

Golf Course Owners Take a Stand *Industry Association Proposes Golf Cart Guidelines*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require golf courses to provide specially adapted golf carts to golfers with disabilities, according to the country's golf course owners.

In a March 20 letter to the Department of Justice, the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) took a proactive approach by proposing guidelines to the Department of Justice (DOJ). The department has not yet responded to the letter, citing the lack of an appointed assistant attorney general, according to Cynthia Smith, a legislative consultant to the NGCOA.

Based in South Carolina, NGCOA has approximately 2,900 members representing 4,200 golf courses worldwide.

Notice Requirements

NGCOA's proposed golf cart guidelines call for golfers with disabilities who need a specially adapted single rider golf cart to request one at least one week in advance when they

reserve a tee time. NGCOA proposes this one-week notice because it asserts that procuring such a golf cart may require some time, as most golf courses do not have the demand that would warrant purchasing their

See Single Rider Golf Cars, page 12



An adaptive golf clinic participant practices from a single rider golf cart. Photo courtesy of the National Center on Accessibility.

Insight on the Access Board

Members and Staff Comment on the Topics of the Day

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) more than 10 years ago, the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) was thrust into the design and construction industry spotlight. Its role was expanded from enforcement and development of design standards in federal buildings, to include developing accessibility guidelines for facilities and vehicles covered by the ADA; providing technical assistance and training on the guidelines; and conducting research to support and maintain the guidelines.

In going where no federal agency has gone before, the Access Board has been met with cheers and jeers from the design and construction industry, the building code industry and people with disabilities. But despite any mis-steps along the way, the board continues to find inventive ways to work within the system while fulfilling its mission.

Universal Design Newsletter has spoken with two members and one staff person from the board to obtain their insights on the workings of one of the most influential bodies in today's building industry. Here are

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Exactly How Much Can Be Tolerated?

I was pleased to recently hear of the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) initiative to research construction tolerances.

This single issue is at the root of much of the litigation presently surrounding compliance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Experts are unable to agree on what are acceptable tolerances for accessibility features in new construction or how much an existing feature can vary from the standards before it is a barrier to someone who has a disability.

Although the language of the regulations seems to imply otherwise, some attorneys in the US Department of Justice have argued in court that any variation from the ADA Standards for Accessible Design (the Standards) is an architectural barrier. To further cloud the issue, at least two courts have disagreed with DOJ's interpretation.

At stake is usability for persons with disabilities and millions of dollars of costs for minor modifications to fea-

tures that are only slightly out of compliance. For instance, the Standards require counters and built in tables to provide a clear height of 27" for the knees of a person who uses a wheelchair; yet 29" is required at the front edge of lavatories. If the clearance at the front edge of an existing lavatory is 27" -- should it be torn out and replaced?

Anthropometric research that the RERC on Universal Design at Buffalo is conducting is another critical effort that will help address this situation. If we have a more complete understanding of how people with disabilities operate in the real world, we will be better able to create and evaluate new alternative designs that meet the needs of users and providers.

Anyone involved with accessibility or universal design should keep an eye on these two projects, as they are likely to affect the way we design and build our environments for a long time to come.

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New Talking ATMs in NY, Illinois and Ohio

Two major financial institutions have announced the installation of talking ATMs in New York City, Chicago and Ohio.

Citibank has announced the installation of New York's first five "talking" ATMs. The ATMs, using text-to-speech

technology, deliver audible information privately through an earphone so that people with visual impairments, or who may otherwise have difficulty reading an ATM screen in print, can independently use the ATM. The five New York machines, along with five Citibank talking ATMs in California, are the beginning of a 16-month plan to install a talking ATM at each of Citibank's Financial Centers and its ATM centers across the country. The machines will be upgraded, improved versions of talking ATMs originally installed by Citibank in November 1999.

Bank One Corporation recently announced installation of talking ATMs in Illinois and Ohio. It has installed 30 of the newly developed ATMs in the Chicago and Columbus areas. By the end of the year

the bank plans to install 100 additional talking ATMs in these and other markets and will announce the locations once they are operational.

Customers will be able to use a standard set of earphones to receive voice prompts that take them step-by-step through an ATM transaction. The earphones can be obtained from the Bank One banking center locations that feature the new technology. Bank One employees will help users get acquainted with the modified ATMs, and audio users will hear a brief "orientation" at the ATM machine.

Ann Byrne, a blind project manager for Exeloncorp in Chicago, stressed the importance of taking advantage of emerging technologies to provide greater independence to the growing number of visually impaired people in the United States. "These ATMs afford visually impaired people some of the privacy and dignity that is sought by everyone," Byrne said. "Not only will this service benefit people who have been unable to see for years, it will offer the growing population of active, aging people with

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Publisher & Managing Editor: John P.S. Salmen, AIA; **Editor:** Denise M. Hofstedt; **Consulting Editors:** James DiLuigi, AIA, CSI and Elaine Ostroff; **Contributing Writers:** Lori Crockett, Gina Urgena and Leigh Anne Schmidt.

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 \$35 (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* Publisher.



Martin Can Use a Cart on Tour

Professional golfer Casey Martin has the right to use a cart during Professional Golfers Association (PGA) events, according to the Supreme Court.

In a 7-2 decision, the high court held that the PGA golf tours and qualifying rounds fall within the coverage of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, the court held that allowing Martin, who has a circulatory condition which is aggravated by extended walking, to use a golf cart is not a modification that would “fundamentally alter the nature” of the tour or qualifying schools.

“The decision is important to supporters of disability rights far beyond the game of golf,” said Gary Robb, executive director of the National Center on Accessibility.

“It signals, at least for the moment, a halt in the erosion of the coverage of the ADA for people with disabilities. While the impact of the decision might be psychologically significant, its real impact only addresses the issue of Casey Martin’s use of a golf car in PGA competitions. It really has nothing directly to do with regulations and requirements of

public access golf courses to insure that people with disabilities have the opportunity to play recreationally on public access golf courses,” said Robb.

In a written statement, PGA Tour Inc. said that it will fully review and evaluate the court’s decision, and how that decision and the applicable requirements of the ADA might affect the tour’s regulations and rules of competition.

Martin has been using a cart since 1998 when a U.S. District Court issued a permanent injunction against the PGA Tour. The PGA Tour appealed the decision but the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the lower court’s ruling. The Supreme Court ruling upholds the Court of Appeals decision.

