

Differently-Abled Digest

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Volume II

Spring 2005

The Right Formula

Information from HBO's *Real Sports 10th Anniversary* was used in this report.

36 year old Italian race car driver Alex Zanardi is a lucky man...and a strong one, too.

In September, 2001, he was involved in a horrific accident; the consequences being that he needed both legs amputated. But Zanardi, who lost two liters of blood and was fighting for his life following the accident, has now returned to racing.

"I thought ... it can be done. It is going to take work and effort but it can be done," he said.

Zanardi now uses a BMW with most of the driving functions in a video game style handset on the steering wheel; this gives him the chance to return to normalcy.



When asked how he did it, Zanardi said "I learned for sure that every one of us has a hidden tank of energies that just comes out when you need it. It's a great gift. It is just the way I am, a very optimistic guy, very positive," he said.

He grins when he talks about carrying his son on his shoulders and swimming with his family despite his disability.

Newfound Mobility

All differently-abled students that are planning to drive, listen up! It's your lucky day! General Motors Company has designed a website that will take you through the process, step-by-step, of modifying a vehicle to fit your needs. Not only does <http://www.gmmobility.com> assist you with just about every aspect of the search, but there are also many links to other resourceful web pages. Most students that have profound disabilities will have to undergo rehabilitative driver's training. First there is an evaluation that ensures that the student has good enough vision and reflexes to be on the road. Once the student passes this preliminary examination, he or she will finally begin learning, with a certified

rehabilitative driving instructor of course, how to use hand controls. Stay tuned for an upcoming interview with a certified driver's rehabilitation specialist.

Hailed By the Chief

VERNON HILLS-At a Town Hall Meeting on Medicare and a Patients' Bill of Rights, Congressman Mark Steven Kirk told the story of how he had the honor of riding back to Washington, D.C. with President Bush. During the course of the flight, the President made the case for his Homeland Security Act; when he was done, he gave Congressman Kirk an opportunity to discuss issues that were important to him. It turns out that the Congressman was carrying copies of my newsletters and PowerPoint Presentation.



After looking at my work, the commander-in-chief wrote me a handwritten note on Air Force One stationery. He also gave me a box of red, white, and blue M&M's and expressed interest in meeting me either the next time he visits Illinois or when I visit Washington, D.C., something I hope to do in 2006.

In Closing



Digest This!

"Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most."

-Mark Twain