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ADA Enforcement Dubuque-Style *City Works with Businesses on Compliance*

An historic city on the Mississippi has fashioned its own Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) enforcement initiative in an effort to enhance accessibility in the municipality's businesses and public facilities.

The City of Dubuque, IA began building its ADA enforcement

program in 2006 after the city's Human Rights Commission reported to the city council that its attempts to educate local businesses about the barrier removal requirements of the ADA were not resulting in changes to facilities. A part-time ADA inspector was hired and an inspection program was developed, based on one in Joilet, IL. The program lists 21 items that are considered "readily achievable." The program

has three tiers. Businesses are given one year to comply with the items listed at each level.

See *City Accessibility*, page 6



Photo Credit: City of Dubuque, IA

The historic city of Dubuque was built on seven hills. This ramp helps to address the many level changes in the business district.

CONTENTS

1	ADA Enforcement Dubuque-Style	
1	Federal Agency Calls for Single Design Standard for FHA Housing	
2	Defining the Spectrum of Universal Design	
2	Where Are They Now?: Todd Andersen	
4	Scott Rains: Focused on Making Inroads	
6	Proudly Accessible Dubuque	
	Reg/Leg Watch.....	3
	WorldUpdate.....	5
	New Products.....	9
	Aha! Moments.....	10
	Design Tip.....	10
	New Media.....	11
	Calendar.....	12

Federal Agency Calls for Single Design Standard for FHA Housing

The US needs a single design standard for new construction under the Fair Housing Act that is in sync with other federal accessibility standards and model building codes, according to a National Council on Disability (NCD) report on the state of housing in the US released in January.

NCD, an independent federal agency, called on the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to convene a working group of design and construction professionals and people with disabilities, to explore the feasibility of developing a single design standard for new construction under the Fair Housing Act that would be harmonized with all other federal accessibility guidelines (Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, the Architectural Barriers Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act) and model building codes, to help eliminate conflicts with other federal standards and minimize differences with state and

See *NCD Report*, page 9

by John P. S. Salmen



Defining the Spectrum of Universal Design

The more I think and talk with others about Universal Design, the more I understand that it is different for different people, in different times and in different places. Yet there is something about it that is the same throughout -- empowerment of the human spirit. The shaping of our environments in ways that enable people to do what they choose.

One of the many intense discussions in our office recently turned to the question of whether or not Visitability can be considered a form of Universal Design in a residential setting. One camp maintained that it isn't Universal Design if it isn't "livable."

The other camp (and in the interest of full disclosure, my camp) said that Visitability is at one end of a spectrum of residential Universal Design. That spectrum ranges from Visitable to "livable" and beyond to "empowering." Visitable is the lower limit, but the other end of the spectrum is beyond the horizon. Who knows what we might be able to do to design a more usable world for more people?

Both camps quickly realized that the issue was one of determining the starting point, or lowest common denominator of residential UD.

The newest version of the ICC/ANSI A117.1 (2010) Standard for Accessible

and Usable Buildings and Facilities (expected out this year) is going to include a new section defining Visitable (Type C) housing. Coupled with Types A and B, the new Type C housing establishes the lower end of a range of accessibility that starts with the least restrictive requirements -- Visitability. Type B is a code language version of the more restrictive Fair Housing compliance requirements. Type A is fully accessible ("livable") residential units.

Similarly, the spectrum of Universal Design can be thought of to start with spaces that allow minimal access (sometimes with assistance), progress to spaces that allow independent living, and extend beyond accessibility to create spaces, systems and technologies that empower.

As an example, a Visitable unit would have accessible routes from the outside to a living area and toilet room, while a "livable" unit would be Visitable plus have accessible routes to an empowering kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. Empowering spaces and elements give residents choices in how they use the space and can evolve over time as technology and needs change.

To address the needs of different people, times and places, Visitability should be regarded as representing merely one end of the spectrum of Universal Design.

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Where Are They Now? Todd Andersen

Welcome to the continuing column, "Where Are They Now?"... where we gain perspective from people who have been involved in accessibility, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Universal Design. For this issue, we talked to former Department of Justice (DOJ) official Todd Andersen, who has been working as a consultant since retiring from the federal government 12 years ago.

Todd Andersen

You may wish to drop me from your article as I never drank the "Universal Design" Kool-aid. I believe great design is idiosyncratic, and that optimal design is an example of marketing of substance. A McLaren F1 sports car [which set the record in 1998 for the fastest production car in the world at 240 mph] is good design. A minivan or SUV is [not good] design. Good design does one thing as well as possible, and makes no attempt

Comment Clock is Running on Information Technology Standards

The public has until June 21, 2010, to comment on the draft standards for electronic and information technology in the federal sector covered by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. The draft was released March 17 by the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board).

