is represented in 50 countries; there are 2,200 chapters; 3,000 trishaws; 33,000 trained cycle pilots and there has been over 1.5 million people served. In Canada alone we have 63 chapters and 87 bikes!! The Trishaws cycle 2.2 million km a year, equivalent to 53 times around the world!! The founder, Ole Kassow stated “The idea of Cycling Without Age is simple. The effects are profound”

Cycling Without Age is founded upon 5 basic principles: **Generosity:** a simple act anyone can do; **Slowness:** time to appreciate the environment and be present in the moment; **Storytelling:** So many stories to share!; **Relationships:** building intergenerational relationships with all involved. Relationships build trust, happiness and quality of life; **Without Age:** Life does not end as you grow older. Age is not a barrier to finding new sources of fulfillment and engagement.

Cycling without Age gives the elderly an opportunity to experience life outside of the walls of their home. A chance to go for a bike ride, to experience freedom and independence they otherwise may not be able to do. So often the elderly are isolated and are experiencing a loss of mobility. This program allows them to remain an active part of their community. The program gives them the right to ‘feel the wind in their hair’, the ability to connect with nature and others and the chance to share their stories.

Cycling Without Age is not only about the passengers. It is also about the volunteers -the pilots of the Trishaw. It’s about bringing

all generations together, in the great outdoors, experiencing the joy of travelling by bike. Its active citizenship at its finest. And as Ole Kassow said “the effects are profound”!

The Kelowna Chapter of CWA started working on bringing this program to Kelowna early 2019. Lauren Lypchuk of the Vernon CWA Chapter provided us with great mentorship. Locally we are a subcommittee of the Kelowna and Area Cycling Coalition and we currently have 7 committee members. We have been able to purchase two trishaws due to the generous funding from the Central Okanagan Foundation and Interior Savings as well as receiving



a generous donation from a private citizen. We have also received fabulous support from Cyclepath who so kindly put our bikes together and are offering their mechanical expertise!

In March 2020 we hosted an orientation session for our Kelowna program and a number of volunteer pilots have come forward. You may have seen them out practicing their trishaw skills this fall in anticipation of the future launch of the program.

We have found a home for our Trishaws at a long term care site in the Central Okanagan and when we are launched will be taking passengers on designated routes which are comprised of bike paths and great scenery. Safety and the comfort of our passengers are paramount so we will be taking advantage of separated bike lanes and low traffic areas. Passengers living in residences will, with assistance, sign up through an online sign up system and rides will be approximately one hour long.

To find out more about Cycling Without Age, cyclingwithoutage.org is a great source and there are some lovely videos that you can access.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer pilot or would like more information please email cyclingwithoutagekelowna@gmail.com