

Dear Ride-Away,

I hope this letter finds all readers in good health, spirit and optimism. I write today in regards to my recent experience purchasing an adaptive vehicle.

I'm a T-12, L-1 incomplete Spinal Cord Injured veteran. I also suffered a complete non-union fracture of my left humerus resulting in nerve damage, several surgeries and the internal placement of hardware.

The doctors and driving instructor advised me that a van would be the best 1st vehicle to purchase due to the fact that my arm was too weak to break down my manual wheelchair for car use.

I was in a New England V.A. for my initial recovery; I researched several conversion van companies and made the decision to have Ride-Away in New Hampshire do the job. I couldn't have been happier.

After a few years and another arm surgery it was time to upgrade the old van for another. I was living in the Florida panhandle and contacted Ride-Away NH and we made arrangements for a new conversion. Ride-Away committed themselves to fitting me properly with the new van. Once again I was in a vehicle that not only met but exceeded my needs with almost seamless effort.

Fast forward a couple of years, my arm was strong so I decided to switch from a van to a car. Of course I went with Ride-Away and had modifications to a full size car.

Lo and behold I broke the hardware in my arm during a recreational sport in 2007. I had the surgery and was discharged from the hospital with a power wheelchair. I no longer had a van so while in rehab at the Tampa V.A. (I since moved to Orlando) an adaptive vehicle company brought several vehicles by the hospital to show the patients different options that were available. I contacted the representative who showed the vehicles and set up an appointment. I purchased a 2007 van, jump to 2009, I only had 10,000 miles on it so I decided to trade-up to an '09.

Now the juicy stuff! I set up an appointment with the mother dealership of the company. I brought my '07 on [Sep 16] and we talk about my wants and needs. They took all my information, evaluated my trade-in, and V.A. eligibility. I did inform them that I had an appointment with another company the following day; I was brought up to be an honest person. Thank you mom.

On [Sep 17] I met with Mike Alfaro at Ride-Away Tampa. I explained my history with them up north and we went over all the information I mentioned above that the other company did. So, we are all on the same page now, time to hear back with what each company had to say, right? Wrong! To this day I have not been contacted by the other company.

Sep 18<sup>th</sup> I heard from Mike, he consulted Dave who deals with financing and together on speaker phone we discussed where I stood. We made a plan of action tailored to my payment preferences. Mike provided me with several available vehicles to consider complete with links to see the vans over the internet. Mike called me after the weekend about an '09 at the mother store in New Hampshire (my old friends) that had incredible incentives and rebates. I made the decision to go for it.

Dave called me a few days later and was able to negotiate my interest rate down with the same finance company I used for the '07. On Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> (2 weeks after our initial meeting) the van was in Tampa, fully converted and we signed the paperwork. I'm now the proud owner of a new vehicle with more options and accessories than I intended to get with little change in my monthly payments.

My hat goes off to the entire staff of Ride-Away. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Margaret who works the front desk, Richard who fitted me and tweaked it to my needs, Mike and Dave for making the purchase possible and of course Jim [Scruggs] who runs a top notch business. To all who worked behind the scenes that I didn't get to meet, I thank you as well.

In conclusion, I realized that Ride-Away has been my family since 1993 when I first met them. I won't cheat on you again.

My sincere thanks for always being there.

Tim W.