

◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

MAY 2005

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association Network- Serving Kentuckiana.

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

At press time we have not received information regarding our speaker for the May 16th meeting. We will likely have a speaker, but if not, a video will be shown. Food and drink will be provided at the meeting.

June's meeting will be dinner at Kingfish Restaurant; 3021 Upper River Road; 7:00 p.m. Meals provided at no cost to members in good standing (current paid membership). The cost of alcoholic beverages is the responsibility of attendees. Please join us for good food and good times.



**ACCESS CENTER
PARTNERSHIP PRESENTS**



**A SEMINAR ON
VISITABILITY &
UNIVERSAL DESIGN**



***BUILDING HOMES
FOR A LIFETIME***



Wednesday, May 18, 2005
Kentucky Society of CPAs
1735 Alliant Avenue
8:00 a.m.—12 p.m.



Registration Fee: \$60



Registration Form/Info At:
www.win.net/accessada
Phone: 502-458-9675



The following is a March, 2005 article from the Internet—ed

VISITABILITY: THE WAY OF THE FUTURE IN HOME BUILDING

**By Roger C. Claar, Mayor and James S. Boan,
Attorney, Village of Bolingbrook**

Visitability is a concept that calls for homes to be constructed so that anyone who has a mobility impairment can visit. The Village of Bolingbrook recently received the Illinois Municipal League's 2004 Innovations Award for their implementation of these Visitability standards. The award recognizes the ingenuity of their effort in the hope that their accomplishment will serve as a model for other communities considering adopting these standards.

Four years ago, the Village of Bolingbrook began a grass roots movement to make single family homes more accessible to those with disabilities and impaired mobility. Today, they are recognized across the nation as a leader in this effort.

In June 2004, the Village passed legislation calling for homebuilders and developers to conform to fundamental accessibility requirements. These requirements include having at least one no-step entrance into homes, minimum widths for doorways and hallways, a first-floor bathroom which allows for wheelchair access (while maintaining privacy) and modifications for locations of light switches and electrical outlets.

Illinois Municipal League officials visited Bolingbrook officials at their November 9th Village Board meeting to present them with the 2004 Innovations Award for "Residential Visitability." Bolingbrook showcased their program at the League's

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Derby City Area Chapter
of the
National Spinal Cord Injury
Association

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Derby City Area Chapter of the N.S.C.I.A. is a membership organization for individuals with spinal cord injuries, their families, and health professionals. Founded in 1984 as a Charter Member of the N.S.C.I.A., it was incorporated under IRS Section 501 (c) 3 as a not for profit organization. The Board of Directors consists of the Officers, Past President and the Board Members At Large.

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NSCIA
DERBY CITY CHAPTER
NEWSLETTER

Editor- Barbara Davis

Contributor- David Allgood

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conference in September and received the most votes cast by other municipal officials as the most innovative program in the showcase.

Bolingbrook's Visitability Ordinance requires all new single-family homes to be built with features that allow a person in a wheelchair to visit without any special assistance.

"It just makes sense, because they are minor modifications that should be just normal business practice throughout America," said Roger C. Claar, Mayor of Bolingbrook.

What now is law in Bolingbrook unfortunately remains on the back burner in many communities, despite efforts by national and local organizations representing the disabled to change the landscape of home building codes.

"Bolingbrook has taken a proactive role, and is setting an example to communities all over the country regarding home design features needed to make residences more accessible to everyone." said Nancy Starns, Vice President and Chief of Staff for Washington, DC-based National Organization on Disability.

"We have a long way to go when it comes to legislation to make these features standard all over the country, but Bolingbrook has stepped up and is taking a leadership role. Other communities need to take notice," Starns said.

Early on in the process there was some initial reluctance on the part of homebuilders to jump on the bandwagon, fearing that implementation of these changes in home design might reduce their profit margins.

"Everyone tends to fear change a little, and area builders just need to sit down and look at it in detail," Claar said.

"It was important that we didn't simply enact a law without consulting everyone the law would affect, because no one wants to be forced into anything.

"But once we met individually with the builders active in the Village and went through the educational process, they warmed to the idea. The builders learned that the financial impact was minimal and the only real costs were the altering of architectural design. Costs associated with an increase in labor or materials were nominal," Claar said.

In 1998 Village staff began meeting to review potential ordinance changes, and conducted a survey of single homebuilders to obtain their input. Once a cost analysis was

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HAPPY DERBY PARTY!!



Refrigerator Calendar

***2005**

MAY

2nd - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting

Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.

16th - NSCIA Derby City Area Chapter meeting, 6:30 p.m., Frazier Rehab.

Mon 4th floor dining hall; speaker to be announced. Call David or Barb at 589-6620.

21st - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.

Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions, contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or at mdclouky.org

JUNE

6th - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting

Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.

20th - NSCIA Derby City Area Chapter annual dinner at Kingfish Restaurant; 3021 Upper River

Mon Road (Zorn & River Rd.); 7:00 p.m. Meal paid by the Chapter for members in good standing.

18th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.

Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or mdclouky.org

For More Information Call
David Allgood, 502-589-6620

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back showing the average price increase per home would be no more than 1.5 percent, homebuilders' fears were stymied.

One developer led the way in accepting the changes.

"Pasquinelli Homes really stepped up to bat for us and took the lead," said Daniel Buonamici, Bolingbrook's Building Commissioner and one of the program's internal architects.