Revision Process Underway for ANSI A117

The first step in developing the 2003 edition of the A117.1 Standard on Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities is underway. The ANSI A117 Committee on Architectural Features and Site Design of Public Buildings and Residential Structures for Persons with Disabilities (ANSI A117 Committee) recently announced it is accepting public proposals from all interested parties for the revisions or additions to the 1998 edition of the A117.1. The committee formed a variety of task groups including:

- Task Group on Special Needs of the Aging Population-Robert Dale Lunch, Chair;
- Task Group on Assembly Areas - Shahriar Amiri, Chair;
- Administrative Task Force on Internet Communications - (Chair Open);
- Task Group on Obstructed Reach Range and Extreme Physical Size - Angela Van Etten, Chair; and
- Task Group on Perception, Illumination and Signage - Marsha Mazz, Chair

With the abundance of “line of sight” litigation, Task Group on Assembly Areas Chair Shahriar Amiri expects his task group to address that issue. He is also anticipating revisiting the dispersion of seating in assembly occupancies.

The public proposal form and instructions can be downloaded from the ICC website at www.intlcode.org. Proposals may be submitted by mail, fax or e-mail. Submittals in an electronic format such as CD, disk and e-mail are preferred.

All proposals must be received in the ICC offices by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 10, 2001.



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Gary Robb,
Executive Director of
the National Center on
Accessibility

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diminishing eyesight an additional option to their effort to manage their own financial needs.”

“Citibank’s agreement to make ATMs fully accessible to all customers, including customers with visual impairments, represents another important milestone on the path to full social participation and economic opportunity for Americans with disabilities,” said Steven Mendelsohn, a blind technology policy analyst and disability rights advocate who lives in New York and has been working with Citibank for several years on the talking ATM initiative.

“These machines utilize state of the art text-to-speech technology to ensure full access to persons who cannot read an ATM screen,” said Kathy Martinez, deputy director of the World Institute on Disability, an international disability research and policy agency in Oakland, CA.

Berkeley disability rights lawyer, Lainey Feingold and Linda Dardarian of the Oakland law firm of Saperstein, Goldstein, Demchak & Baller, participated in the discussions with both banks. They have assisted members of the blind community around the country on the talking ATM issue.



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their thoughts on a variety of topics.

Ken Schoonover

Maximizing the extent of accessibility in the built environment and harmonizing federal accessibility standards with state/local and model building codes are what drive Access Board Member Ken Schoonover. President of KMS Associates Inc., a consulting firm in Lansing, Ill., Schoonover served on the Access Board for three years when he was reappointed for a four-year term in December 2000.

Before opening his own firm, Schoonover was vice president of codes and standards with the Building Officials and Code Administrators International (BOCA). He also served on the ADAAG Review Federal Advisory Committee and from 1997 to 2000 he was chairman of the ANSI A117 Committee. Among his observations:

Importance of Harmonization. Schoonover says the design and construction industry is in a tight spot because there are two different sets of standards. First, there are local building codes with their accessibility requirements and then there is the ADA at the federal level.

“The greater the difference between the two, the greater the difficulty for the industry,” he says. “When I was working with BOCA, we were working toward harmonizing the technical provisions. So that everybody is having to comply with one set of provisions.” He says harmonization will enhance overall accessibility and help the design and construction industry.

“Accessibility provisions that are incorporated into state and local building codes have a much greater im-

pact on the extent of accessibility built in,” he says. “Accessibility is enforced at the time of construction – when its being built. And the construction industry will benefit because it will have one set of rules with which to comply.”

New ADAAG. He notes that in the updated ADAAG there will be a tremendous amount of technical consistency – more than has existed in the past. “There is a greater degree of harmonization within the next generation of standards. I think it will help the equivalent facilitation concern,” says Schoonover. “If ones goes through the private sector evaluation process... there is a very, very strong likelihood that the outcome would be the same. It will go a long way to relieve concerns about equivalent facilitation.” He noted that while 100 percent harmonization is not achievable, harmonization will remedy some of the problems with the federal system.

Advisory Committees. He applauds the board’s use of advisory committees. Advisory committees allow interested groups including those representing designers, industry, and people with disabilities to play a role in the board’s development of guidelines which are then proposed for public comment. “They are extremely valuable,” he says. “They bring a broad cross-section of experience that is useful in establishing realistic standards. It is difficult to write reasonable and appropriate standards without” their input.

Open vs. Closed Meetings. He understands critics’ complaints of board sessions that are not open to the public, but feels they are necessary. “The board’s work is different from the ANSI process. ANSI develops standards in the open – but the standards are not mandatory,” he says. “The Access Board’s rulemaking becomes law. [When final votes are conducted in closed sessions] nobody has an advantage knowing what will be in a final rule. Everybody learns what it is at the same time. [If all the meetings were open,] those who have the means and resources to attend all the meetings would have a distinct advantage over those who don’t.” He notes that the board is rigorous about staying within the scope of rulemaking. “It doesn’t stray into new areas that would be a surprise to people. ...People know where we are.”

Enforceable Language. One of the biggest obstacles the Access Board must overcome is writing code language in a civil rights context. According to Schoonover, the challenge is coming up with enforceable language. “When it comes to establishing standards that apply to a regulated entity the chal-

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Ken Schoonover,
Access Board
Member

Advisory Committees Prove to be a Valuable Tool

Whether driven by the immediate need for greater accessibility or simply responding to a vocal industry’s demand for relevant guidelines, the Access Board has broken new ground in the area of public-private partnerships. In 1996 members of the Access Board and its Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) Review Advisory Committee received Vice President Gore’s Hammer Award, given to individuals or groups that have demonstrated exemplary reinvention of the federal government.

The ADAAG Review Advisory Committee was made up of 22 organizations representing the interests of the design and construction industry, the building code industry, state and local government and people with disabilities. It was charged with drafting recommendations to update ADAAG.

In presenting the award an administrative spokesman noted, the Access Board “used common sense in tackling problems with the guidelines. This meant calling on the people who knew, firsthand the most about access issues, from all sides.”

This common sense approach, he said, has produced outstanding results including greater uniformity in standards, increased customer participation in decision-making, greater credibility for the federal government among industry professionals, and the potential for greater compliance with the ADA. ■

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lenge is writing standards that are clear, understandable and enforceable," he says.

Change of Attitude. Over the last 20 years Schoonover has noticed that building owners and designers have acknowledged that accessibility is something that they have to handle. "It is a fact of life," says Schoonover. "Now building owners and designers are trying to find the easiest and quickest way to deal with it."

