

Housing Design Awards Promote Universal Design

By Lawrence H. Trachtman

For the past three years, designers and disability advocates in the state of North Carolina have sponsored an annual awards program that recognizes outstanding examples of universal design in housing.

In 1998, three homes were selected for awards by a jury of architects, designers, homebuilders and disability advocates. All three winners were recognized at the Governor's Advocacy Council's annual awards banquet.



The exterior grade changes at this award-winning home are made with gently sloping paths (*winner, Steven Fisher*).

1. Steven A. Fisher, of Chapel Hill, N.C., was a winner in the Outstanding Residential Design and New Construction category.

This modest-sized home has well-designed features in a small package. Part of a pedestrian-friendly planned community, it uses landscaping to create accessible routes to the front and back doors. The kitchen has ample knee space at the stove and sink, pull-out shelves in the base cabinets, a side-by-side refrigerator and multiple counter heights. The bathroom has a curbless shower, and ample knee space and maneuvering room. Most spaces/circulation paths are constructed of hard surfaces for easy traveling.

2. A second winner in the same category was Mary Lou Jurkowski, of the Brown Jurkowski Architectural Collaborative in Raleigh.

This vacation rental property offers universal design features throughout the home, enhancing its marketability to a variety of renters. Friends and families can enjoy a holiday at the beach without sacrificing usability. The home has a three-stop elevator, accessible bathrooms, adjustable kitchen cabinetry and multiple work surface heights in the kitchen. The jury particularly liked the hidden knee space in

See Housing Design, page 10

Telecom: Equipment Accessibility

How can individuals with disabilities be assured that telecommunication equipment and systems will be accessible? Two acts are addressing this question—Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act

Signed into law in 1996, the Telecommunications Act is the first major overhaul of telecommunications law in almost 62 years. The goal of this law is to let anyone enter any communications business;

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Medical Interventions: A New Dimension to Universal Design

I came away from a recent discussion with a health care professional with the realization that we can add another method to the ways in which we balance the demands of the environment with people's abilities, i.e., universal design.

For years I have looked at the intervention process from a design perspective, which I learned from Harold Kiewel, AIA,—a renowned architect and disability advocate in Minnesota.

He suggests four types of intervention to overcome the difficulties faced by people who must use an environment that doesn't fit them well. We can change the architecture, equipment, and procedures, or we can provide personal assistance.

I now believe that we should add a fifth method to that list—medical interventions. In a nutshell, because we now have the medical technologies to change the person, this fifth method expands our methods of addressing the human condition at the beginning of the 21st Century.

- ◆ Architecture involves modifying the rooms, buildings, facilities, landscapes and towns that we inhabit.

- ◆ Equipment involves everything from consumer appliances to prosthetic devices that help people to better manipulate the environment.

- ◆ Procedures involves rehabilitation for the individual or operational

changes that allow people to do things in different ways.

- ◆ Personal Assistance involves other people helping to do something for a person who chooses not or is unable to do a task alone.

- ◆ Medical interventions involves medications and surgical procedures to the human body to give individuals new or restored abilities.

People have been modifying the architecture and providing personal assistance to each other since the beginning of time. Equipment and procedural interventions are methods that have developed fairly recently, as our society industrialized and has become more consumer-oriented. Medical interventions are only now becoming technologically and financially realistic possibilities for an unprecedented number of people.

As we move into the new millennium, it may be important for us to look at the full range of interventions to be able to develop cost-effective solutions to make our built environments fit everyone. As illustrated by the Fashion Finger Splints found on Page 9 of this issue of *Universal Design Newsletter*, I believe that in many cases, universal design solutions will involve several of these interventions and result in design solutions that may be radical, beautiful and effective.

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Universal Design Newsletter is published by Universal Designers & Consultants, Inc., which is frequently engaged by plaintiffs and defendants for consulting and expert witness services in ADA litigation, design review and facility evaluations.

Mail subscription rates: One year \$75 (U.S.). Second-Class Postage paid at Takoma Park, Md. Postmaster send address changes to **Universal Design Newsletter**, 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912-4324. For information on advertising rates or obtaining alternative accessible formats, please call or write the **Universal Design Newsletter** Editor.

Reg-Neg Committee Reaches Major Consensus on Trails

The U.S. Access Board's Regulatory Negotiation (Reg-Neg) Committee on Outdoor Developed Areas has reached preliminary conceptual agreement on the scoping and technical provisions for trails.