Marking a departure from previous rule-making, the Access Board has made known its intention to include criteria for certain interactive transaction machines (ITMs), such as point-of-sales (POS) machines and self-service kiosks.

“The new criteria (POS) will have a far reaching impact,” says John P. S. Salmen, AIA, President of Universal Designers & Consultants Inc. “Any retail establishment with a credit card machine is going to be effected by these new standards and guidelines.” POS devices were not mentioned in the 1991 ADAAG and are specifically exempted from the 2004 ADAAG.

The draft features a new structure and format that combines the 508 standards and Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act guidelines into a single document referred to as the “Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards and Guidelines.”

According to the Access Board, requirements have been reorganized by functionality instead of product type, since many devices now feature an array of capabilities and applications. These standards affect telephones and cell phones and other telecommunication products, computer hardware and software, websites, media players, electronic documents, and PDAs, among others. Access is addressed for various disabilities, including those that are sensory, physical, or speech-related.

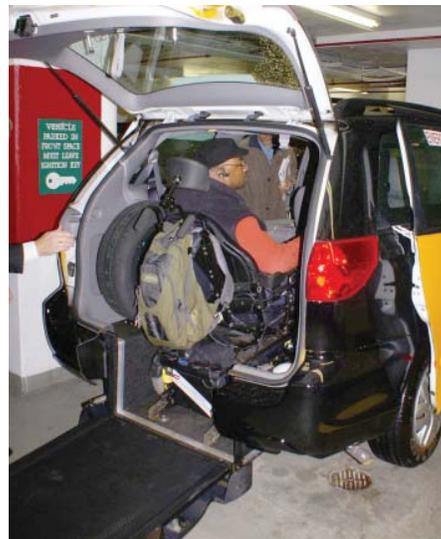
The draft rule and published notice are available at www.access-board.gov/508.htm. To view and submit comments, visit www.regulations.gov. For further information, contact Tim Creagan at creagan@access-board.gov, 202.272.0016 (v), or 202.272.0082 (tty).

Accessible Cabs in DC

In January, five accessible taxi cabs began operating in Washington, DC, with an additional 15 expected to be on the road by the end of April. The cabs are part of a two-year pilot program funded by the National Capital Transportation Planning Board (TPB). The TPB will be collecting input on customer satisfaction once all 20 vehicles are fully tested and operational.

The cabs, modified Toyota Sienna Minivans, provide wheelchair access via rear entry ramps and are available through the Royal Cab and Yellow Cab companies in Washington. According to Beth Newman of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, people using power wheelchairs, manual wheelchairs and scooters have

been provided accessible taxi service during the testing phase. The cabs are available to provide taxi service to anyone in Washington who needs a cab, but



Cabs provide wheelchair access via rear entry ramps.

passengers needing the wheelchair-accessible service are given first priority. The expected wait time is 30 minutes, but actual data is still being collected. Standard cab fare rates apply.

Captioning on YouTube

YouTube will offer automatically generated captions for its entire video catalogue, a boon for deaf users and those who want to watch videos in other languages. At a press conference, Google software engineer Ken Harrenstein demonstrated the feature and went through the reasons Google invested in the product -- from expanding accessibility to crossing language barriers to improving

See **Reg/Leg Watch**, page 8

The cabs are part of a two-year pilot program funded by the National Capital Transportation Planning Board (TPB).

Scott Rains: Focused on Making Inroads

Building the Case for Inclusive Tourism

by Lindsey Scherloun

Scott Rains is everywhere. From conferences in Indonesia, Mozambique and Brazil, networks touching every corner of the world, to scores of internet appearances, his advocacy of Inclusive Tourism seems to have no boundaries. After writing a list of things he'd done in 2009 for the editor of New Mobility magazine, Rains was surprised. "Even I was impressed," he chuckled bashfully. When New Mobility saw it, they were impressed too, and had enough hard evidence to name him 2009 Person of the Year.

An incredible connector, he said, "My role is to link people together, articulate problems and keep focus on tourism and the semi-parallel infrastructure you build for tourists." In 2004 Rains began the Rolling Rains Report, a prolific blog, receiving up to 300 hits a day, which provides an excellent venue to display the wealth of information collected through conferences, organizations for which he writes and speaks, and global networks of people in the field. As impressive is Tour Watch, an online "incubator" of experts and professionals in Inclusive Tourism. "By founding and maintaining Tour Watch, Scott Rains

beyond the idea of "accessible tourism," which went little past the 32" door. His was a vision which included the Seven Principles of Universal Design, and incorporated people from those with disabilities to hospitality workers into the full experience of travel.