He also notes that code enforcement officials have accepted accessibility as an issue that falls under their purview -- in the area of health, safety and welfare. When the ADA brought accessibility issues to the forefront, some code enforcement officials had concerns about their expanded scope of responsibility. "Now it is becoming part of the fabric of normal duties," he says.

He has also noticed that the attitudes of disability advocates have changed over time, perhaps due to the Access Board use of Advisory Committees. "There is a greater degree of trust of the private sector code enforcement community. Twenty years ago the disability community didn't hold state and local code officials in very high regard. State and local code officials didn't have the awareness [about accessibility] and allowed inaccessible designs to get built. Now there are more and more disability advocates that view code officials as an ally rather than enemy. But we still need to make more headway."

A striking change that he has seen is the federal officials' increasing willingness to rely on standards that are developed in the private sector. He credits the work of the ADAAG Review Advisory Committee, as marking a turning point in relationship with federal and private sector levels.

Marsha Mazz

Balancing the interests of the all the parties involved is the focus of Marsha Mazz's work as a member of the Access Board staff. Mazz, who is technical assistance coordinator, struggles to make sure the guidelines are "as fair as is humanly possible."

With the Access Board for 10 years, Mazz says

that the board is committed to taking a leadership role in the development of codes and standards for accessibility. The board works with model code organizations and voluntary consensus standards groups that develop and periodically revise codes and standards affecting accessibility. According to board literature, such coordination allows the board to encourage or enhance the coverage of accessibility by industry standards and advances the harmonization of the board guidelines and industry standards.

Among Mazz's observations are:

Prescriptive vs. Performance. "Our constituency has told us it wants more specifics -- in part because the design community and the construction community haven't internalized what federal civil rights mean," says Mazz. "They need prescriptive instruction." She also notes that being more specific helps people with disabilities understand the scope of the ADA. Mazz says, "When it is clear -- black and white -- people know" what to expect. "If it's vague, how does a builder know if [he/she] has complied? Building codes and civil rights diverge.... If we leave it in gray language, [people] will end up in court."

Equivalent Facilitation. In discussing the pitfalls of equivalent facilitation Mazz notes that there are some people who are more willing to take chances. "People who have internalized accessibility are more willing to take a chance. It's not enough to understand the principles of design of accessibility -- they have to understand how people use space. In the end for architects it means expanding what is 'normal use.' Architects are more and more understanding that people with disabilities are part of the population who use their buildings." Her advice to designers: "Less is never equal." She notes that a door way that is 30" instead 32" wide -- can not be called equivalent. She suggests that when such questions arise that designers and architects should call the board's technical assistance hot line. Although callers don't get a formal blessing on a design idea, the technical staff will guide them through an issue and perhaps identify other issues to consider.

Board Decisions and Harmonization. In making its decisions, the board gets recommendations from committees and staff. Sometimes it will come to a consensus without voting. But a final vote is always conducted on a final rule, according to Mazz. Up until the final vote, the board also takes into consideration comments from the public. "People in the public have a right to be heard and responded to," says Mazz. Based on such comments, the board will consider an editorial reorganization of the rule even if it means the document will no longer be harmonized with the corresponding industry standard.

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"When it is clear -- black and white -- people know what to expect. Building codes and civil rights diverge. If we leave it in gray language, people will end up in court."

Marsha Mazz,
Technical Assistance
Coordinator,
The Access Board



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Answering the Question

Why Universal Design is Not Mainstream in Design Education

by Beth Tauke and Ed Steinfeld

“Every daring attempt to make a great change in existing conditions, every lofty vision of new possibilities for the human race, has been labeled utopian.” -- Emma Goldman (c. 1912, first published in Shulman, 1972)

Some faculty argue that the design of the material world should create physical challenges, a position diametrically opposed to the universal design principle of reducing effort and making things intuitive and simple to use.

Universal design has not yet become well established as a mainstream philosophy in design education. After two decades, the concept still has only a few proponents on the faculties of design schools. We believe that the reasons lie in the perceptions that faculty have about the utopian nature of universal design, as well as how advocates of the idea present the concept.

Origins of Accessible Design

The origins of barrier-free (or *accessible*) design lie in the field of rehabilitation. After World War II, the practice of medical rehabilitation was successful enough that physicians and therapists were able to provide many people with severe disabilities enough function, skills and technology for them to accomplish activities of daily living independently. As their clients tried to reintegrate into the community, however, they discovered that the environment outside the rehabilitation center(s) was not conducive to independent living without modification – removal of barriers to mobility. This perspective on design is based on the idea of treatment and is fundamentally a medical model of practice.

Conversely, the idea of universal design is a utopian notion. Universal design seeks to eliminate discrimination by design and support full social participation for all members of society. There are two underlying assumptions inherent to universal design. The first is that all people – not just people with disabilities – can benefit if the environment’s ability to serve one’s needs improves. The second is that the opportunity for equal social participation requires mutual respect among all segments of society. By working to create one environment which is seamlessly usable by all members of the community, universal design promotes avoidance of the stigma associated with being considered separate and therefore “different.” Thus, unlike barrier-free

design, which benefits a specific group of people, universal design benefits everyone.

Wary Faculty

Unfortunately for the status of universal design education, many university faculty are wary of utopian claims. They argue that the term “universal” is a specious and dangerous concept, and cite that there has been an enormous amount of suffering and waste in the world due to the adoption of misguided general solutions and the demise of pluralism. And despite the fact that, “universal design” is, according to the experts “design for all people,” to the outsider, the myth of “one design for all” seems to be an impossibility.

Sometimes there is resistance because the utopian idea of universal design is in conflict with other utopian perspectives popular among academics. For example, the idea that architecture should require exploratory interaction and effort to understand and appreciate. Some faculty argue that the design of the material world should *create* physical challenges, a position diametrically opposed to the universal design principle of reducing effort and making things intuitive and simple to use. And, in fact, people do enjoy and value many activities that require added effort and cause inconvenience. For example, consider these design issues:

- a devout woman whose faith is reinforced by the symbolism of pushing open heavy church doors;
- a child who enjoys the strain of reaching to turn on the bathroom faucet while imagining that someday he’ll be big enough to turn it on by himself; or
- the environmentalist who values the additional effort required to empty a composting toilet because it reduces environmental pollution.