At its January 1999 meeting in Miami, the committee reached a historic consensus on trail accessibility. The committee unanimously concurred that all trails are to be built considering access from the start. Each newly constructed trail or trail segment will apply the technical access provisions—trail width, slope, cross-slope, surface, etc.—and depart (or not) from a technical provision(s) based solely on conditions at the site.

Because of concerns about complexity, quotas and other issues, the committee took a significant departure from earlier proposals.

According to Whole Access, representing one of the 26 committee members, "This common-sense approach reflects the very essence and spirit of [the late] Ron Mace's concepts of universal design. It is also the most simple, the most just and, in the long run, the most cost-effective way to build trails."

Preliminary conceptual consensus was also reached on connecting pedestrian routes in outdoor-developed areas and beaches. For more information, contact the Access Board at 800.872.2253 (voice); 800.993.2822 (tty); or www.access-board.gov. 



New ADAAG Comment Period

Recognizing that the revised ADAAG will include dramatic format changes and that organizations will need time to study the new document, the U.S. Access Board is considering providing a public comment period of 120 days.

The Board plans to hold two public hearings on the revised guidelines in late summer/early fall—one in Washington, D.C. and the other in Chicago. The exact hearing dates will be announced in the *Federal Register* and in the July issue of *Universal Design Newsletter*.

For more information, contact the Access Board at 800.872.2253 (voice); 800.993.2822 (TTY); or www.access-board.gov.

Class Act(ion)

In the ongoing ADA dispute between Independent Living Resources and the Oregon Arena Corporation (the Portland Rose Garden Arena), the court has certified a class and is accepting comments from affected parties until May 7, 1999.

The consent decree lists a variety of facility/operational changes to the Portland Rose Garden Arena that may set precedence in the field of ADA compliance for arenas and stadiums.

The class certification is one of the latest in a series of class action law suits appearing around the country as disability advocates and business defendants seem to be recognizing its advantages to settling their disputes.

A particular advantage to businesses is the perceived protection a class action settlement affords from future law suits from individuals who would be considered to be members of the class. An advantage to disability advocates is that they can establish more comprehensive and court-monitored settlements.

New ADAAG Rules Issued in 1998

The U.S. Access Board issued the following three final rules in 1998, supplementing the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for Buildings and Facilities:

1. Building Elements Designed for Children's Use. Based on children's dimensions, these amendments provide alternate specifications for certain building elements and fixtures such as drinking fountains, toilets and sinks.

2. State and Local Government Facilities. These guidelines cover public-sector facilities such as judicial, and detention and correctional facilities.

3. Detectable Warnings. The existing suspension

of ADAAG requirements for detectable warnings at curb ramps, hazardous vehicular areas and reflecting pools was extended to July 26, 2001.

Although these rules have not yet been adopted by the U.S. Department of Justice, the new rules can be used as guidance for designing courthouses, prisons and building elements for children's use. To obtain a new ADAAG reprint (publication S08), which includes the new ADAAG rules, contact the U.S. Access Board.

In related news, the Access Board and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) plan to develop training materials on the Board's guidelines for courthouses, prisons and children's elements. For more information, contact the Access Board at 800.872.2253 (voice); 800.993.2822 (TTY); or www.access-board.gov.

DOJ Sues Theater Chains

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is suing American Multi-Cinema and AMC Entertainment.

The lawsuit claims that these movie theater operators violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by denying movie-goers who use wheelchairs or who cannot climb stairs access to stadium-style seating.

Stadium-style seats are placed on risers to provide unobstructed views with improved viewing angles. According to DOJ, newly constructed stadium-style movie theaters must locate seats for individuals with disabilities within the stadium portion of the seating area.

DOJ is Being Sued

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is being sued by Cinemark USA for "unilaterally adopting a change in the law of public accommodations."

The law suit claims that, "The department has also promulgated a change in the law without prior notice and its attempts to enforce its new rule retroactively is a violation not only of the APA [Administrative Procedures Act] and ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act], but also the United States Constitution."

The law suit stems from a recent court decision (under appeal) regarding stadium-style movie theaters. In that case, DOJ filed an *amicus* brief in support of disabled plaintiffs against Cinemark USA for the design and construction of the Tinseltown USA cineplex in El Paso, Texas.



The U.S. Access Board is considering a 120-day public comment period for the new ADAAG requirements.