He began under the radar, building resources with disability travel agents and writers. Slowly his notoriety increased; he defined Universal Design to the tourism world and started brainstorming words to describe what he was looking for. He saw that achieving change in tourism, with its diversity of players, pre-established systems, and global mentalities, required clear communication of well defined concepts. Mindsets vary in different parts of the world, Rains noted. Japan's impetus for change stems from an awareness that its population is aging, whereas South Americans have a real heart for people with disabilities, he said, and a more Marxist focus of inclusion of all citizens. So Rains came up with "Inclusive Tourism," "the systematic application of Universal Design by the travel and hospitality industry at every stage of a product, service, or policy life cycle."

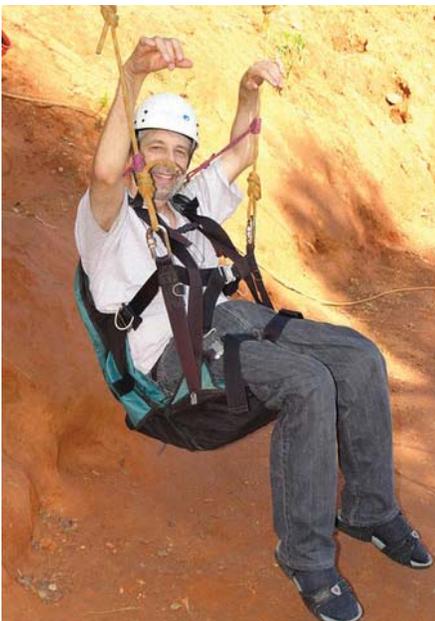
Because of tourism's ties to national incomes, Rains' involvement with tourism reached into international development, advocating consideration of people with disabilities in economic policies. He worked on rebuilding Indonesia after the tsunami and New Orleans after Katrina, pointing out that developing regions have the advantage of little pre-established infrastructure, allowing policies and projects to begin with a mindfulness to Universal Design.

Attending the 2010 Global Partnership for Disability and Development conference in Mozambique, he reflected on a report by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). His hope is that "UNWTO will come to explicitly champion Inclusive Tourism knowing disability is a cross-cutting issue that is both cause and effect of poverty." Funded by the World Bank, this gathering saw representatives from 18 countries, and organizations such as Handicap International, and discussed the interrelationship of development and tourism. By the end of the conference, Rains had some new projects to add to his schedule:

See **Scott Rains**, page 11

"My role is to link people together very quickly, articulate problems and keep focus on tourism and the semi-parallel infrastructure you build for tourists."

Scott Rains



Rains tries out the ultralite seating designed for adventurous touring people with quadraplegia on this zipline in Socorro, Brazil.

has provided fora for those around the world dedicated to tourism for people with disabilities. His expertise, drive, reach and dedication are unparalleled," said Sandra Rhodda of Tai Poutini Polytechnic.

It all started with a conversation. Rains and his wife were talking about transitions into retirement. Already a traveler, writer and researcher, he realized he could take advantage of what he knew about accessibility from his own disability, and through tourism, make it internationally relevant. Although there was some discussion of accessibility in the hospitality industry, the scene was embryonic. Tourism needed a reconceptualization

SWEDEN

A Chair for All

A stylish ergonomic chair designed by end users and experts was introduced in February at the Furniture Fair in Stockholm, Sweden, and shortly after that recognized with a Red Dot Award. The Red Dot is an internationally recognized quality label for excellent design. It is not surprising that this unique chair was developed through an innovative process involving user input, the basis of Universal Design.

“The i-SIT chair was very well received and attracted much attention at the Stockholm Furniture Fair,” said project partner Karen Bendixen of Bexcom. “Several confirmed the project assumption that there is a need for an aesthetic and functional chair for the ‘new elderly’ and everybody. The audience found that the chair has a ‘fascinating idiom’ that it ‘gives comfort and flexibility’, ‘best combination of comfort and a modern design,’ while giving a sense of private space.”

While a piece of marketable furniture that can meet the needs of many users is the tangible end product, the focus of the project is to create and test a multiple disciplinary process that is systematic and user-driven.

Input for the chair was provided by end users with special needs, i.e. people with back problems, weak wrists and arthritis. The idea was to make the chair useable by people regardless of age, size and physical ability. Several user surveys were conducted including two in-depth examinations of users needs. The project partners include a furniture manufacturer (Magnus Olesen A/S), a textile manufacturer (Gabriel), two government funded trade research organizations (Centre of Development for Furniture and Wood and the Knowledge Centre for Smart Textiles), a design-for-all expert/communications company (Bexcom) and a design company (Design Concern).