Presentation is Everything

The way that universal design practitioners and educators present the concept to others is also an important factor in its adoption. Universal design is often presented (whether intentionally or not) with a kind of redemptive or salvation approach. Either one has “seen the light of universal design” or one is still “in the dark of form-driven design.” Those who have “seen the light” are “saved” – and have an obligation to enlighten the rest of the world – to spread the word. Those who have not “seen the light” aren’t quite as “good” as those who have. This kind of approach prevents the adoption of a set of critical perspectives and, ultimately, a critical practice –

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A heavy church door.

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a practice that continually challenges and questions itself in order to grow, one that recognizes that there are other kinds of design and other ways in which the physical world can shape our bodies, minds, and spirits.

Universal design is also too often presented as a therapeutic intervention. The popularity of the *Principles of Universal Design* (Connel, et al. 1997) as a pedagogic framework and “attitudinal change” as a focus of introductions to universal design are examples of this emphasis. The prescriptive nature of the *Principles* adopts the stance of therapy and the focus on attitude change is a form of ideological indoctrination. Again, this exclusionary perspective is not accepted well in liberal academic circles.

Utopian Ideas

Of course, utopian ideas have their strengths. There is nothing wrong with idealism and a focus on progress. The three primary characteristics of a utopian idea are: Idealism, Change, and Critique.

Although an absolute idealism can be naïve and inconsequential, an idealism tempered with pragmatism is what distinguishes the mundane from the significant in design. Moreover, the courage to take risks and search for new approaches, perspectives and solutions are attributes valued highly by most design educators. Most importantly, utopian ideas emerge from a critique of the status quo. When this process is embraced thoughtlessly with sloganeering and militancy, outsiders question the sincerity of the critique. But when it is adopted with considerable reflection and well articulated, educators respect it as a valid point of departure for good design.

The word utopian has always had positive and negative connotations, and this is especially so for practitioners of universal design. On the one hand, it embraces idealism, the optimistic belief that “yes, universal design can be accomplished - we



A child reaches for a faucet.

can design for everyone.” On the other hand, it suggests impracticality, the impossibility of reaching a goal – the naiveté of believing that “we know enough to think that we can actually include everyone” and perhaps even the inability to separate fantasy from reality. Yet, every utopian notion creates skepticism in intellectual circles, because of the inherently exclusive nature of most ideologies and groups espousing them.

Universal design ultimately sets its sights beyond breaking physical barriers, to include the redefinition of disablement as a universal condition, a condition of difference that we all share (Wijk, 1997). This view of universal design as a cultural critique is exciting for design education because the form of pedagogy most emphasized in the design professions is criticism. Nothing is sacred in a design critique. Students are encouraged throughout their academic career to develop skills of critical thinking. Faculty in the design disciplines are experts at criticism. Thus, universal design, as a utopian construct, has the inherent qualities of a powerful design philosophy, one that should be respected by other faculty.

To persuade more academics to recognize the value of universal design, we must focus on the positive aspects of utopian thought. We must develop a reflective pedagogy that not only retains the original critical focus of universal design as a philosophy but also uncovers the significant intellectual foundation behind the ideology and its limitations. A reflective and critical perspective will help us to understand how others perceive our own work and help us develop more effective educational pedagogies and practices.

We hope that such pedagogies will also engage the very best faculty and students and convince them not only to practice universal design, but perhaps also to become universal design educators themselves. 

A reflective and critical perspective will help us to understand how others perceive our own work and help us develop more effective educational pedagogies and practices.

The contents of this insert are provided by the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) on Universal Design at Buffalo, which is sponsored by a grant from the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) U.S. Department of Education (DOE). These contents, however, do not necessarily represent the policy of DOE. Readers should not assume an endorsement by the federal government.

Moving Assistive Technology into the Market

Moving new or improved assistive technology to the marketplace is the focus of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer (T2 RERC), said Project Director Joe Lane.

Recently, the center expanded its efforts to include universal design, and has an ongoing effort with the RERC on Universal Design at Buffalo.

Like all other RERCs, T2 RERC is required by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to contribute to nationwide efforts in research, training and education – as well as to regularly disseminate information gathered by its grant to interested parties.

“You’ll find that most garage inventors were clearly just trying to help themselves, or someone else,” says Lane. “They just tried to patch something together – and it’s no surprise to us that someone out there has something that works better, because there are people working everyday to improve existing products.”

With this as the case, many of T2 RERC efforts are centered on developing knowledge of unmet needs in the marketplace, and ensuring that this knowledge is shared by all members of its stakeholders team. That team consists of other RERCs, corporate and government researchers, designers, clinicians, manufacturers and consumers.

In order to facilitate and develop this information, T2 RERC continuously surveys its stakeholders about what the most prominent unmet needs are in the area of assistive technology. When it finds consensus on any issues among stakeholders, it prioritizes those needs and arranges, once a year, to bring interested parties together within a targeted forum to examine a single topic and discuss solutions to the top four prioritized needs. Lane says that the advantages to these types of forums are that they bring together groups which don’t normally communicate – generating new knowledge for all groups. During the working seminars participants come ready to solve problems rather than merely discuss them.

T2 RERC then takes the results of these forums (revised priorities and new problem statements) and posts them to various computer discussion groups (such as, the Consortium of Federal Laboratories, NASA, and the Department of Defense) as well as into other communication venues for nationwide input. “It’s estimated, for instance, that about 750,000 technicians and other researchers see NASA Tech Briefs,” says Lane. “And the beauty of it is,

they see a story which says ‘technologies wanted...’ They don’t have to know a thing about our field. They don’t have to know wheelchairs. They don’t have to know assistive technology. They don’t have to know our terminology. All it says is ‘Do you have a technology that does the following things...?’”

According to Lane, relieving those involved from coping with the various terminologies used within the process is key: “One of the biggest problems in identifying the new good technologies is the differ-



T2 RERC recently hosted a Stakeholder Conference on Communication Enhancement.

ent vocabularies that are used. When you tell me ‘I need a new monitoring device for my wheelchair battery,’ – right away I’m thinking ‘I don’t know anything about wheelchairs.’ But if you say to me ‘I need a monitoring device that monitors a lead acid battery over the course of 12 hours -- and gives continuing feedback on available load. Then I can tell you what I have that will do the job -- or what I have that can be adapted to do the job.’”

So if you are an inventor, with the prototype of a hot new product sitting on your 1973 AMC Gremlin -- there is good news and bad news. The bad news: Where in the past, manufacturers might have been willing to produce a product to “test the market” – today a manufacturer wants to know that test production is worthwhile and shows the promise of producing a profit.

According to Lane, less than 5 percent of the privately submitted inventions have any market potential, and only a small percentage of these – even with the help of the RERC – will find a willing manufacturer.