Universal Design Conference: Part III

Improving the Lives of Older and Disabled People Through Design

By Cynthia Leibrock, MA, ASID, IFDA, Hon. IIDA

Editor's Note: The following is the final of a three-part series highlighting presentations given at the "Designing for the 21st Century Conference." Held in June 1998 at Hofstra University in Long Island, N.Y., the conference featured educational sessions by renowned experts in universal design.

"We are disabled by attitudes and environments—not by physical differences."

—Cynthia Leibrock

I start every presentation talking about my brother, who has schizophrenia. With his permission, I'd like to tell you about his struggle. When he was diagnosed with the disease in his late teens/early 20s, he was faced with two choices—institutionalization or staying at home with my parents. He stayed with us for several years, until we were finally forced to put him in an institution.

It took this institution two years to stabilize my brother so that he could be brought back into the community.

After he returned to our home, he had another setback, and we were afraid he'd have to be institutionalized again. Only this time there was a halfway house in our neighborhood with house parents—a nice residential environment. Within two weeks, they stabilized him. Two weeks versus the years of suffering he went through in an institution. This was largely due to the difference in environment.

Designers have a lot of power. They can empower people to do what they want to do. We are not disabled as long as we can do what we want to do. We are disabled by attitudes and environments—not by physical differences.

Unfortunately, many still think that segregation by design is acceptable. In the 1960s, we thought it was okay to put people of one minority in one bathroom and everybody else in another bathroom.

In the 1990s, we think it's okay to put people using wheelchairs in one bathroom and everybody else in another bathroom. Or that it's okay to put people using chairs on a ramp, while the rest of us go in another entrance.

Barrier-free design is like a pair of eye glasses. It's an orthopedic device that lets you do what you want to do, but the eye glasses are very visible. Universal design is like contact lenses. They're invisible, yet they let you do what you want to do so that you are not segregated by a product.

Empowering Older People

Now I'd like to switch gears and talk about aging. What makes us deny that we're aging? Maybe

we're afraid that some of our freedom is going to be taken away from us, and that we're going to end up in a nursing home.

What if I told you that through design, we could guarantee that you would always be able to do what you want as you got older, and that you would never get institutionalized? Wouldn't that be wonderful? Here's a case in point.

At the Bergweg facility, in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, residents have the security of health care for life and the dignity of care in their own apartments. They will not be moved along the continuum of care from independent living to assisted living to skilled nursing.



Located next to the elevator in the Bergweg facility, this escalator from the street invites walk-in traffic and encourages community interaction with the residents.

Each Bergweg resident can live with their spouse, have their children stay overnight and develop friendships with their neighbors without the fear of being moved out of the neighborhood into a health care facility. This project has literally returned life to residents who were previously subsisting in "semi-private" rooms in nursing homes.

The complex consists of 180 lifetime apartments, each with two or three rooms totalling 660 to 740 square feet. The apartments are not only accessible to wheelchair users, they are accessible to people in hospital beds, as well. Even a bed-ridden resident can be bathed on a gurney in the privacy of his or her own bathroom.

The apartments are built over an ambulatory health care facility offering skilled nursing to 60 patients and assistance to an additional 60 in the apartments. No one lives in the health care facility,

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though many spend a portion of each day there receiving therapy and rehabilitation.

Each apartment overlooks a glass-roofed atrium. Surrounding the atrium is a 20,000-square-foot shopping mall, which invites walk-in traffic and community interaction with the residents.

In addition to serving 180 residents, this ambulatory facility offers daycare to 20 community residents and is staffed with occupational therapists, physical therapists, a full-time general practitioner, dentist and massage therapist. The entrance to the ambulatory health care facility is also on the street level, well away from the apartment entrance.

This same type of housing complex is now emerging in many countries in northern Europe. We really need to think about developing this type of facility in this country. This is just one example of design making a tremendous difference in the lives of so many people. We all went into this field thinking we could make a difference. I challenge you to make a contribution by integrating universal design in all of your work.

Cynthia Leibrock, principal founder of Easy Access, in Fort Collins, Colo., also teaches in the architectural department at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. She has written several publications, including: "Beautiful Barrier-Free: A Visual Guide to Accessibility," for which she was awarded the 1993 Pulsky Prize for literature; and "Beautiful Universal Design," currently on press.

"Health Care Design Detail," due out next year, encourages consumers to take responsibility for their own health care through design. Leibrock can be reached at 970.219.0212. 



Exterior overview of the Bergweg facility, located in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.



Floor plan of an apartment in Bergweg. The complex consists of 180 lifetime apartments.



At the Bergweg facility, residents have the security of health care for life and the dignity of care in their own apartments.