The i-SIT chair is a shell chair, which can be upholstered to fit the user’s style. The user can adjust the back of the chair to a reclining position by means of a control knob built into the armrests. According to the project organizers, the knob can be operated with hands, arms or elbow, if the user has problems with pains or mobility in hands or arms.

The chair height was designed to make it easy

to get up from the chair. The back of the chair follows naturally the rotation point of the hip joint when the user leans back. A loin pillow is integrated, and it gives extra support and the broad seat makes it easy to move around in the chair and get comfortable.

According to Bendixen, the chair’s “earflaps” work as a kind of silencer. Several of the fair’s visitors found the “hollow feeling” provided by the design comfortable. The next step is to have the user panel test the chair one more time. “There is a need for us to work further with especially the control button, so we meet the users’ wishes and requirements for activating the control button in various ways such as being able to use the whole hand.” For more information, visit www.i-sit.dk



Two i-SIT chairs at the Stockholm Furniture Fair

AUSTRALIA

Western Australian Accessible Tourism Pays Off

Five years ago Western Australia decided to get serious about competing for tourism dollars on the national and international levels. Business and government leaders there developed a Strategic Directions Plan to identify ways to expand tourism options for people of all ages and abilities and increase the customer base for tourism operators.

Tourism Western Australia and the Disability Services Commission began to educate tour operators about the importance of a universal design approach to tourism.

See **World Update**, page 8

“World Update” is compiled by Elaine Ostroff, Hon. AIA, founding director of the Institute for Human Centered Design, and Denise Hofstedt, Editor of UDN. If you have information about international universal design efforts that you would like to have published in Universal Design Newsletter, write to us at: 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912; or contact publisher@universaldesign.com

City Accessibility, from page 1

The tiers are described as follows:

Tier 1 - parking, exterior access, and entrances into the facility.

Tier 2 - restrooms, drinking fountains, telephones, counter heights, width of aisles, emergency access, and seating.

Tier 3 - elevators/chair lifts and restrooms regardless of public availability.

After the initial inspection, a business is provided with a letter detailing any deficiencies. There is an appeal process if the business owner disagrees with what is identified as “readily achievable.”

“Our Readily Achievable inspections are geared to improve accessibility and not put any of the shops out of business,” says Gary Blosch, the city’s ADA Inspector. “I have to say that there are many people out there who do not know what the ADA is. Having said this, the real gist of the matter is the

definition of ‘Readily Achievable.’ As defined by the ADA it means easily accomplished and carried out without much difficulty or expense.



Photo Credit: City of Dubuque, IA

Store fronts feature step/ramp combinations.

This is why the program is over a three-year period to give the small business owners a chance

See **City Accessibility**, page 7

“I have to say that there are many people out there that do not know what the ADA is....”

Gary Blosch

Proudly Accessible Dubuque

Building on the idea that accessibility is good for business, a non-profit group has been formed in Dubuque, IA to educate businesses about and help them promote their accessibility.

Proudly Accessible Dubuque is an independent organization that has partnered with local business groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to assist businesses in enhancing their accessibility. It has created criteria so that businesses can receive recognition for their accessibility through a “Proudly Accessible Dubuque” designation.

Businesses that achieve the designation are: encouraged to use Proudly Accessible Dubuque logo in their advertising; listed on the organization’s and the Chamber of Commerce website; provided window stickers; and listed in the annual visitors’ guide. Dubuque, with a population of 60,000, attracts 1.5 million tourists a year.

Not content to just “talk the talk,” Proudly Accessible Dubuque also directs eligible businesses to pursue federal tax credits and deduc-

tions for their accessibility improvements. In addition, it provides information on access to Proudly Accessible Dubuque Community Loans. The five-year loans, available at a rate of 6%, are to help businesses make ADA improvements such as alterations to restrooms and parking lots; entrance widening; installation of power door openers; and safety considerations. The maximum loan amount is \$10,000.

One of the more effective teaching tools employed by the organization is a video on the group’s website, which features local businesses have made accessibility improvements.

According to Katrina Wilberding, Executive Director of Proudly Accessible Dubuque, nearly 119 businesses have signed on to the program, with approximately 20 more coming aboard every month. “We want to show businesses that there are reasonable and cost effective things they can do to make things [accessible].”

For more information, visit: www.proudlyaccessibledubuque.com



Proudly Accessible Dubuque logo

City Accessibility, from page 6

to make the maximum changes possible and not break the bank doing so.”