Pasquinelli began incorporating Visitability features into their new homes in the Whispering Oaks subdivision. Once Pasquinelli began doing it, other builders followed suit.

From 1999 to June 24, 2004, when the Visitability Ordinance was adopted as law, more than a dozen area home builders voluntarily complied with the program, and Bolingbrook's brisk home sales didn't skip a beat, to the contentment of the homebuilding community.

About 2,000 homes built in Bolingbrook over the last three years now are accessible, and by the time the Village builds out to a population of 88,000 in another 10 years, an additional 3,500 homes will meet Visitability standards.

Clair said he became an advocate of creating Visitability codes when his mother began using a walker about five years ago and family members struggled with the possibility of adding grab bars to the shower in the residence she occupied in Effingham.

"We looked at what the cost would be to retrofit the bathroom shower, and it was very expensive, almost cost-prohibitive," Clair said. "That got me very interested in making this code."

The program has drawn the attention of communities in Illinois, as well as nationally.

"We have received calls asking us to offer information from communities like Silver Springs, Colorado, and San Diego," said Buonamici.

What other communities have found out is that the modifications do not impact the sale or resale value of the home, and in fact, are considered features.

"This ordinance isn't only for the resident who is disabled and in a wheelchair, but for those people who have friends or relatives who may want to visit the home and have impaired mobility, such as a broken leg, and have need to use a chair," Buonamici said.

"Wider doors also make it that much easier for people who are moving furniture in and out of a home, or pulling luggage on wheels," Buonamici

Starns says the codes are necessary because, "As our population ages everyone is likely to encounter some sort of disability or lack of mobility. Since our entire country has enjoyed a high level of mobility, a loss of mobility will not be easily accepted."

"As our population moves and relocates, especially at retirement age, doesn't it just make sense that the codes for homes should be consistent throughout the country?" Starns said.

Bolingbrook's new ordinance had the strong support of the community as well. Edward Bannister, a Bolingbrook resident, not only supported the ordinance, but helped lobby for it.

Bannister, a past president and member of the Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities and the Vice President of the statewide Rehabilitation Board, was one of the first residents to retrofit a home in town to accommodate a wheelchair.

Bannister sat in on many meetings that eventually led to the program's adoption.

"With the aging of baby boomers, the existing senior population, and the disability population now numbering 54 million and increasing, accessible homes are something that every city in America must address eventually," Bannister said.

"I am fortunate that, being disabled, I live in Bolingbrook, because the mayor and his staff had the foresight to ensure that accessible single family homes are available to the citizens of this village," Bannister said.

The modifications seem minor, but many communities still have yet to act on Visitability requirements.

One neighboring community to Bolingbrook adopted similar ordinances, but failed to require a no-step entrance.

"A city goes and requires almost all of the features necessary, but fails to require a no-step entrance, so it makes it difficult for people in wheelchairs to enter the homes and take advantage of the other features. Why even adopt the others in the first place?" Bannister said.

Any concerns that the features might hurt a home's resale value are unfounded, say local realtors.

"Over the last few years I have found I can use these features as selling points, because eventually people want to get top dollar for their homes," said Eric Jensen, a sales consultant for Realty World Jensen, Bolingbrook.

"These items increase not just the quality of living for homeowners, but the quality of the home itself. They

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don't detract," Jensen said.

Among the "Visitability Criteria" are:

- One no-step entrance to the home — many homes have incorporated that feature into a side entrance or garage entrance, but many feature it prominently in the front entrance. "The slope is so gradual approaching the front door, you never really notice it," Buonamici said.
- One bathroom on the same level as the no-step entrance — with a minimum 32-inch clear doorway and path to fixtures, occupants must be able to pull in and shut the door behind them.
- Bathroom wall reinforcement for grab bars — these must be installed before drywall and finishing a bathroom, and can use simple grade wood. Once installed, these may go unused for years, but homeowners can then install grab bars economically rather than have to tear out walls and build in infrastructure, an expensive option.
- Minimum 42-inch wide hallways and passageways — when located on the same level as the no-step entrance.
- Electrical wall outlets/receptacles shall be 15 inches above the finished floor — minimum requirement when measured from the finished floor to the center of the light switch.
- Wall switches controlling light fixtures and fans shall be a maximum 48 inches above the finished floor — when measured from the finished floor to the center of the switch.
- All exterior and interior doors shall be 3-feet in width — all doors must provide a minimum of 32-inches of clear opening.

For further information, contact the Village of Bolingbrook at 630/226-8400.



FOR SALE!!!!



***2003 Ford F-250 lift-equipped green/gray van;** leather seats, TV, DVD player. Playstation hookup, am-fm radio. Rick Miller, 937-2245.

***Shower Chair; 2 yrs old, negotiable; 2 RoHo cushions; low profile; \$150 each; Invacare 900 Action Power Chair; 4 yrs. Old; \$600. Call 448-5296.**

***RoHo High Profile 16x16 cushions; \$160; 589-6620.**

***Cookbooks for Sale:** Recipes compiled by Chapter members; \$10:00. Call David @ 589-6620.

***Video tapes for sale.** Various topics related to spinal cord injuries. Call David Allgood or Buddy Lawson.

****If assistance is needed to pay for any of the above items, contact Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation at 1-800-327-5287 for information on loans at 5% interest to qualified candidates.*

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO
PLACE AN AD IN FOR SALES,
CALL 589-6620. ASK FOR
BARB OR DAVID.**