Telecom, from page 1

allowing any communications business to compete against each other in any market.

Section 255 of the act requires telecommunications service providers and equipment manufacturers to make their services and equipment accessible to people with disabilities, to the extent that it is readily achievable to do so. The final guidelines for Section 255, which were developed by the U.S. Access Board and the Federal Communication Commission, went into effect on March 5, 1998.

The guidelines specify that manufacturers develop a process for ensuring that accessibility and usability are considered in the early product design phases. To help manufacturers comply, the guidelines include functional criteria and an appendix with useful strategies for the incorporation of accessibility.

Section 508: Rehabilitation Act

Section 508 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It requires that electronic and information technology that is developed or used by the federal

government be accessible to people with disabilities. On Aug. 7, 1998, the Workforce Investment Act, which includes the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, was signed into law. The 1998 amendments significantly expand and strengthen the technology access requirements in Section 508. They will create binding, enforceable standards that will be incorporated into federal procurement regulations. The standards will make it easier for federal agencies to make their technology systems accessible.

The standards, which will be developed by the U.S. Access Board, are required by law to be issued by Feb. 7, 2000. The Access Board will define which electronic and information technology is covered by Section 508. It also will describe what is meant by "accessible technology" by setting forth the technical and functional performance criteria necessary to implement the accessibility requirements. To assist it in developing the standards, the Access Board has created an Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee (EITAAC).

The next issue of *Universal Design Newsletter* will address the status of the Section 508 standards, and the activities of the EITAAC. 

Buyers of Smoke Hoods and Masks: Beware

By Edwina Juillet

Not all escape smoke hoods are created equal, particularly when it comes to protecting persons with disabilities and others who are at higher risk in fire emergencies. This has prompted some fire and safety experts to call for standards on the design specifications and testing of personal respiratory protective escape devices.

In 1983, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) issued an alert with regard to the danger of certain devices that are purported to support safe escape through smoke and other products of fire. According to the NFPA, some devices do not provide adequate protection against the products of smoke and, in particular, carbon monoxide.

However, while some are cause for concern, others do perform well. One of these devices, EVAC-U8, was given the "Best New Product" award at the International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show in November 1997.

The EVAC-U8 emergency escape smoke hood reportedly provides more than 20 minutes of protection for users from carbon monoxide, toxic smoke and gas munitions.

What do these products look like? According to Mary Schiavo, former inspector general of the U.S. Department of Transportation, "Many manufacturers sell smoke hoods to the public for use at home, in high-rise offices or to take on the road. These can be found in travel and safety stores, and in mail-order catalogs. Some are small, canister models that look like a soda-can projecting from a plastic rain

bonnet; others look like the headgear on a haz-mat suit."

She added, "You must buy smoke hoods that protect against carbon monoxide. They cost \$50 and up. You must not open it until you need to use it. You can buy a practice hood for about \$15 to familiarize yourself with the gear."

The following are examples of products that are being marketed as personal emergency escape masks to persons with disabilities and others who are at higher risk in fire emergencies.

The following ad can be found on the Internet. According to Duram Rubber Products, maker of the emergency escape mask (also sold as Guard Mask):

"The DURAM MASK is an emergency evacuation mask you can carry in your pocket, designed to provide respiratory protection and reduce the health risks and mortality rates associated with inhalation

of toxic air. The DURAM MASK, a Personal Escape Mask, is designed as a protective device for self-rescue in case of a chemical incident. It offers protection against organic gases and vapors with a boiling point higher than 65C, certain inorganic gases and vapors, sulfur dioxide and other acidic gases and vapors, ammonia and ammonia derivatives."

In May 1995, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) challenged claims made by Duram Rubber Products. An FTC press release noted that, "FTC alleges that the company made false claims for the fire escape mask. A settlement between the two parties requires advertising, labeling disclosures and notifications to purchasers."

Also, in the following year, the FTC announced that, "Duram Rubber Products has agreed to notify prior purchasers that its DURAM MASK emergency escape mask does not filter out carbon monoxide, a lethal gas associated with fires."

Here is another case in point. A personal fire smoke escape hood called SMOKESHIELD, manufactured by Dowty Environmental & Safety Products in the United Kingdom, was taken off of the European market because it did not meet the requirements of the British and European Standard "BS EN 403: 1993 for Filtering Respiratory Protective Devices with Hood for Self-Rescue from Fire."

