

OUCH! EASY RIDING



Helpful male nurse with senior lady on wheelchair helping her get in to the car

I've just had first-hand experience of why subsidies, once given, become accepted as such a fundamental right that they are nearly impossible to take away.

A broken ankle has made driving impossible for me, so on my wife has fallen the burden of getting me to the doctors' appointments, blood drawings and physio-therapy sessions that dog geriatrics like me.

But she, dear lady, is also the costumer for an opera company and, as I've seen, the pressure in putting on a show is even more intense than writing to a deadline. Adding my needs on top of hers, as another performance nears, is agonizing.

No surprise then that I heard church bells ringing when I discovered that our small town had started free door-to-door rides for old folks. What a boon – though I dread to think

what it is costing all local taxpayers to service a minute percentage of the total in such a grand way – and I'd certainly vote against it for all but the poor if a referendum were held.

But, of course, now that it is here, only a saint would refuse something so desirable and I use it regularly.

Even so, one day this week, when the driver was running late and then, instead of going directly to my phlebotomist, made a time-consuming detour to pick up another old codger, I found myself thinking, "Can't they do better than this?"