

She's Bound to a Wheelchair, But that Doesn't Stop Centralia Woman From Helping Others

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Bored? Don't be. Try this simple cure: Give pleasure to someone else and experience the joy of giving.

Your gift can be as simple as a phone call, a cheerful note, or — as demonstrated by the women of the Sacajawea Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution — visiting a local nursing home to deliver wheelchair bags and pockets.

The gifts were designed and sewn by Harriett Rounsley, local member and Centralia resident. At age 91, Rounsley says that she is not old — merely older — and refuses to stay bored just because she's sitting in a wheelchair.

In her workroom was an unsatisfactory curtain she had made for her house. The fabric was new, it was just taking up space, and she was tired of looking at it. So she got her yardstick, did some measuring, and tore it up.

It had to be torn; her severely damaged back prevents leaning over a cutting board. But no problem — tearing is good. It goes with the grain of the fabric, ensuring that all pieces come out even for sewing into bags and pockets, strings and straps. When finished, she dropped the results off at Riverside Nursing & Rehabilitation in Centralia.

A few days later when she phoned to ask whether they could use any more, she learned that most of their residents are in wheelchairs and that those few had gone fast.

Aha! A need! Off to the fabric counter at Walmart to buy the fabric from which to construct the items that were awaiting delivery when the women came to visit.

Susie Conrad, an employee at Riverside Nursing and Rehabilitation, shows Harriett Rounsley one of the wheelchair bags that Rounsley created for a Riverside resident.

Photograph submitted by Shirley Stirling, Sacajawea Chapter of DAR