The product ad did include the following cautionary note: "The SMOKESHIELD hood is not designed to remove carbon monoxide." In addition, the ad noted, "For your information: This product may not be effective when used by young children, infants or people with breathing difficulties."

This device is now being manufactured by KAPTAIR Inc., and being sold in North America under the name EXITAIR. According to KAPTAIR:

"EXITAIR provides a better chance of survival during emergencies. Without protection, 80% of fire victims will die by toxic smoke this year. Our pocket smoke escaping hood, EXITAIR, is a mask for urgent evacuation, giving the person a chance to quickly leave the fire scene and, at the same time, to have the capacity to breathe and communicate freely. In addition to protecting the respiratory system, it also protects the hair, eyes and face from smoke, fire and sparks."

Some devices do not provide adequate protection against smoke and carbon monoxide.



The EVAC-U8 emergency smoke hood was named "Best New Product" at the International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show in 1997.



Web Spotlight: Accessible Home Plans

United Design Associates (UDA) is an Auburn, Ala.-based architectural firm that offers universally designed home packages. Its website, <http://www.uniteddesign.com>, offers a variety of resources, including a free copy of the "UDA Home Planning Guide," a 22-page booklet available for downloading.

UDA maintains an online library of 110 home design plans. The company also offers accessible home plan packages. They are located at: http://www.uniteddesign.com/accessible_plans.html. These home designs incorporate accessibility features such as ramps, handrails, blocking details, doors and windows, accessible cabinetry, roll-in showers, plumbing fixtures and alternative bathrooms. Home styles range from southern, colonial and heritage to one-story homes and weekend retreats. Ideas on building universal design into new homes at the outset also are included.

Japanese Magazine Explores Universal Design

The premier issue of the magazine, *Universal Design: For a 21st Century Culture of Welfare*, written in Japanese with some English translations, contains an article by the late Ron Mace regarding the application of universal design principles for older people. Considerable space is devoted to innovative hospital and nursing home designs, with experts citing the psychological effects of entering a nursing home and suggesting ways to ease the transition.

The magazine also contains the proceedings of a recent universal design conference in Tokyo. Presentations focus on the needs of Japan's aging population and the efforts of local governments to make improvements, including:

1. Cooperation between local governments, businesses and residents to devise viable solutions for Japan's aging population.
2. Creating a unified system of health services, medical care and welfare.
3. Future local government activities.

For more information, contact the Universal Design Consortium at GxK Co., Ltd., Mitsuboshi 3rd Bldg., 2-13-6, amotocho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 101-0032, Japan; phone: 011.03.5820.3321.

Kitchen and Bathroom Planning

"*Universal Kitchen and Bathroom Planning: Design that Adapts to People*" is a guide to help designers create spaces that meet the needs of clients at any stage of life. Written by Mary Jo Peterson, CKD, CBD, this publication was sponsored by the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA).

Organized in graphic standards type with charts, diagrams, floor plans, and English and metric measurements, designers are led through the process of creating universal kitchens and bathrooms, from start to finish. The seven appendices cover: applicable laws and standards; product sources and resources;

separate design checklists for universal kitchens and bathrooms; two case studies; and bathroom fixture transfer techniques.

The first two chapters discuss the history of universal design and space planning. The "40 Guidelines of Kitchen Planning," developed by the NKBA and universal design experts, are presented next.

The bathroom section covers NKBA guidelines, lavatories, bathtub/shower areas, toilets and bidets, bathroom fittings, controls and accessories, and bathroom storage. Special sections also are devoted to kitchen and bathroom safety, disabilities and functional limitations, guidance on disability etiquette, and tips on marketing universal design services.

For more information, call the NKBA at 800.843.6522; website: <http://www.nkba.org>; e-mail: educate@nkba.org.

Videos: Designing for Accessibility

The "*Designing for Accessibility*" video series explores the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design, Title III, 28 CFR, Part 36.

Available in tapes that include both non- and open-captioned versions, the videos were produced by the Center for Universal Design with a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research/U.S. Department of Education.

This nine-part series teaches designers how to plan entrances, exits, areas of rescue assistance, signage, elevators, communication devices and other building elements according to ADA standards.

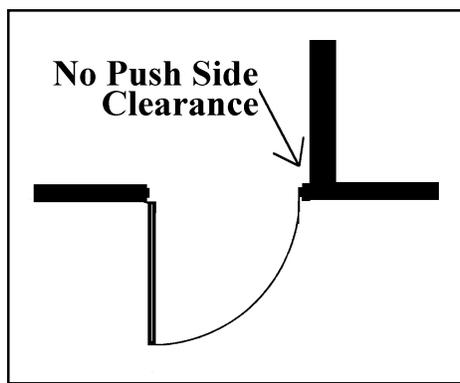
The videos cover the following topics.