The good news, however, is that far from discouraging the process, T2 RERC is charged with working to bring ideas to market. In fact, the RERC has an excellent working relationship with several technology companies, and also markets assistive prod-

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“...They don’t have to know wheelchairs. They don’t have to know assistive technology. They don’t have to know our terminology. All it says is ‘Do you have a technology that does the following things...?’”

Joe Lane,
project director,
T2 RERC

News from the Center

The Universal Kitchen: Putting the Pieces Together

The kitchen is one of the most used places in the home. It is essential to preparing food, carrying out household activities, maintaining family contact and fostering social interaction in the home. While kitchens at home are as old as the history of domesticity, kitchen design in this contemporary mass-market, mass consumption culture is far from being perfect.

The Product Evaluation and Testing (PET) Project, in coordination with RERC on Universal Design at Buffalo is tackling the age old challenges posed by kitchen design in its current Universal Kitchen System product.

Jointly, the PET and the Product Development Initiative Project work together to identify, evaluate, and test new products, systems, and technologies developed universally, and bring them to either the consumer or manufacturer markets.

In addressing the limitations of conventional

kitchens, the Universal Kitchen System responds to the lack of flexibility, usability, user-involvement, and current construction technology. It reduces installation time, and is therefore much more economically feasible. The new system is based on the idea that cabinets and appliances do not have to be fixed in place, so users can adjust them and move them around, either on demand or periodically as needs change. Also, because it offers such flexibility in the placement of appliances and cabinets, users can be involved in decision making even during construction increasing the potential for long-term satisfaction.

Unlike conventional kitchens which have permanently mounted wall and base cabinets and fixed-in-place appliances, the Universal Kitchen employs a wall technology to allow easy positioning, movement and adjustment of cabinets and appliances anywhere along its length. This wall surface may either be layered over the existing wall or be made part of a free-standing wall, so that the elements of the kitchen can be located anywhere in the room, or be moved around based on spatial demands, or when needs or preferences change.

"This wall technology has the potential to involve users in the design process, so they can make decisions about kitchen design and spatial organization," said Associate Professor Abir Mullick, coordinator of the project. "In the Universal Kitchen System, it is possible for users to work with a kitchen manufacturer directly to select cabinets and appliances, and plan the kitchen organization and layout. The kitchen manufacturer can then ship the kitchen wall, cabinets, and appliances custom tailored to achieving the desired organization and layout." The Universal Kitchen System:

- includes accessible design as a baseline;
- responds to user diversity and economic levels;
- provides equal opportunity to all users;
- offers flexibility, adaptability and choices;
- installs and adjusts quickly and easily; and
- allows individualization and customization -- this flexibility results in different designs for different users within the same system.

The wall technology makes it possible to speed up the kitchen installation process by greatly reducing on-site construction time. Not only will this be attractive to the installer, it will also allow user involvement in the design, construction and adjustment process. Following installation of the wall surface, users can participate in the organization and adjustment of their own cabinets and appliances.

This wall technology makes it possible to speed up the kitchen installation process by greatly reducing on-site installation time.

Assistive Technology, from page 8

ucts it has participated in developing on the Web at www.dynamic-living.com.

T2 RERC has handed over the function of providing a full-scale evaluation of new products to a private sector company A to Z Technologies (AZ Tech). AZ Tech is a consulting firm for inventors who wish to see their devices come to market, and functions as the port of entry for private inventors who wish to submit prototypes to T2 RERC. For a fee, AZ Tech will do preliminary market research and report its findings to inventors, who then have the option of partnering with the company as a licensing agent.

In discussing how an effort to create assistive devices related to universal design, Lane notes, "From our perspective, [universal design is essential because] the broader the market, the greater the chances of successfully commercializing the product.... For the private sector, what they look for is consensus. And until they hear that consensus, they're just as happy to move on. To me, the most important thing that could possibly happen would be for the disability community and the aging community to join forces. There's no larger demographic and there's no stronger market. Whomever can bring those two constituency groups together will reshape the market for universally designed products as well as for assistive technology."

For more information, visit T2 RERC at: <http://cosmos.buffalo.edu/t2rerc/>

Accessibility Improving on AOL?

A Look at the Company's Progress Since the Agreement with NFB

In the year since America On Line (AOL) formally agreed to improve accessibility to its services for people with visual impairments, there is still work to be done, says to the National Federation of the Blind (NFB).

According to Curtis Chong, the NFB's director of technology, AOL 6.0, released in October 2000, better addresses the needs of blind users than its predecessor, but there are still problems with certain fields such as in the address book, and the AOL customer service department and its lack of knowledge about accessible features, like key commands and the JAWS conversion tools.

"Our goal is to continually improve AOL client software, as well as our other products, to address the needs of people with disabilities," said AOL spokesperson Andrew Weinstein. Although AOL does not publicly announce anticipated dates for upgrades, Weinstein stated that improvements have been made to AOL 6.0 since last October and that those features will be included in future releases. In addition, AOL is making a concerted effort to provide a broad range of services and devices—from AOL by Phone and paging systems to AOL TV—with accessibility in mind.

"Of course, not every new feature introduced by AOL will be the perfect fit for all patrons," stated Chong. Certainly AOL by Phone, with its voice-command retrieval of e-mails, news, stock quotes, sports scores, shopping and more, is ideal for blind patrons, but perhaps not suitable for hearing or voice impaired users. "As long as AOL can provide access to their services in a way that everyone can use, with equal features," added Chong, "then they will have made great strides in the accessibility arena." In addition, Chong would like to see AOL's e-mail work flawlessly, much like those offered by Earthlink, Concentric and other providers, as well as web browsing, media player, parental controls, buddy lists and chat features.

"It's safe to say that, on the public front, AOL got the message [delivered by the lawsuit] that they needed to make everyone aware of the work they've been doing on addressing accessibility issues," said Chong.

An agreement to enhance accessibility was the result of a lawsuit filed in November 1999 by NFB and nine individuals who would have enrolled with AOL but found they couldn't register or install AOL's proprietary software without sighted assistance. The plaintiffs claimed that AOL had "failed to remove communications barriers, thus denying the blind independent access to this service in violation of Title III of the ADA."

According to NFB President Mark Maurer, "Blind people can and do make extensive use of computer programs, including commercial applications, by using screen access software." However, in order for specialized screen access packages such as Window-Eyes, JAWS for Windows and others to work effectively, the commercial software must provide text labels for all graphics, permit keyboard access to all functions with automatic focus adjustments and rely on standard Windows controls. At the time of the lawsuit, AOL 5.0 featured unlabeled graphics, mouse-only command activation and custom controls painted on the computer screen.

