



Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund
Wounded Warrior Center • Bldg H49 • Camp Pendleton, CA 92055 Phone: 760-725-3680, Fax: 760-725-3685, Web:
www.semperfund.org

DRAFT

MEDIA ADVISORY

Released: December 22, 2011 Event: December 23, 2011

SFF Media Contact: Lisa Killeen, Case Manager 240-377-6420
Ride-Away Media Contact: Crystal Snowden: 301-856-2650

Specially adapted vehicle to be presented to OIF veteran and his family in time for holidays

Navy Seal SO2 Bill DeGennaro's family will receive the van on Dec 23.

Beltsville, MD – The gift of mobility will be given to Navy Seal Operator Bill DeGennaro and his family just in time for the holidays. A specially adapted van will be presented to the veteran's family at the Ride-Away Handicap Equipment holiday party in Beltsville, MD this Friday, December 23 at 1:00 PM.

SO2 DeGennaro, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), suffered an anoxic brain injury in 2009 which left him confined to a wheelchair. After many months of rehabilitation in the Tampa VA Hospital, SO2 DeGennaro has recently been moved to a Washington, DC facility to be near family. The specially adapted van will give family members the freedom to transport SO2 DeGennaro to appointments and family outings.

The vehicle is being presented to SO2 DeGennaro and his family at no cost through a \$16,600 Adaptive Transportation grant from the Semper Fi Fund and allowances given by the Veterans Administration.

Due to SO2 DeGennaro's medical condition, the van will be received by his brother, George DeGennaro. Also in attendance at the presentation and holiday party will be Semper Fi Fund Case Manager, Lisa Killeen, Ride-Away Handicap Equipment representative, Crystal Snowden and Ride-Away employees.

- **Who:** SO2 Bill DeGennaro's brother, George DeGennaro; SFF Case Manager, Lisa Killeen; Ride-Away representative, Crystal Snowden and employees
- **What:** Media availability for presentation of a specially adapted van to George DeGennaro
- **When:** Friday, December 23, 2011 – 1:00 pm
- **Where:** Ride-Away Corporation, 11409 Maryland Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705
- **Web:** The Semper Fi Fund: (www.semperfund.org) & Ride-Away Corp (www.ride-away.com)

The Semper Fi Fund helps fund specially adapted vehicles through its Adaptive Transportation grants. These grants are provided to post 9/11 service members who are injured or critically-ill. Modified transportation is a vital component to a successful rehabilitation for someone who is wheelchair bound. It is key to ensuring that appointments and therapies are easily attended, and more freedom of mobility is given to the service member and their families.



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As of November, 2011, the Semper Fi Fund has provided more than 1,700 grants totaling almost \$6 million towards the costs of purchasing or modifying vehicles for our catastrophically injured and critically ill service members.

ABOUT THE SEMPER FI FUND (SSF): The Semper Fi Fund (SFF)– (www.semperfund.org) is a non-profit organization that provides financial assistance and quality of life solutions for Marines and Sailors, as well as members of the Army, Air Force and Coast Guard who serve in support of Marine forces, when they become injured in post 9-11 combat or training operations, or they face life threatening illness or injury. Our fund provides relief to qualified Servicemembers and their families for immediate financial needs that arise during hospitalization and recovery, as well as perpetuating needs such as home modifications, customized transportation and specialized equipment.

The Semper Fi Fund has awarded over 37,000 financial grants totaling more than \$56 million in grants given to our injured and critically ill service members & their families!

The SFF was founded by Karen Guenther, a registered nurse and spouse of an active duty Marine who had first-hand knowledge of the challenges faced by wounded Marines and Sailors returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. She, along with a dedicated group of military spouses established Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund in May of 2004.

ABOUT RIDE-AWAY: Ride-Away is one of America's largest providers of modified vehicles and adaptive equipment for people with disabilities. Ride-Away products are used by individuals with minor to profound disabilities requiring additional assistance while traveling and range from hand controls and lifts to raised door and lowered floor vehicle modifications. Founded in 1986, Ride-Away's 12 East Coast locations are committed to offering a broad selection of specialized vehicles and services to meet the needs of every customer. All of Ride-Away's locations are also QAP (Quality Assurance Program) certified through the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA), resulting in Ride-Away being held to the highest standards in the industry. Ride-Away also gives back to the community by contributing 10% of its earnings to various non-profit organizations throughout their communities and also has over a 95% volunteerism rate with their employees. For more information, call (888)-RIDE-AWAY (888-743-3292) or visit our website at www.Ride-Away.com <<http://www.Ride-Away.com>> .