

Access Abilities



Specialized Home Design.

34 Applewood Drive, Sparta, Michigan 49345
PH 616.887.8130 ❖ Fax 616.887.2026 ❖ <http://www.shdesigns.net>

Access Abilities

April 2011



"The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month." ~ Henry Van Dyke

...so, with that quote for "Spring" in mind, today is April 19th, 2011 and I am looking out the window while I'm writing this and it is HAILING!!!

This has been such a long, bitter & harsh winter for many here in Michigan, as well as many other states across the country.

We sure do hope that old man winter will finally rest and we

GARDENING FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

It is Spring time once again and with Spring comes planting your gardens. Many enjoy gardening and working around the home. Today, I wish to take time to talk a bit about home gardening while contending with a disability. There are many specific scenarios that we could discuss; however let us talk in general about an enabling garden and patio region.

First, make sure that if one needs to utilize a wheelchair or other assistive device (i.e. walker, cane, etc.) that the entry/exit door leading outside is barrier free. Try to have a 36" wide doorway with ½" beveled or ¼" squared threshold. When one can eliminate steps going from the home onto the rear patio regions, everyone can find it a more pleasurable destination. If steps are present, make sure you have a sound structure with sturdy handrails on either side of the steps. Extend the handrails 12" minimally at both the top and bottom of the steps. If a ramp is required, make sure you allow yourself adequate landing space both at the top and the bottom of the ramp. In this article, I will not get into the specifics of ramps other than to advise you to consult a specialist when considering a ramp system.

Now, if we anticipate a patio region in the backyard, make sure you allow for patio furniture and the appropriate space relationships. Allow minimally a 5'x5' turning radius to make a 360° turn with a manual wheelchair or 6'x6' for a power recline wheelchair. If space is limited and one has a wheelchair then at

will soon be able to enjoy the overdue Spring we are so deserving of.

Hopefully we will start to embrace the warmer weather so that we can soon begin to enjoy spending afternoons outside getting our hands dirty. Maybe working out in the yard, picking up the leftover fall leaves, or maybe planting a vegetable garden or a flower garden. Check out the feature article this month for those gardening with disabilities.



So...maybe...just maybe this crazy weather will "get with the program" so that we can all start gardening!

Easter was last weekend. Scott, Vicki and Sally at Specialized Home Design hope you all had a

HOPPY

least allow for a "T" turn in which one can turn 180° in a confined space. This can be accomplished with minimally 36" at the top of the "T" and 36" in the leg of the "T". Allow 24" where the individual can pull into the leg of the "T" and pull back out and reverse directions. One needs a minimum space of 60"x60" "T"-shaped space to provide a 180° turn of a wheelchair. This is illustrated in the ANSI A117.1 standards.

One also needs to consider what type of materials to utilize in the patio region. Different types of materials such as concrete, asphalt, wood, stones, bricks, etc. should be taken into consideration. Remember that as one travels over this region in a wheelchair or with a walker, significant elevation changes should be eliminated. If one chooses a pattern that incorporates varying elevations, one can create significant obstacles for those that utilize an assistive device. Pathways can become a washboard for those using a wheelchair. It is recommended that different color(s) be utilized when going from one location on a patio or pathway to another. For this region, a small texture or color difference will signal the user that there is a change coming. For those with low vision, this can be very helpful. The exact type of material that should be used within a specific region should be investigated and considered thoroughly based on the individuals needs. Also keep in mind that asphalt and concrete can become very hot in certain environments.

As one considers the width of the pathways within the garden region, allow 48" minimally and 60" if one expects to have two wheelchairs traveling along the same pathway. Another consideration is lighting along the pathways and around the patio region. Accenting with lights can enhance your enjoyment long into the evening hours. Motion detector lighting can make your travel easy and enjoyable, especially if you are restricted by a disability.

Let's now discuss containers and planters within the garden region. Typically those who cannot stand for long periods of time (fatigues easily or frail) may wish to do their gardening from the seated position. One may want to have plant containers at varying



EASTER!!!

Hopefully you took the time to enjoy this special holiday with family and loved ones.

UPCOMING SEMINARS:

Scott Anderle, PT, CAPS, may be coming to a city near you to present a seminar on universal and accessible home design.

Check out the upcoming seminars below:

"THE ABC'S OF HOME MODIFICATIONS FOR PATIENTS WITH PHYSICAL AND NEUROLOGICAL DIABILITIES"

5/11/11 LONG ISLAND, NY

5/12/11 MANHATTAN, NY

5/13/11 QUEENS, NY

[SEE THE BROCHURE](#)

5/18/11 BURLINGTON, VT

5/19/11 ALBANY, NY

5/20/11 WHITE PLAINS, NY

heights throughout the patio/garden region. These may range from 18" up to 34". One can have planters at higher levels but it will become more challenging the higher they are. Many individuals prefer tiered planters that may be at a higher vertical level; however specialty pieces of equipment will then need to be utilized. There are many types of hand tools that can make working in the garden region more practical and enjoyable for those who work from a seated position. Following are pictures of several gardening tools from Craig Hospital Horticultural Department and Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.



