



## Vet Moves Into Newly Built Home at Parkside at Wanaque

HASKELL, N.J. – “Home for the holidays” took on a new meaning for Matthew Todd, an injured veteran of the Iraq war, as he moved into a brand new first-floor condominium, donated to him by the Semper Fi Fund and Greentree Development Group.

Todd, 32, a Marine who served in Iraq before being discharged, was ceremonially handed the keys Tuesday to his new home at Parkside at Wanaque, a community of 88 townhomes and condominiums built by Greentree Development. Todd’s 1,100-square-foot new home includes two bedrooms, one bathroom, a kitchen, living room/dining room combination, laundry room and storage areas. In addition to the kitchen appliances that come with the home, a washer and dryer, donated by Ferguson Appliances of Rockaway, were included. “It took a few days for it to register,” Todd said, standing in his living room before the ceremony. Still facing surgeries on his injured feet and still awaiting his veteran’s benefits, making ends meet – including rent – has been a constant concern. Now, he says, he has his own place. “Even when I’m here, though, I wonder what’s the catch.” The Marine arrived home after two tours in Iraq suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain and other injuries, including the loss of some of his toes. Todd, however, has been adjusting with help from the Semper Fi Fund, an organization devoted to helping critical ill and wounded servicemen and women. Today, he is an employee of Route 46 Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge, a Little Falls car dealership that Todd says has been very supportive. He’s also working with the Semper Fi Fund, helping other Marines adapt to life after combat. Todd received the keys to his home at a short ceremony Tuesday, attended by family, friends, and officials, as well as the Greentree Development Group, Semper Fi and partners of both organizations. Speaking to about 20 supporters standing in the drizzle, Todd thanked everyone and acknowledged how lucky he is. “I appreciate everything all of you have done for me,” he said. “There’s a lot of us out there who aren’t getting this kind of help.” Dave Gunia, division president of Greentree Development Group, builders of Parkside at Wanaque welcomed everyone to the ceremony. “We’ve long respected the service of the U.S. military,” said Gunia. “And we’re familiar with how important homes are in people’s lives. We’re proud to welcome Matt home to our community at Parkside at Wanaque.” Calling Todd a “mature, independent and grounded Marine,” Susan Rocco, senior director of the Semper Fi Fund, said she felt blessed to be able to present him with the keys to his new home.

Ms. Rocco said the Semper Fi Fund strives to bring health to service members. Its work with Todd, from the time of his initial injuries to today’s presentation, are the sort of life-changing work Semper Fi members look forward to accomplishing. “We were able to change a service member’s life today,” she said. “It impacted him greatly and put him on his future path for his life.” U.S. Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-11, himself a combat veteran, was on hand to congratulate Todd and thank him for his service. Wanaque Mayor David Mahler added his gratitude and congratulations. “Welcome to Wanaque,” he said. Gunia said the idea for a donation began taking shape several weeks ago at a meeting with Greentree’s construction partners. And those ubiquitous yellow tractors seen at every construction site paved the connection. “We work with a lot of different organizations to accomplish our work,” said Gunia. “Lakeside Construction, who did the excavation work here, uses Caterpillar machines. They buy them from Foley Incorporated in Piscataway. Kim Foley, chairman of Foley Caterpillar, sits on the board of directors of the Semper Fi Fund. We made a call and here we are.” Gunia said Todd was a great choice to receive the home. “Matt is a perfect example of a young man who gave up so much to keep us secure and allow us to do what we do,” said Gunia. “We know having a good home will help Matt continue to adjust and continue to contribute to our community.”

The Semper Fi Fund, and its program America’s Fund, are set up to provide immediate financial assistance and lifetime support for injured and critically ill members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families, directing urgently needed resources to post-9/11 service members of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Reserves. The Semper Fi Fund has given more than \$99 million to over 13,000 service members and their families.

Greentree Development Group was established in 2011, a spinoff of Greentree Investment Group which is engaged in the development of commercial and residential real estate projects. Greentree Development Group specializes in redevelopment, revitalization, environmentally challenged and financially troubled properties. More information about Greentree and its services is available at [www.greentreedevdevelopmentgroup.com](http://www.greentreedevdevelopmentgroup.com).