The two parties reached an agreement in July 2000 to suspend the suit while AOL explored and planned implementation of several accessibility provisions, including the April 2001 release of new software that would be compatible with screen reader assistive technology. In keeping with the agreement, AOL posted on its website the America Online Accessibility Policy and created an accessibility checklist for its publishers, designers and engineers. A preliminary timetable was established that gave AOL one year—until July 2001—to build accessibility provisions into its system.

AOL 6.0 is the first version of its software built with accessibility in mind. According to AOL, designers focused on the overall infrastructure of their software to create an entirely new product that, although very similar in appearance and behavior to AOL 5.0, premiered several features for both its sighted and blind patrons. The installation and registration process is now compatible with screen access technology and a configuration was added to be used with JAWS for Windows.

AOL's Integrity Assurance Group, which oversees the Accessibility Division, is a small group of employees who, by all outward appearances, seem to be working aggressively toward the common goal of universal accessibility. Programmers are learning about the main screen readers, working to label each piece of information on every screen, and generally making an effort to anticipate the needs of people with visual impairments. AOL's Director of Accessibility, Debbie Fletter, and her staff have been preparing for a focus beta test of AOL 6.0 among users with disabilities, which is scheduled to begin in July. In addition, AOL recently concluded an Accessibility Month created to educate employees on accessibility and disability issues.

Having stated repeatedly that "active cooperation achieves more than determined opposition," the NFB currently has no plans to reinstate the original lawsuit. 

"It's safe to say that, on the public front, AOL got the message [delivered by the lawsuit] that they needed to make everyone aware of the work they've been doing on addressing accessibility issues."

Curtis Chong,
Director of
Technology,
NFB



Website Spotlight: European Concept for Accessibility (ECA) Network

The European Experts on Accessibility, a group of volunteers specializing in several areas of design and manufacturing, was created to gather the different national approaches of universal design “in order to achieve a quality built environment that facilitates the functioning of every person in their daily lives.” The ECA website, www.eca.lu, provides a comprehensive description of the group’s philosophy, pertinent terminology and examples of applied universal design principles throughout Europe. Although several of the pages are still under construction,

such as those for design principles, legislation, technology and standards, the site provides a valuable forum for discussion on outdoor environments, buildings, housing and products as they relate to universal design. Visitors are invited to submit proposals to complete or improve chapters from the European Concept for Accessibility, which can be viewed online or downloaded from the publications page. In addition, the site provides information about past and up-coming international meetings, a list of the experts and useful related links.

Guide for Places of Lodging: Serving Guests Who are Blind or Who Have Low Vision

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) recently released *Guide for Places of Lodging: Serving Guests Who are Blind or Who Have Low Vision*, a technical assistance document that addresses a variety of issues concerning Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for hotels, motels, inns and other places of transient lodging and how they should accommodate guests with visual impairments. In addition to stating the ADA obligations, the guide includes recommendations on check-in and check-out procedures, room keys, room selection, guide dogs and other service animals, signage, staff training, architectural barriers, room orientation, lighting, recreational and conference facilities, gift shops, restaurants and lounges and emergency procedures.

For more information, visit the DOJ website at www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada.

Gracious Spaces: Universal Interiors by Design

Written by Irma Laufer Dobkin, ASID and FIFDA, and Mary Jo Peterson, *Gracious Spaces: Universal Interiors by Design* is a demonstration that inclusive design can yield dazzling results. With more than 150 illustrations and numerous case studies, this “show and tell” book of design possibilities is filled with magazine-quality aesthetic ideas and solutions to common accessibility problems. *Gracious Spaces* offers residential universal designs that are attractive, functional, relaxing and fun.

Published by McGraw-Hill, *Gracious Spaces: Universal Interiors by Design* is available at local bookstores or can be purchased online at www.Amazon.com or www.Barnes&Noble.com.

Universal Design: Manual of Practical Guidance for Architects

Architect Selwyn Goldsmith, author of the internationally acclaimed *Designing for the Disabled*, has written a new manual, *Universal Design: Manual of Practical Guidance for Architects*, to help architects and designers look beyond the prescribed minimum design standards for people with disabilities. The manual describes and illustrates universal design principles and presents detailed design guidance in an easily referenced format. The 160-page paperback, complete with 235 line illustrations, covers the planning of circulation spaces, sanitary facilities, parking areas, seating requirements and more for both public buildings and private housing.

Published by Butterworths-Heinemann, *Universal Design* is available online at www.Amazon.com or www.Barnes&Noble.com.

Technical Bulletin on Movie Captioning

A technical bulletin on closed captioning technologies for movie theaters has been issued by the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). The bulletin describes several new systems that present movie captions in a discreet manner that does not interfere with the typical viewing experience. Guidance is provided on how the different systems work, their design requirements, costs and availability. Captioning, while not required by the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, can provide access for people with significant hearing loss who may not benefit from other technologies, such as assistive listening devices which amplify the volume. For more information, contact the Access Board at 800.872.2253 (v), 800.993.2822 (tty) or by e-mail at pubs@access-board.gov. 

With more than 150 illustrations and numerous case studies, this “show and tell” book of design possibilities is filled with magazine-quality aesthetic ideas and solutions to common accessibility problems.

Gracious Spaces

Single Rider Golf Carts, *from page 1*

own single rider golf carts. The proposed guideline also states that the course will make “best efforts to provide a specially adapted golf cart for the golfer with a walking impairment disability covered by the ADA.”

“These guidelines which require renters to give notice and require best efforts but with flexibility for golf courses reflect the precedent set in the car rental industry with the Avis case,” explained Smith, referring to a 1994 DOJ settlement with Avis Inc., in which Avis agreed to provide vehicles with hand controls with eight hours’ notice at major airports and with 24- to 48-hour notice at other Avis locations. Avis also agreed to provide training for its staff.

Although the settlement applied to Avis specifically, it alerted the industry to DOJ’s position about how companies with fleets of vehicles for public rental should apply the ADA to avoid litigation.

ADAAG Impact

DOJ’s response to NGCOA’s proposed guidelines will not affect the rulemaking process or final rules for golf courses under the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). The Recommendations for Accessibility Guidelines: Recreational Facilities and Outdoor Developed Areas, which includes golf courses, developed by the Recreation Access Advisory Committee, is completed and is scheduled to be voted on by the Access Board at its July meeting, according to Bill Botten, accessibility specialist at the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board).

