



Transportation Solutions Evolve With Progressive Disability

In 1984, Janet Zeller was employed as an elementary school librarian when she fell at work injuring her right leg. Two years later, and after multiple surgeries, she lost the use of her leg. Over time, Janet's disability increased and she continued to look for adaptive products to help her maintain an active, productive and independent lifestyle.

Following her initial injury, Janet contacted Ride-Away® in hopes the company could modify her sporty Toyota Celica. Because Janet had injured her right leg, the most obvious modification was to install a left-foot gas pedal. This vehicle modification worked well until 1988, when Janet developed a complication from the original injury: reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD), a condition that resulted in a significant increase in her disability, ultimately to a functional level of C5/6. Following six months of intensive rehabilitation, and now in a manual wheelchair, Janet revisited Ride-Away to explore her transportation options.

"What is different about Ride-Away is that I'm not different," Janet says, "At Ride-Away, a person who uses a wheelchair is ordinary. The emphasis is placed on what you can do and although it may not be much, Ride-Away will find a way to maximize that ability."

Ride-Away offers a variety of conversion options to suit individual needs. In 1988 Janet needed a way to easily stow her wheelchair in her car as well as a way to drive without the use of her legs and with limited hand and wrist function. Ride-Away suggested a two-door sedan with hand controls for gas, brake, reduced effort steering, high beams and horn. They also installed a chair topper, painted to match her car, so she could easily stow and access her chair. As her RSD progressed, transferring in and out of the car began to take a toll. Janet's doctor recommended she give up her manual wheelchair and use a power wheelchair. Once again, Janet consulted with the staff at Ride-Away and together they selected a modified Ford E150 van that would accommodate a new power chair.

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-Janet Zeller



 BraunAbility
Because Life is a Moving Experience™

Janet with Ride-Away President, Mark Lore.

- The longest warranties in the industry – 5 year/60,000 mile warranty on all Braun and Viewpoint lowered-floor minivan conversions
- The largest adaptive vehicle inventory – over 400 vehicles in stock
- In-house financing available – up to 10 years from initial finance date
- All modified and non-modified vehicles accepted for trade
- Eleven East Coast locations from Maine to Florida plus access to a reciprocal service network of over 180 dealers throughout the country
- Satisfaction Guarantee – Select pre-owned vehicles may be returned within 30 days of purchase for a full credit toward the purchase of another vehicle*
- 24/7 Emergency roadside assistance available to all Ride-Away customers**

To learn more about Ride-Away, visit www.Ride-Away.com or call 888-Ride-Away.

"We understand that everyone with a disability has a unique challenge because of where they live, where they park their vehicle, how often they use their vehicle and many other variables," said Ride-Away President Mark Lore. "We focus on a customer's specific capabilities and what they want to do. In Janet's case, her transportation solution has evolved over the years, as has our ability to create solutions for her."

As Janet's RSD progressed and she had less and less use of her hands, Ride-Away worked to create an adaptive vehicle that would maintain her mobility. Janet's first van was a short-wheelbase full-size Ford E150 van with lowered floor, lift, power doors, primary and secondary driving controls and power wheelchair lockdown in driving position. After trading in her Ford van in 1996, she purchased a lowered-floor Dodge Grand Caravan with electronic gas, brake and elbow button for additional vehicle controls. In 2003, she traded the Dodge minivan for another with lowered floor, full driving controls for range of motion and strength abilities, and additional functions that could be electronically controlled.

Drivers with disabilities are often hindered in their ability to operate controls for directionals, horn, high beams and a host of other secondary controls. Recent technological advances have created voice-activated solutions for many of these vital driving functions. In Janet's most recent minivan, she places one hand on the tri-pin for the steering wheel and the other on the tri-pin for the electronic gas and brake. She then uses two "talking" elbow buttons to scroll through additional functions. The first button controls the washer wiper, cruise set and resume, rear washer and wipe. The second operates the horn, right turn signal, left turn signal, headlights and windows. Janet also has a separate headlight dimmer button. Even though the elbow buttons arrived pre-programmed, a Ride-Away technician reprogrammed the buttons in the order Janet preferred and replaced the shrill factory-installed voice with his own pleasant voice, at an ideal scrolling pace.

Janet enjoys the freedom and the ability to keep working that her lowered-floor minivan provides her. She simply clicks the fob as she approaches her van and by the time she reaches the vehicle, the ramp is out, ready for her to "roll right in." She easily maneuvers her power chair into the EZ Lock system, which allows the vehicle to operate only if her chair is properly locked in place. She is then ready to drive.

The company's 24-hour service, highly specialized technicians and a commitment to creating solutions that meet each customer's changing needs is what brings Janet back to Ride-Away each time she needs a new vehicle. "It's a different mind set here," she says. "They acknowledge that you have lost some function, but also that you've got other abilities and they design ways to maximize those abilities. The emphasis on what I can do is central to the way they do business at Ride-Away."

Janet can go anywhere she wants alone.



*Second vehicle must be of equal or greater value.
Not all vehicles qualify.

**Charges may apply.




We Deliver Freedom.