Blosch has found the business owners hesitant, but cooperative. “My usual mode of doing an inspection is to call ahead and set up a time to do the inspection,” he says. “When I arrive I usually get the impression that the owner is nervous about the inspection and is worried about the process. I usually can calm their nerves while the inspection moves forward. The owners are amazed that the fixes for their building are so simple. We have had a very good response from our business owners here in Dubuque. They know that they need to get as many people into their businesses as possible -- that means dollars in their pockets.”

Inspections are conducted using a prioritized list developed by the city’s Building Services Department. Medical facilities are the top priority, followed by dental care facilities, chiropractic

care facilities, grocery stores/bakeries, financial institutions, hotels, gas stations and convenience stores, fast food restaurants, sit down restaurants, public parking/parking ramps, shopping centers, theaters/places of exhibition or entertainment, and “anywhere that is open to the general public for their use.”

If there is a complaint against a business, that business will be inspected immediately, according to Blosch.

Approximately 350 businesses have been inspected, representing about 25% of the total businesses in the city.

“The City of Dubuque, Iowa, is a beautiful city on the Mississippi River. It’s a family-oriented city with majestic bluffs, great parks and historical points of interest. We are working very hard to make this an accessible city and friendly for all of our citizens and visitors. We are just getting a good start with the best to come,” says Blosch. 



“...We are working very hard to make this an accessible city and friendly for all of our citizens and visitors.”

Gary Blosch,
ADA Inspector
City of Dubuque

Where Are They Now, from page 2

to serve other goals. Universal Design does a number of things poorly, and does nothing as well as possible. For example the minivan does not go fast nor quickly, does not stop well, does not handle well, does not carry significant loads of persons or material for its weight nor on the basis of cost per mile.

I say these things out of regard for John, as I would not wish him to feel ambushed by learning after the article appears in print that I don’t support some of his ideas.

If you wish to proceed with the article: I left DOJ in late 1998 after realizing that the advancement of accessibility in the built environment

was not well served by being administered by attorneys. By their training and the tenants of the their Canon of Ethics they are geared to value process over results. In the worlds of design and construction the timetable or delivery date is all important. If the job is running late you find ways of deleting tasks or adding workers rather than let the school not be ready for the first day of the new semester. Conversely, lawyers will let the schedule stretch as required rather than let an “i” not be dotted, nor a “t” not be crossed.

In 1998 I joined Rolf Jensen Associates (www.rjagroup.com) as a Building Code consultant reprising my role from my prior company Eisenberg Andersen and Spinetto of Boston. From my location in northern Virginia, I ran an accessibility consulting boutique consultancy serving projects throughout the US. In July 2009 I semi-retired to continue my consultancy on a reduced basis. 

Todd Andersen
Fairfax, VA

UNIVERSAL
Accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act

DESIGN

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The editor welcomes reader reaction and suggestions for people to highlight in this column. If you would like to see someone featured here, contact UDN at publisher@UniversalDesign.com

World Update, from page 4

They suggested that tourism operators:

- Ensure staff can meet any specific access requirements of their customers with disabilities;
- Create attractive buildings and facilities that can accommodate customers with a range of physical and sensory abilities; and
- Provide accurate information about the accessibility of their services to potential customers of all ages and abilities.

“The key to tapping into this expanding customer base is to provide mainstream services that are attractive and accessible to all,” according to the report.

The efforts have paid off by attracting business and leisure travelers. According to the Strategic Directions Plan for Western Australia, the initiative led to 18 national or international disability-related conferences being confirmed for Western Australia, translating to 10,385 delegates coming to the state with an expected expenditure of nearly \$20 million over three years.

For more information, visit: www.tourism.wa.gov.au/About_Tourism_Western_Australia/Access_for_All/Documents/Access%20All%20Areas%20doc.pdf

...each building is someone's home, not just a place to deliver services and buildings must be "future-proofed" so that residents know they can remain in their homes as their needs change.

UNITED KINGDOM Homes for Older People

Older people in the United Kingdom want homes that give them independence, choice and the ability to maintain their friendships and family contacts. They do not see their homes simply as a place where they receive health care or social services, according to a Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) report.

The report, “Homes for Our Old Age: Independent Living by Design,” features 10 case studies of housing schemes which show how the range and design of housing can allow older people to have more independence, a better range of choices and the ability to maintain friendships and community networks.

Among the lessons learned, according to the report, are that each building is someone's home, not just a place to deliver services and buildings must be “future-proofed” so that residents know they can remain in their homes as their needs change.