1. "Overview and Scope" focuses on new construction, additions, alterations and historic preservation.
2. "Accessible Route & Protruding Objects" covers pedestrian circulation routes and differing floor surfaces.

Nine videos explore entrances, exits, areas of rescue assistance, signage, elevators, communication devices and other aspects according to ADA standards.

? **Problem:** How do you make a doorway with a closer and latch usable by a person who uses a wheelchair or other mobility assistance device when the door does not have the necessary push side clearance called for in accessibility standards that allows the person to get close enough to the latch to operate it and push the door open?

Tip: One method is to install an automatic operator on the door, so that there is no need for the push-side clearance. That solution, however, can be costly and complicated.



Another solution, when allowed by code, is to eliminate the closer or the latch. By eliminating the closer, there is no force requirement, and once a latch is operated, the door can easily be pushed open. By eliminating the latch, the door can be pushed open from any point on its surface. ■

Send Your TIP To:

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Proponents for standards on the design specifications and testing of personal respiratory protective escape devices note that, "North America has become the dumping ground for these devices."

Proponents add that Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and other countries have already established standards for these products. However, there are no such standards for these devices in either the United States or Canada. As a result, many of the personal respiratory protective escape devices that cannot meet the standards in other countries are now being distributed in North America.

So Where Do We Go From Here?

In 1995, the Standards Council of the NFPA decided to consider creating standards for this type of product. As a result, the Technical Committee on Air Purifying Personal Respiratory Protective Escape Devices was established.

Recently, the NFPA committee proposed a new document, titled, "*Standard on Respiratory Protective Escape Devices*." This document will be brought before the NFPA membership in May, at the Spring Association Technical Meeting in Baltimore, Md. *Universal Design Newsletter* will provide you with an update on the outcome of that meeting in its July 1999 issue.

Edwina Juillet, a consultant on fire/life safety for persons with disabilities, is the co-founder of the National Task Force on Fire/Life Safety for People with Disabilities. She has served on several national committees, including the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Committee on Safety to Life (LSC101), Means of Egress (Chapter 5); and as chair for the Board and Care Facilities (Chapter 22 & 23). Juillet can be reached at: edwina@shentel.net. ■

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3. "Human Factors" looks at space allowances and reach ranges, storage, controls, teller machines and dressing rooms.
4. "Accessible Parking and Curb Ramps" explores parking considerations for cars and vans, loading zones and curb ramps.
5. "Vertical Circulation" looks at ramps, stairs, elevators, and lifts within and outside of buildings.
6. "Accessible Doors and Entrances" focuses on doors, entrances, exits and areas of rescue assistance.
7. "Plumbing" explores drinking fountains, toilets, sinks, bathtubs, showers, and related elements and spaces.
8. "Communications" covers alarms, detectable warnings, signage, telephones and listening systems.
9. "Seating and Assembly Areas" looks at fixed or built-in seating and tables, and assembly areas.

For more information, contact the Center for Universal Design, School of Design, North Carolina State University, Box 8613, Raleigh, NC 27695-8613; phone: 800.647.6777. Please note that videos 1,3,7 and 9 have not yet been completed, and have a target release date of August 1999. ■

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Newsletter provides
a one-year free
subscription for any
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PRODUCTS

Fashion Finger Splints



The Silver Ring Splint Company of Charlottesville, Va., is offering custom-fit finger splints for people with chronic hand, finger and joint problems due to rheumatoid arthritis, cerebral palsy and other debilitating conditions.

Patented and listed with the Food and Drug Administration as medical devices, the splints were invented by an occupational therapist with arthritis. The splints look like expensive jewelry and reportedly help to improve hand function, stabilize and align a joint, decrease pain and swelling in a joint, rest a joint and normalize the appearance of the hand.

Universal Kitchen Cabinets



KraftMaid Cabinetry's Passport Series offers universally designed kitchen cabinetry that can be used by people of all ages and abilities.

Common features include: lowered wall cabinets and countertops of 36 and 34 inches; a pullout table; a

raised dishwasher cabinet; a low-voltage light kit and acrylic shelving for increased visibility; roll-out shelving and roll-out pantry; cabinet doors that swing 180 degrees for increased mobility; and cabinets specially designed for easy storage.