Gardening tools



More gardening tools

Another consideration is a vertical wall garden by using walls, fences, arbors and railings. Adding these elements can make the patio/garden region interesting to all. One should consider

[SEE THE BROCHURE](#)

**"SPECIALTY PRODUCTS
FOR HOME
ACCESSIBILITY AND
INDEPENDENCE"**

4/20/11 SAN ANTONIO, TX

4/21/11 AUSTIN, TX

4/22/11 HOUSTON, TX

[SEE THE BROCHURE](#)

6/15/11 PARAMUS, NJ

6/16/11 ADDISON, NJ

6/17/11 ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

[SEE THE BROCHURE](#)

6/22/11 SPRINGFIELD, MO

6/23/11 TULSA, OK

6/24/11 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

[SEE THE BROCHURE](#)

**You may register for these seminars through Cross Country Education at 800-397-0180 or at

[Cross Country](#)

[Education's](#) website:



(Click on link above

hanging baskets with ropes and pulleys. The individual can lower the basket and tend to his or her plants and raise them back up and out of the way.

If one wished to build a planter box allowing access under it for a seated gardener, then one will usually have the planter box no more than 24" deep with minimally 27" of vertical knee space for the seated gardener. Always measure the wheelchair or stool with the individual seated in it prior to building the planter box. This allows for an accurate measurement when building access for the gardener. It is recommended that a minimum of 30" be allowed for width but 36" or more is ideal.

Another item that should be addressed is the water faucet. If possible, allow for a raised water faucet with a lever handle preferably.



The following pictures demonstrate different types of enabling gardens with some of the concepts/principles mentioned in this article.

or on the Logo)

**WE ARE PROUD TO
ANNOUNCE:**

Scott's live seminars are
now available as online
seminars:

["THE ABC'S OF HOME
MODIFICATIONS FOR
PATIENTS WITH PHYSICAL
AND NEUROLOGICAL
DISABILITIES"](#)

["SPECIALTY PRODUCTS FOR
HOME ACCESSIBILITY AND
INDEPENDENCE"](#)

["EVALUATING AND WRITING
AN EFFECTIVE HOME
MODIFICATION
EVALUATION: THE DO'S
AND DON'TS"](#)

Click on the "TITLES"
above for an overview of
each seminar.

Click on the logo below to
order your online version:



COME & CHECK US OUT
ON [Facebook](#) &
our [BLOG!](#) "LIKE" us to



Accessible pathway



Another accessible pathway



Raised and tall containers for gardening

stay updated on our newest posts.

ATTENTION STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS!

The CHER® makes an excellent teaching tool that can easily be incorporated into your program(s) curriculum. Many higher educational facilities are utilizing the CHER® to teach future professionals on universal and accessible home design, and the importance of a detailed and comprehensive home evaluation report. Both students and professors can utilize the CHER® as a reporting tool, reference guide, resource of information, and much more! Click [HERE](#) for more information!

THE LATEST UNIVERSITIES TO UTILIZE THE CHER® IN THEIR CURRICULUMS:

Alvernia University
(Reading, PA) - Occupational Therapy Graduate Students

Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI) - Physical Therapy Students (2nd year using the CHER)

Concordia University Wisconsin (Mequon, WI) -



Raised containers with accessibility underneath



Another view of raised containers with accessibility underneath



Occupational Therapy Students

Wayne State University
(Detroit, MI) - Occupational
Therapy Students

Click [here](#) to learn more about
the



April Showers...



...bring May Flowers

Be sure to visit Specialized
Home Design's [website](#) and
click on the 'Events' tab.
Here, one can view the
most up-to-date list of
Scott Anderle's speaking
opportunities that are
available for one to
attend. This list is updated
frequently, so be sure to
visit often.

**A UNIQUE MARKETING
OPPORTUNITY FOR
YOUR COMPANY:**

A wall garden



Another wall garden

You can find more information about enabling gardens through
the sites listed below:



Buehler Enabling Garden



American Horticultural Society



Denver Botanical Gardens

Click [here](#) to learn more about the RESOURCE DIRECTORY within the CHER®.

Click [here](#) to view directions to create your RESOURCE DIRECTORY account within the CHER®.

Have a great Spring!

Today, I have discussed with you several recommendations within the garden region. There are many more considerations; however I will leave you to explore the many options available. For now, God Bless and I hope all your gardening activities bring you joy and happiness.

-Scott Anderle, PT, CAPS

“I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in tune once more” ~ John Burroughs



HAPPY GARDENING

You are receiving this email newsletter because you opted to receive information on universal and accessible home design from Specialized Home Design, Inc.

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

Would you like to reach approximately 2000 people each month advertising your products and/or services? We are pleased to offer the opportunity to advertise in our monthly newsletter. For more information, please contact Vicki at vicki@shdesigns.net or 616-887-8130.

[Unsubscribe](#) sally@shdesigns.net from this list.

Our mailing address is:
Specialized Home Design, Inc. 34 Applewood Dr. Sparta, MI 49345

Our telephone:
616-887-8130

Copyright (C) 2008 Specialized Home Design, Inc. All rights reserved.

[Forward](#) this email to a friend

[Update your profile](#)