CABE is a government supported organization that promotes the quality of life through design. The report (.pdf format) is at: www.cabe.org.uk/files/homes-for-our-old-age.pdf 

Reg/Leg Watch, from page 3

search. YouTube users can see available captions by clicking on a button in the lower right-hand part of the video player. They can also choose to see captions in a different language from the language of the video. Harrenstein, who is deaf and gave his presentation in sign language, said he has been working on the product for the past five years.

UD in the African American Community

A push to promote Universal Design (UD) in the African American community is being fueled by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA Center) at the University of Buffalo received a 2009 NEA Leadership Award that will fund the enhancement of UD curricula at seven historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). It will support a speaker exchange

program and an assessment of the inclusiveness of HBCUs. The focus of the efforts will be to enhance the public awareness of the importance of UD in African American communities. African American communities have the highest disability rates in the country.

The IDeA Center has already launched its 18-month initiative and held its first Advisory Committee meeting last November. The plans developed from that meeting include development of a new architectural curriculum emphasizing UD at North Carolina A&T, smaller curriculum development projects at other schools, a national UD student competition through the National Organization of Minority Architects, a design and diversity conference through the American Institute of Architects, and a publication and traveling exhibition on UD. 

Hands Free Door Opener

A door opener that activates with the wave of a hand has been introduced by Nabco Entrances. Acuwave, a touchless sensor, is useful in high traffic pedestrian areas where the chance of unnecessary door activation is high. The manufacturer suggests installation of the system for restrooms, clean rooms, and operating rooms.



Above: Infrared light aimed at the Wave Hand sticker. When activated it expands coverage (below).

The Acuwave sensor is mounted above the door and aims an infrared beam down to a hand height sensor, “Wave Hand” sticker. In stand-by mode, the detection pattern is reduced to a small area in front of the sticker to prevent unnecessary door activation. When a person waves his or her hand in front of the “Wave Hand” sticker, the door opens and the detection area increases to cover a larger rectangular area in front of the door and reverses door closing action if another pedestrian enters the detection area.



Grab Bar/Shelf

A line of grab bars has been introduced that do not look like grab bars. The Invisia™ Col-

lection from HealthCraft includes bathroom accessories that are grab bars hidden in plain sight. The professional grade products blend into the design of a bathroom. The Corner Shelf has an integrated support rail. The Corian® shelf can be removed for easy cleaning. The Toilet Roll Holder provides a support rail and storage for extra toilet paper rolls. There is also a circular functional rail that serves as a soap dish.



Corner shelf

The product line also includes a ring that can be placed around the faucet and a teak and stainless steel shower seat. Each unit provides a 350 lb. weight capacity. There is a choice of two finishes.

Pull Out Cookware Organizer

Rev-a-Shelf has a new 21” two-tier cookware organizer. The shelves are door mounted and operate independently. The top tier hold up to 12 lids and the dividers are adjustable.



Cookware organizer

The unit is made of heavy duty chrome plated wire frame and can hold 100 lbs. fully extended.

Smoker/Grill/Oven

Viking Industries has introduced a portable gravity feed charcoal smoker that is front loading with a total overall height of 46” and 26 ½” deep.



Smoker

The unit features removable, heavy-duty cooking racks that create a flexible cooking area with maximum capacity.

The smoker has precise temperature controls and can perform a variety of cooking functions from ribs to deserts. The unit features removable, heavy-duty cooking racks that create a flexible cooking area with maximum capacity.

Nabco Entrances Inc.
(Door Opener)
S82W18717 Gemini Dr.
Muskego, WI 53150
www.nabcoentrances.com

HealthCraft Products Inc
(Bath Accessories)
2790 Fenton Road
Ottawa, Ontario,
CANADA K1T 3T7
www.healthcraftproducts.com

info@healthcraftproducts.com
888.619.9992
613.822.1885
613.822.1886 (fax)

Rev-A-Shelf
(Cookware Organizer)
2409 Plantside Dr.
Jeffersontown, KY 40299
www.rev-a-shelf.com

502.499.5835
800.626.1126

Viking Industries
(Portable Smoker)
111 Front Street
Greenwood, MI 38930
662.455.1200
888.845.4641
www.vikingrange.com

NCD Report, from page 1

local accessibility codes.

In the report, NCD also urged HUD to work with the Department of Justice to issue public written binding guidance that broadly interprets the statute of limitations period for fair housing complaints in new development and states that a failure to design and construct accessible housing is a violation of the Fair Housing Act that continues until the violations are corrected.

NCD also recommended that HUD and the Department of Agriculture collect data annually on the accessibility features and occupancy of its accessible units, and “report how many units are actually occupied by people who need accessible features.” The report is available at: www.ncd.gov

Aha!**Moments**

It's Not What You're Doing, It's Why? Where? When?