Accessible Tubs/Showers

Aqua Glass specializes in baths and showers designed for people with disabilities.

Its accessible designs include low or roll-in thresholds, textured floors for safer footing, molded-in or fold-down transfer seats, and optional dome lights and grab bars.

Designed for home or commercial use, many units have either below-floor rough-in or built-up floor applications to allow easy wheelchair access.

The units all include new Microban antibacterial protection that reportedly inhibits the growth of bacteria, mold and mildew.

Options include control valves, to guard against fluctuations in water pressure and temperature, and hand-held shower fixtures. All controls, shelves and bars are positioned for easy access by standing or sitting bathers.



Silver Ring Splint Company

(Fashion Finger Splints)
P.O. Box 2856
Charlottesville, VA
22902-2856
Phone: 800.311.7028/
800.971.4052
cindy@silverringsplint.com

KraftMaid Cabinetry Inc.

(Universal Kitchen Cabinets)
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Suite 239
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Phone: 800.571.1990/
440.632.5333
www.kraftmaid.com

Aqua Glass Corp.

(Accessible Tubs and Showers)
P.O. Box 412
Industrial Park
Adamsville, TN 38310
Phone: 901.632.0911/
800.238.3940
www.aquaglass.com

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Accessibility of Pedestrian Signals

Accessibility to pedestrian signals may soon be addressed in the new edition of the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices," published by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) for traffic engineers. The manual covers intersection design issues, pavement markings, signage and other traffic control issues.

In January, the NCUTCD Signals Technical Committee approved standards based on a U.S. Access Board report titled, "Accessible Pedestrian Signals." The report lists the current technology that's available in accessible pedestrian signals, such as audible, vibrotactile and transmission devices. It also includes orientation and mobility techniques used by pedestrians with vision impairments.

The committee plans to take final action on the proposed standards at NCUTCD's annual meeting in late June. For more information, contact the Access Board at 800.872.2253 (voice); 800.993.2822 (TTY); or www.access-board.gov.

COPOLCO Group Goes Universal

The Consumer Policy Committee of the International Organization for Standardization (COPOLCO) has established a working group to develop an ISO/IEC document on designing products and environments for elderly people and people with disabilities. Among other things, this document will promote universal design; that is, products and environments designed so that elderly people and people with disabilities can easily use them.

The working group held its first meeting in October 1998 in Tokyo, Japan. At that meeting, the group defined its mission, discussed current standardization activities in their respective countries, and explored the framework and contents of the ISO/IEC document.

Some 72 countries comprise COPOLCO. U.S. participation is through the ANSI Consumer Interest Council. The next meeting will be held May 10-12 in Washington, D.C. The theme will be "Meeting the Needs of Aging Populations: Enhancing the Quality of Life Through Standards." For more information, contact Jim McCabe at: jmccabe@ansi.org.

Housing Design, from page 1

The North Carolina housing award program recognizes projects that can be sold to or lived in by people of all ages and abilities.



The base cabinet doors in this bathroom lavatory fold away when needed (winner, Mary Lou Jurkowsky).

ample storage in base cabinets and soffits. It has a curbless shower with an adjustable height, a hand-held shower and a bench. The renovation also includes a roll-in closet with multiple height elements for storage.

the base cabinetry. This home is one of the few vacation homes on the East Coast with truly universal features.

3. The third award winner, David Tyson, of Charlotte, N.C., was selected from the Outstanding Design in Remodeling category.

This attractive, small-scale bathroom and storage renovation works for users who may be seated or standing. It features two sink heights, and



This dual-height vanity accommodates people who sit or stand (winner, David Tyson).



This bathroom features a curbless shower and fold-up seat (winner, David Tyson).

The criteria for selection as an award winner included design excellence, marketability and universal design features. Examples of universal design features include:

- √ One or more level entrances.
- √ Minimum 2-foot, 10-inch-wide doorways.
- √ Level interior thresholds.
- √ Maximum 48-inch-high light switches.
- √ Minimum 18-inch-high electrical outlets.
- √ Lever door and faucet hardware.
- √ Blocking in bathrooms for grab bars.
- √ Multiple work surface heights in kitchens.

- √ Easy-access cabinetry with easy-to-use hardware.
- √ Open floor plan design.
- √ A bedroom/bathroom on an accessible level.
- √ Easy touch or hands-free controls.
- √ Variable lighting design emphasizing stairs, entrances and task areas.

