

# New chapter for RARA

## Book sale helps Lowell group get new van

By Angel Roy

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LOWELL — It wasn't exactly designed for a comfortable ride.

With deteriorating seat belts and crowded rows, the 1997 van used by RARA made it difficult for the disabled and developmentally delayed adults the organization serves to travel.

And this year, the van didn't pass inspection.

Luckily for the clients and volunteers of RARA (Remarkable Active Resilient Adults), they will soon be cruising around in a new 15-passenger van with aisles. There are also seats in the back that fold to the sides and a DVD player — ideal for those long trips.

The van might not be possible if it wasn't for **Got Books**.

Bob Ticehurst, president/founder of Got Books, is giving RARA half of the profits from book sales in December.

RARA promotes public awareness and understanding of the needs and issues of developmentally delayed adults and their families. The group also holds day and weekend programs for its clients.

Each month, Got Books donates half of the profits from book sales to different

organizations.

Seven years ago, Ticehurst, a Marine and a former accountant, began selling used books for profit at work and online in his parents' basement. When others caught wind of what he was doing, he began taking books off their hands to sell as well.

In 2004, he was approached by a university, which wishes to remain nameless, that asked him to sell 20,000 books for them. After many trips to the school in his SUV, Ticehurst was able to sell them all and split the profit 50/50.

"It made me realize that it wasn't the only place in the world that needed help," said Ticehurst, who then established Got Books. "Selling the university's books worked so well, it made enough to fund the business."

RARA was one of the first organizations to work with Got Books, a relationship that developed a year and a half ago when Bonnie Gallagher of Tewksbury, a member of RARA's board of directors, saw the business' insert in a package of coupons she received in her mailbox.

"I went to see what Bob's book sale was like, and I was very impressed," Gallagher said. "I approached him and asked if he'd like to be a part of our fundraising."

According to Gallagher, through "Bob's generosity," RARA has raised enough money — \$21,000 — to place a down payment on the van, which the group will purchase within the next two weeks from New England Wheels of Billerica, a company that specializes in handicapped-accessible vehicles.

Gallagher said 2008 is the 40th anniversary of RARA, "and this is going to be a nice birthday present."

RARA not only receives half of book-sale profits (all books are sold for \$1) but it is also paid for the pounds of books that are collected in donation bins.

The organization currently has book-donation bins at Tewksbury Town Hall, Meadow Glen Mall in Medford and at the RARA office at 295 High St. in Lowell.

In addition to fundraising, Got Books also provides opportunities for handicapped and developmentally delayed children to help at the sales to get work experience.

"It's great to get the kids out of the classroom," Ticehurst said. "It will help them be able to take on real jobs."

Got Books holds charity book sales at its warehouse, at 35 Concord St. in North Reading, on Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

For more information go to [www.raraagency.org](http://www.raraagency.org) or [www.gotbooks.com](http://www.gotbooks.com).

