



Veteran Drives Away with Modified Minivan and Savings of \$25,000

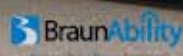
Negotiating the transfer from a wheelchair to a car can be a dangerous exercise – at the very least it can elicit anxiety and fatigue. The maneuver requires some upper body strength and mindfulness of the gap between chair and car. The possibility also exists that you or your car will be hit by another vehicle. For these reasons, Steve Hodgkins set out to find a solution that would help him safely and easily move from his wheelchair to his car.

Steve Hodgkins sustained a spinal cord injury when he was shot while serving in the Navy during the Vietnam era. He was paralyzed from the waist down just shy of his 21st birthday. For over 20 years, Steve drove cars with hand controls and put his wheelchair in the backseat, risking his life every time he tried to transfer from his wheelchair to his car. After a passing car nearly tore his open driver's door off its hinges, Steve decided it was time to reconsider his mode of transportation. "Transferring from my wheelchair to the car left me tired and frustrated until I purchased a modified minivan from Ride-Away. Now, I no longer worry about my safety, I roll into the van, up to the steering wheel and drive directly from my wheelchair," Steve said.

Steve learned about Ride-Away from his brother-in-law who accompanied him to the company's headquarters in Londonderry, New Hampshire. Ride-Away, America's largest supplier of new and pre-owned modified vehicles, inventories a wide range of full-size vans and minivans, including: Dodge, Chrysler, Chevrolet, Pontiac, Ford, GMC, Buick, Toyota and Honda.

"Dave (Qualey, Ride-Away Sales Consultant) knew just what to do and he made all the phone calls to the VA."

-Steve Hodgkins



Steve with his Ride-Away Sales Consultant, Dave Qualey.

- 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.

Steve discovered that Ride-Away could modify his current vehicle or he could choose from the company's wide selection. However, when Steve wheeled into the showroom, he was immediately drawn to a shiny black adaptive Dodge Grand Caravan SXT and he was ready to write a check right then and there.

Ride-Away prides itself on providing experienced and personalized customer service. It was Dave Qualey, Ride-Away Sales Consultant, who approached Steve and asked about his disability. Once Dave learned that Steve's injury occurred while he was in the service, he then asked if Steve had contacted the Veterans Administration. The VA had paid for the installation of hand controls on Steve's car ten years earlier, however, Steve hadn't considered that the organization might help with van modifications.

"Dave was very helpful," Steve said. "He made all the phone calls to the VA knowing exactly which questions to ask." Dave added, "We're here to help people, to educate them and insure that they purchase the right equipment. Not only did we work to pair Steve with a vehicle and products that best fit his exact needs, we made sure he received the service-connected veteran benefits he was entitled to." The help Steve received translated into a new minivan and \$25,000 in savings!

Steve's minivan has a Braun 10" lowered floor conversion with a remote-control passenger sliding door and ramp. A kneeling suspension system lowers the van's rear suspension to further reduce the slope of the ramp. Steve easily wheels his chair up the ramp and into the van. He then rolls into an EZ Lock Wheelchair Docking system so that he can drive the car directly from his chair. "I should have done this years ago. It's so much easier to get in the car without worrying about getting hit," Steve said. Steve uses hand controls to brake and accelerate and a spinner knob for steering. He also has a driver's seat that can be added so a person without disabilities can drive his van.

Ride-Away emphasizes the importance of listening to its customers and educating them on all available options – in both vehicles and adaptive equipment. The company's staff is knowledgeable about the products and vehicles that work best with the range of personal mobility devices. The combination of knowledge, experience and caring helps Ride-Away find the solution that fits the customer's needs – now and in the future. "You won't find high pressure sales techniques when you visit Ride-Away. Instead, our goal is to provide help in the most sincere way possible," said Mark Lore, President and CEO of Ride-Away.

Steve and wife, Diane, enjoy the convenience of their customized van.



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

**Charges may apply.



 Ride-Away

We Deliver Freedom.