Welcome to *Universal Design Newsletter Aha! Moments*. Students of Universal Design know that “no one knows it all.” Those in the field occasionally come across technical accessibility criteria anomalies that evoke an **Aha! Moment**. This column seeks to identify those surprising criteria and present opinions as to their intent. We welcome your discoveries as well. If you have comments or other examples of strange things you have found in the technical standards that made you scratch your head or otherwise change your mind -- send them to us at publisher@universaldesign.com.

The argument can be made that the viewports in meeting room doors are job-specific equipment intended for use only by employees servicing the meeting rooms.

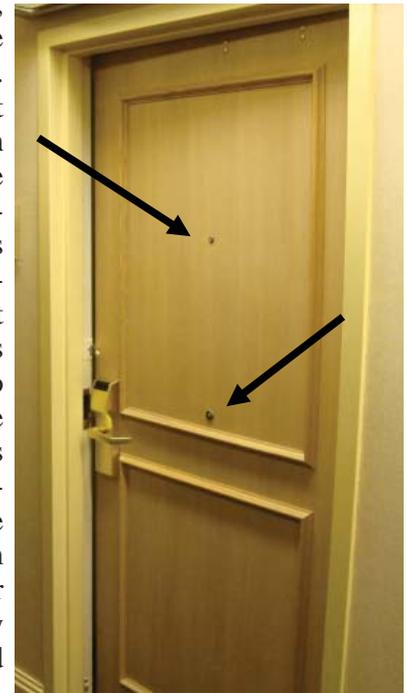
Context appears to be the single most important determinant of appropriate accessibility solutions. It's not what you are doing, it is why, where or when that really determines what works and what doesn't work.

A recent example we came across was the question of whether a lowered viewport (for people who use wheelchairs or are short statured) is required in hotel meeting room doors when intended for service staff to unobtrusively observe the program in order to provide service at appropriate breaks. This might be expanded to address the question of whether or not a low, accessible-height viewport is required whenever a standard-height one is provided.

In hotel guestrooms, providing dual height security view ports in wheelchair accessible rooms is a matter of standard practice in most upscale hotel chains. But we were confronted with a different setting for a different purpose. In a new hotel construction project, viewports were requested by the hotel so that staff could de-

termine when they should enter a meeting room. Though the viewports are intended for employee use, they can, in fact, be used by anyone, including hotel guests.

The argument can be made that the viewports in meeting room doors are job-specific equipment intended for use only by employees servicing the meeting rooms. Therefore, though desirable for many people, viewports are not required. The fact that the doors with viewports are located in public areas does not necessarily mean that the viewports are intended to be used by the public. Guests do not typically need to use meeting room viewports nor should they be expected to use them since there is



Dual view ports on a guestroom door

the possibility of getting hit, as they bring their face close to the door, when someone exits the room. Staff, on the other hand, are trained to manage such risks. □

DESIGN TIP

Doorknob Out of Reach

PROBLEM: How can you easily close a door from the inside if you have limited mobility and the doorknob is out of reach?

TIP: A decorative cord hung between the door's handle and a hook in the door jamb can allow a user to close the door from the inside when

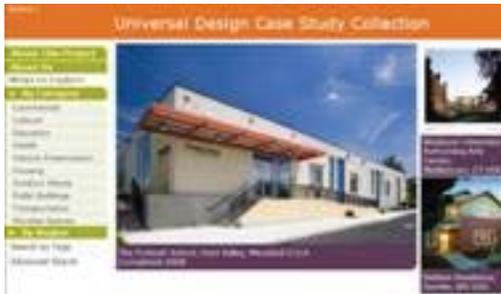
the handle is out of reach (See Photo 1). This can be an attractive solution easily made and installed in a home or office. Simply create a loop at both ends of a length of ½" cord. One loop is slipped over the door handle, and the other is slipped over the hook, screwed into the hinge side door jamb. See instructions and more photos of this solution at www.UniversalDesign.com, click on Newsletter Extras. □



Door cord strung between the handle and door jamb. Photo 1

Universal Design Case Study Collection

An international collection of case studies showing Universal Design “best practices” in the built environment is now available free on the web. Compiled by the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD), with support from the National Endowment for the Arts through its 2008 Leadership in Universal Design Award, the collection is a treasure trove of ideas for design practitioners, educators, students and other



Screen shot of the UD Case Study website.

built-environment project stakeholders ranging from individuals to governments from around the world.

Each case study includes descriptions of the project’s Universal Design and environmental design features, evaluations, photos, images and information about the team that designed and built the project. The categories are health, outdoor places, transport, commercial, culture, education, housing, public buildings, and historic preservation and worship spaces. For more information, visit www.udcasestudies.org.