“These guidelines provide construction standards. The car issue is an operational guideline and so is not included,” explained Botten. “Operational guidelines will be discussed by DOJ when they adopt the final rule.”

“DOJ’s response will be an opinion, not a guideline,” said Smith. “If [DOJ’s] opinion is challenged, it would go to court.” Smith emphasized that it is important that the industry know DOJ’s position and use it as a guide.

Different Views

NGCOA involved representatives of golfers with disabilities in the development of the proposal. However, key leaders for these groups did not entirely agree with the proposed guidelines although they supported NGCOA’s efforts.

Greg Jones, founder of the former Association of Disabled American Golfers, and Gary Robb, executive director of the National Center on Accessibility at Indiana University, both feel the one-week notice period is too long. Jones suggested that a 24- to 48-

hour notice period is more reasonable, while Robb feels that the maximum notice period should be 48 hours. Jones also felt that the guidelines should require significant training be provided for golf course staff as well as golfers with disabilities.

John McGovern, president of the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association for suburban Chicago, feels that the “best efforts” language isn’t specific enough. “I think DOJ is going to say they can’t measure what ‘best efforts’ are. The language needs to be more measurable and usable.”

“The best efforts language in the proposed guidelines puts too much responsibility on the golfer,” added Robb. “I would like to see stronger language in terms of ensuring that golfers with disabilities be accommodated and reducing the notification time.”

Robb conducted a 1998-99 study for the United States Golf Association to determine existing golf course policies and procedures for accommodating players with disabilities. The report emphasized the need for greater education of golf course owners as well as players with disabilities. The report also revealed that most golf courses had had few or no players with disabilities on their courses.

Robb agreed that with little demand for single rider golf carts by players with disabilities golf courses have little incentive to purchase their own. The specially adapted single rider golf carts cost from less than \$2,000 to as much as \$14,000, although the average range is \$4,500 to \$6,500, according to the NGCOA. Until demand requires otherwise, both Robb and Jones support the concept of pooling, in which several courses would buy single rider golf carts and then share them.

Michael Quimbey, corporate vice president of Club Corporation International, said another possible option might be for medical supply stores to carry these single rider golf carts and rent them to golfers with disabilities. However, Quimbey pointed out this would raise additional issues of insurability, liability and responsibility for training the golfers to operate these carts.

Jaro Jones, a PGA golfer with a disability who is in the process of purchasing a golf course in Texas, said that the demand is low right now because courses are not “actively encouraging and motivating people with disabilities to play golf.”

“The NGCOA and others continue to stick their heads in the sand. They are overlooking six million potential new golfers, people with disabilities who are capable of learning to play golf. No one is trying to cultivate this market because they are afraid of

See Single Rider Golf Cars, page 13

No one is trying to cultivate this market because they are afraid of lawsuits.”

Jaro Jones,
PGA Golfer

PRODUCTS

Bi-Fold Door Hinges for Improved Accessibility

Acclaimed by leading universal and barrier-free design specialists for its unique applications for accessible environments, the Ezyfold hinge is an alternative to traditional bi-fold track systems.

Ezyfold allows bi-fold doors to swing back and store against the outside wall, improving wheelchair maneuverability, increasing knee space and providing wider closet and cabinet openings. Providing a 50 to 75 percent reduction in door swing arc, Ezyfold units can be installed in a variety of configurations on all types and sizes of base and wall cabinets, pantries, utility spaces, free-standing furniture and storage units.



Single Rider Golf Carts, *from page 12*

lawsuits,” said Jaro Jones.

Jaro Jones will have six single rider golf carts he already owns at his course. Jones, who currently teaches golf to people with disabilities, intends to actively market his golf course and instruction to people with disabilities. “The bottom line is the bottom line,” he said, emphasizing the potential market of golfers with disabilities as well as the aging senior citizen population.

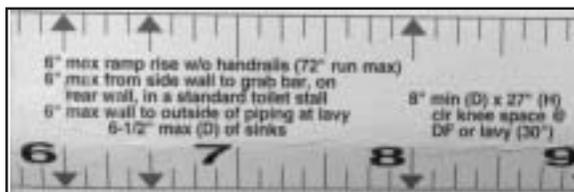
While the golf cart technology has improved in recent years, Smith said that there are still problems with the single rider golf carts, such as inadequate battery strength and stability. Smith suggested that sellers of these single rider golf carts are behind the litigation that has affected hundreds of golf courses.

“NGCOA members are being threatened with lawsuits and are turning to us for the answers,” said Smith. “It is hard for the association to give advice when we don’t know where DOJ stands.”

According to Smith, DOJ had advised NGCOA to submit a letter of inquiry regarding DOJ’s position on single rider golf carts to ensure a prompt response to the issue. “We are trying to help DOJ by suggesting workable guidelines,” said Smith. 

Tape Measure with ADA Requirement Notations

Access-Ability’s impact-resistant, stainless steel, 25-foot tape measure features the 88 most common notations for installing equipment called for by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ramp rise, grab bar, knee and toe space and tub dimensions are among the



easy-to-read measurements printed directly onto the heavy duty tape line at pertinent dimensions. The tape features Tough-Tip® blade protector which self-adjusts for inside and outside measurements and Positive Tru-Lock® to prevent the blade from slipping.

Assistive Computer Reading Technology

New from Cloudworld Ltd., the WordAloud assistive reader is a user-friendly system that helps people read text displayed on a computer screen.

Controlled by using the cursor keys or the mouse, WordAloud displays text, one word at a time, in large characters on the screen, while simultaneously speaking the word with a speech synthesizer. Users can play the text continuously, pause, and step backward or forward by word, sentence, paragraph or section,



much like using a tape recorder or CD player. In addition, the display colors, text font, speech synthesizer and reading speed can be configured to suit individual users. WordAloud is ideal for those who have visual impairments, dyslexia, difficulty reading printed material or who are learning how to read English. WordAloud runs on Windows ’95, ’98 and ME. For a demonstration version of WordAloud on CD-ROM, e-mail sales@cloudworld.co.uk. 

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82 Shelburne Center Rd.
Shelburne, MA 01370
Phone: 413-625-9506
Fax: 413-625-6014
www.ezyfold.com

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www.tommy.demon.co.uk

Access Board, from page 5

“Sometimes [the reasons for reorganization] are more compelling than being harmonized,” she says. Mazz notes that technical changes are not considered at that stage in the process.

