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MOUNTAIN TRIKE GIVES AMANDA A LIFE WITHOUT LIMITS

And if you'd like to read about Amanda's inspiring Snowdon Challenge, see www.mountaintrike.com/snowdon-shove-2016-support-dog-teams-climb/

While approaching 10 years' service, Metropolitan Police officer Amanda Davidson sustained multiple back injuries at the hands of a schizophrenic patient during a domestic call and was forced to take early retirement.

As Amanda explains, there were some positives. She met her husband the day she left London and the couple now have two teenage daughters.

She takes up the story: "Life has not been smooth. I developed Lupus shortly after leaving, had a stroke at 38 and then the Lupus attacked the site of my spinal fixation. For the last six years, I have been using a wheelchair for anything other than light walking in the house. Anything more

and the legs paralyze. The more often this happens, the higher the chance the paralysis will become permanent.

"My body wasn't playing ball but my brain was still as stubborn as when I was a copper. I then discovered Support Dogs and they inspired me. They train dogs not just for disabled people, but autistic kids and people with epilepsy. They truly change lives and they have changed mine.

"We got a Labrador puppy, Jupiter, who I hoped would become my support dog but I needed to walk him. Not fair weather walking - I wanted to go down the local country park, over the fields, everywhere that any other dog walkers could and I didn't want an electric wheelchair to aid me. I wanted to do it myself. A bit of a challenge, to say the least."

Two years ago, she discovered Mountain Trike - an off-road all terrain wheelchair which could be powered by Amanda using the unique lever drive system. It has transformed her life.

"There were a few learning curves and a couple of incidents where Jupiter pulled the Trike over and I wore it as a hat, but apart from that there is no stopping us! It is hard work but it's fun, keeps me fit and offers me the independence I was

looking for," explained Amanda, who is now 20 years into her retirement.

"Nowhere is off limits now that I have the confidence to handle the Trike. Thanks to air suspension and hydraulic disc brakes I can travel in comfort and safety and it looks pretty cool too," continued Amanda, who attaches the Trixie Deluxe Dog Walking Wheelchair Lead Set to allow her to steer, power and brake her Trike using the two levers, which also keep her hands clean and dry.

She has raised £1000s for Support Dogs and was the first wheelchair participant in the Fright Hike (18 miles in the dark around Sherwood Forest). She was also delighted to complete her first 10k wheelchair race in her Mountain Trike in an impressive 1 hour 33 minutes.

Amazingly, she reached the summit of Snowdon in her Mountain Trike - an outstanding achievement whose year-long organisation she describes as the most stressful but proudest thing she has ever done. ■

<https://supportdogs.org.uk/>
<http://www.mountaintrike.com/> or email info@mountaintrike.co.uk