Research on Accessible Tourism Available

Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) Bookshop provides access to more than 300 research reports conducted by some of Australia’s leading researchers in the tourism industry. The reports are all available for

free PDF download. There is also the option to purchase hard copies. All reports have a summary sheet overview of findings and outcomes, as well as a link to the full report. Among the publications available are Consumer-Generated Web-based Tourism Marketing; Visitor Accessibility in Urban Centres; Wildlife Tourism: Impacts, Management and Planning; Good Practice User-Pays Systems for Protected Areas; and High Impact Activities in Parks: Best Management Practice and Future Research. To use the STCRC reports for distribution, teaching, reproduction or similar purposes, contact STCRC for permission. For more information, visit www.crctourism.com.au/BookShop/.

Common Problems Arising in the Installation of Accessible Pedestrian Signals

A new technical assistance bulletin on deficiencies related to accessible pedestrian signals (APS) is available from the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). The bulletin discusses the ever widening scope of APS available and describes common mistakes made in the installation of the devices. Among the 15 issues addressed in the document are:

- APS volume (louder is not better);
- Location, location, location;
- Which signal? Speech indications necessary;
- Wrong pole... Wrong message;
- Reach (how far?); and
- Braille (right side up!).

The technical assistance guide is available at www.access-board.gov. 

Each case study includes descriptions of the project’s Universal Design and environmental design features, evaluations, photos, images and information about the team that designed and built the project.

Scott Rains, from page 4

an accessible makeover of UNESCO historic patrimony site Sao Luis, Brazil; an accessible overland corridor from South Africa’s KwaZulu Natal province to Mozambique’s capital city; a collaboration with Botswana’s Endeavor Safaris and Inclusion By Design to open a fully accessible safari lodge inside Gorongosa National Park, staffed by people with disabilities.

His unending enthusiasm for change has been impressively effective, as Inclusive Tourism con-

tinues to expand into a powerful force. “Scott is one of these unique persons, passionate for living, for traveling, for meeting and dealing with people and for creating networks for building a society which is better for all,” said Rosangela Berman Bieler of the InterAmerican Institute on Disability and Inclusive Development.

For a list of resources about Inclusive Tourism and Scott Rains, visit www.UniversalDesign.com, Newsletter Extras. 

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be received three weeks before the publication date.

April 6-8, 2010: Access to ADAAG: Level II Advanced Accessibility Training, York, PA. This workshop is sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center and Eastlake Derry & Associates. Contact: www.adaderry.com

April 19-22, 2010: National Association of ADA Coordinators National Conference, Miami, FL. Training for architects, engineers, ADA coordinators, attorneys on access, services and design. Contact: www.jan.wvu.edu/NAADAC or 888.679.7227 ext 1

April 28-29, 2010: 21st Century Trails, Bradford Woods, Martinsville, IN. This National Center on Accessibility course will focus on creating the accessible recreational experience for people with disabilities and their companions through the planning, design, construction and maintenance processes. Contact: www.ncaonline.org

April 30, 2010: Call for Papers Deadline: Visions of an Inclusive Community 2010. Conference to be held in Tampa, FL in October. Contact: www.vic2010.com

May 10-12, 2010: US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Meeting, Washington, DC. Contact: www.access-board.gov/about/meetings.htm

June 2-4, 2010: The 12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010), Hong Kong. Hosted by the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, the theme

will be "Sustainable Transport and Travel for All." Contact: www.transed2010.hk/front/

June 21, 2010: Deadline for public comments on Electronic and Information Technology Draft Standards released by the Access Board. Contact: www.regulations.gov

June 22-25, 2010: Accessibility Management in Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Portland, OR. Offered by the National Center on Accessibility, this program is a comprehensive accessibility management that is the key to success for park and recreation agencies.. Contact: www.ncaonline.org

Oct. 9-12, 2010: Universal Design Summit 4: Creating Universal Homes & Communities, St. Louis, MO. The goal of this national conference is to bring about community integration, participation and enhancement of the independence of all people. Contact: www.UDInstitute.org

Oct. 14-16, 2010: Visions of an Inclusive Community 2010, Tampa, FL. The conference includes tracks on the built environment, community engagement and community support. **Elaine Ostroff** will be a keynote speaker. Contact: www.vic2010.com

Oct. 30-Nov. 3, 2010: The 3rd International Conference for Universal Design, Hamamatsu City. This conference will be hosted by the International Association for Universal Design (IAUD). Contact: www.iaud.net/en/event/090731.html

Universal Design Newsletter

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