She says that as the ANSI A117 Committee begins the review cycle this year for its 2003 standard, it can review any of the differences in the soon to be published updated ADAAG. She notes, “One building code equals a true building code.”

Attitudinal Change. Mazz is happy to say that she has seen attitudes change toward accessibility. “More and more architects and designers are internalizing accessibility – there are more people specializing in accessible design. Twenty-five years ago there were 10 experts in the principles of accessible design. Now there are hundreds. There are a lot of qualified people.”

Soy Williams

Architect Soy Williams believes that architects should serve all people and that the profession of architecture is a service – not an art or science.

Although a relatively new Access Board member, Soy Williams, AIA, is not new to the process. She is the former vice chair of the ANSI A117 Committee and a former member of the ADAAG Review Advisory Committee. “I’ve been involved with the board’s work from the outside,” says Williams. “I have found the Access Board is willing to work with all constituents in a mostly open forum – through consensus building and cooperation.”

When she received her appointment to the board last December, Williams was in the unique position of also being employed by the International Code Council. She notes that her appointment to the board was as an individual, not as a representative of an organization. If a conflict were to arise she notes, “I

would act according to my conscience and use my personal discretion – which is not inconsistent with the work I do.”

Williams recently moved to Miami and is with Greenberg Traurig, P.A. Following are her observations.

Closed vs. Open Meetings. “All federal rulemaking is done behind closed doors – it is unlike the ANSI process,” she says. “It leaves people wondering – what really goes on behind closed doors. I prefer an open process. I did see a difference in the ability to discuss issues in the open and closed sessions.” (Williams had been to only one Access Board meeting as a member when she spoke to *Universal Design Newsletter*.)

Code Language in a Civil Rights Context. Williams understands the challenges of writing code language in a civil rights context. “There are inherent differences in the way in which codes are enforced. Code language is pro-active. Civil rights enforcement is reactive or after the fact.” She says, “The challenge is to try to reconcile the concrete nature of building construction with the broader nature of civil rights laws.”

The Future of Accessibility Standards. The design and construction industry is having to deal with two trends in standards development, says Williams. “The ADA and current standards are performance-oriented. If there has been [an effort toward more specificity] -- I’m not sure that there should be. There has to be a balance between specificity and performance. Hopefully with the harmonization of ADAAG and ANSI in the future there will be very little need for the Access Board to promulgate rules.” When asked if the Access Board should get out of the rulemaking business, she notes that it may take on a different role – as a reviewer of rules and work through the open consensus process of the code making groups. “There are enough frontier issues to keep it busy,” she says.

Harmonization. Williams believes in the sanctuary that harmonization offers. “[Harmonization] would eliminate multiple layers or conflicting requirements. If there was a way to harmonize through ICC, you are getting implementation of civil rights and the user of the codes and standards will have a safe harbor. It would streamline the process.”

Rulemaking Process. When it comes to rulemaking Williams feels, “Speaking as an ICC staff member – faster is always better. Once the ADAAG is issued in a final rule, it will be about two generations behind what ICC will publish at the end of this year.”

“There are inherent differences in the way in which codes are enforced. Code language is pro-active. Civil rights enforcement is reactive or after the fact.”

Soy Williams,
Access Board
Member

ANSI A117 Committee Chairmanship Open

The ANSI A117 Committee is currently without a permanent chair. Angela Van Etten is acting chair and vice chair. When Ken Schoonover left the Building Officials and Code Administrators International (BOCA) in January his ANSI Committee membership status was altered and he was no longer eligible to serve as chair of the A117 Committee. The ANSI Membership Subcommittee recently recommended that Schoonover be accepted as an individual professional member of the full committee. According to Larry Brown, program manager with the International Code Council, the committee is expected to approve the recommendation for membership at its December meeting. Brown then expects the committee to re-appoint Schoonover as chair. ■



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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

July 9-11, 2001: *The US Architectural & Transportation Compliance Board* will hold its bi-monthly meeting in Washington, DC. For more information, contact the board at 202.272.5434 (v), 800.872.2253 (v), 202.272.5449 (tty) or www.access-board.gov.

August 3-5, 2001: *2001: A Technology Odyssey Conference*, Pittsburgh, PA. Jointly sponsored by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired and the American Foundation for the Blind, this conference will offer hands-on, in-depth training using the newest access software and devices, applications, and internet presentations to explore the future of access technology. For more information, contact 212.502.7638(v) or muslan@afb.net.

Aug. 15-17, 2001: *Florida's ADA Convention, Orlando, FL*. Organized by the Florida Americans with Disabilities Act Working Group, this conference will include a session on mediation as a means of resolving issues, a Web Tech Day and a discussion of issues related to the ADA Notification Act. For more information, contact 850.487.3423 (v), 850.410.0684 (tty), 850.414.8908 or austinj@dms.state.fl.us.

September 2001: *Americans with Disabilities Act Workshops*. Presented by the National Employment Law Institute, these interactive workshops will be held during September and Oct. 1 across the country. The workshops will cover legal trends, recent court cases and EEOC's latest policies. For more information, contact NELI at 303.861.5600 (v), 303.861.5665 (fax), or www.neli.org.

Sept. 10-12, 2001: *The US Architectural & Transportation Compliance Board* will hold its bi-monthly meeting in Washington, DC. For more information, contact the board at 202.272.5434 (v), 800.872.2253 (v), 202.272.5449 (tty) or www.access-board.gov.

Sept. 24-28, 2001: *Retrofitting for Accessibility*, Gatlinburg, TN. Sponsored by the National Center on Accessibility, this training course is designed for maintenance professionals, facility managers, site accessibility coordinators and planners. For more information contact, NCA at 812.856.4422 (v), or 812.856.4421 (tty), www.ncaonline.org.

Oct. 18-20, 2001: *Integrating Differences: Theories and Applications of Universal Design* is an international symposium exploring universal design for all. Organized by the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) Teaching Institute and others, the symposium will bring together experts from around the world in the fields of architecture, education, fashion, interior design, product design, philosophy and technology. For more information, contact FIT at www.fitnyc.suny.edu.

Nov. 1-2, 2001: *Second Western Conference on Universal Design and Home Modifications*, Braille Institute, San Diego. Sponsored in part by the Access Center of San Diego and San Diego State University - Interwork Institute, this conference will feature speakers in the areas of interior design, landscape architecture, construction, occupational therapy, social services and gerontology. For more information, call 619.293.3500 ext. 383 (v), 619.293.7757 (tty) or visit www.interwork.sdsu.edu/sdudc.



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