About the Awards Program

The Excellence in Universal Housing Design Award is sponsored by the North Carolina Governor's Advocacy Council for Persons with Disabilities (a disability civil rights protection agency) and the Center for Universal Design (a national research/information center at North Carolina State University).

The program recognizes builders, architects, remodelers or developers who have demonstrated effective use of universal design features in housing. Projects can be single- or multi-family dwellings that do not target specific populations or incorporate services as a necessary part of residency.

"This award program is designed to recognize projects that can be sold to or lived in by people of all ages and abilities," says Richard Duncan, awards program coordinator.

He added, "Part of our overall mission to promote universal design is achieved by increasing the visibility of successful design projects. Awards programs are one way to get this information to the general public that may not yet understand the differences between accessible and universal design, and to reinforce universal design within the entire housing industry."

The success of the North Carolina awards program has attracted national interest. This year, *Enable Magazine*, the Center for Universal Design and Lifespan (from Miles Homes International) sponsored a national call for universal design home plans. Judging took place in August 1998 and the winning plans will be published in an upcoming issue of *Enable Magazine*. In addition, the best designs will be selected for an upcoming book on universal design home plans.

"We are pleased with the progress of our awards program," notes Duncan. "Even though it takes time to get the ball rolling, the increased number of entries each year and the improved quality of entries indicates a greater acceptance by the public for universal design. We expect the program to grow and look forward to collaborating with other design award programs to extend this idea nationally."

For more information about the Excellence in Universal Housing Design Award program, contact the Center for Universal Design at: 800.647.6777 (tty) or at: www.design.ncsu.edu/cud. 



Printed on recycled paper with vegetable inks.

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be submitted to the editor two months before the publication date.

Universal Design Newsletter
6 Grant Avenue
Takoma Park, MD
20912

April-May 1999: The National Employment Law Institute will conduct a series of seminars around the country discussing the status of accessibility and employment issues surrounding implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The locations and dates of these seminars are: San Francisco, April 8-10; Chicago, April 15-17; and Washington, D.C., April 22-24. For more information, contact NELI at 415.924.8844.

April 21-23, 1999: The Passenger Vessel Access Advisory Committee will meet next in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Paul Beatty at the U.S. Access Board: 202.272.5434, ext. 19 (voice); 202.272.5449 (TTY); e-mail: pvaac@access-board.gov.

May 10-12, 1999: The ADA Project will sponsor a symposium. Held in Kansas City, it is designed for ADA coordinators of state offices, schools/colleges, agencies, counties and cities and attorneys, architects, human resource managers, facility managers and building inspectors to provide federal, state and local perspectives on the ADA. For more information, call 800.949.4232/adalh@showme.missouri.edu.

July 12-16, 1999: Vision '99, International Conference on Low Vision will be held in New York City. Sponsored by the Lighthouse Intl., it will showcase rehabilitation and design solutions for people with low or no vision. For more information, contact the Lighthouse at 212.821.9482 or via e-mail at: vision99@lighthouse.org.

July 27-28, 1999: The Universal Design Conference, to be held in Perth, Australia, is primarily being sponsored by the Disability Services

Commission, as well as the Design Institute of Australia (WA Chapter) and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (WA Chapter). The Universal Design Conference will focus on retail design and include a design competition. John Salmen, AIA, of Universal Designers & Consultants Inc., will present the keynote address. For more information about this event, please contact Pip Daly-Smith at pip.dalysmith@dsc.wa.gov.au.

Aug. 9-10, 1999: The Trace Center will present a training course on the universal design of telecommunications products. Funding for this course is primarily from the RERC on Universal Telecommunications Access (funded by NIDRR), but it is also being evaluated in the context of the Universal Design Research Project. For more information, go to: www.tracecenter.org/tuder/.

Sept. 5-8, 1999: The Fourth Global Conference of the International Federation on Ageing will be held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The event will feature a Universal Design track with plenary and workshop sessions. John Salmen, AIA, of Universal Designers & Consultants Inc., will present the keynote address on Examples of Universal Design Excellence. For more information, contact IFA at 514.287.1070; e-mail: ageingconf@jpd.com.

June 14-18, 2000: Designing for the 21st Century II, an International Conference on Universal Design. This event, which will be held in Providence, R.I., is sponsored by Adaptive Environments Center, and the Center for Universal Design. Keep checking www.adaptenv.org/21century/ for announcements and for the call for proposals. For more information about this event, contact: mdilorenzo@adeptenv.org.



Address Correction Requested