



Community Access Monitor (CAM) Training

For two days in April, the Andover Commission on Disabilities hosted a Community Access Monitor Training (CAM) at the Mass. School of Law in Andover. The conference, facilitated by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), taught people from across the state about Titles II and III of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and the rules of the Mass. Architectural Access Board (AAB). These define and enforce the laws governing accessibility for people with disabilities in Massachusetts.

There was excellent attendance with 12 people from Andover attending of the total of 30 attendees. Attendees included people with disabilities, members of local Commissions on Disability, municipal employees, building inspectors and others. Once trained, one may choose to be certified to work as a volunteer in their communities to promote access for people with disabilities. Our thanks to Myra Berloff, Director of the Massachusetts Office on Disability for her team's presentations. Discussed were the regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and the Americans with Disability Act Standards for Accessible Design. From the MOD Website, <http://www.mass.gov/mod> "Working closely with the disability community, MOD

established the CAM program". Since the creation of the CAM training program, 1,000's of people have been trained by the Massachusetts Office on Disability to survey buildings for accessibility and to advocate for compliance.

Playgrounds for Everybody

In keeping with the mission of addressing Andover's needs for families with disabilities, and the spirit of believing that playgrounds are for the enjoyment of all children, we are very pleased to be able to provide some equipment. After researching current Andover play facilities, the ACOD has procured some exciting additions to the Shawsheen School playground. We met with the principal, Mrs. O'Brien and collaboratively selected three additions to the current equipment available. This equipment includes a spring platform and two individual spring seats. The addition of this equipment will assist in providing enjoyment for all children, inclusive of those with special needs disabilities.

Memorial Hall Library Access Grant

Memorial Hall Library continues to implement the federal grant entitled "Serving People with Disabilities". A workshop for library staff and town workers was held on April 14, 2004 with Jennifer Buxton of Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. Entitled "Improving Customer Service to People with Disabilities" the workshop was attended by more than 40 people and focused on increasing awareness, heightening sensitivity, practicing etiquette and assistive technology.

Jennifer gave a demonstration to the reference librarians of the accessibility features of Windows 2000 and Internet Explorer. One of the library's reference staff, Ruth Rosensweig, wrote a brief description of how to set up the accessibility features according to the patron's need. Ms. Rosen-

sweig also prepared a list of nine disability-related Internet sites. These disability sites and the library's accessibility features are now posted on the disabilities page of the MHL home page.

To assist people with hearing disabilities, the library's lecture hall has several assistive listening devices that amplify sound coming through the sound system. The library has also installed larger monitors at the public Internet computers. The larger and sharper monitors make the accessibility features of Windows more valuable to our patrons.

As Memorial Hall Library moves into the next phase of the "Improving Services for People with Disabilities" grant, it will be working to design and set specifications for ADA compliant signage. *Cont'd on page 2*

ACOD presents The Chateau Restaurant a plaque for accessibility



are familiar with ADA specifications, having adapted their other three restaurants to allow access to wheelchairs, walkers and other assistive devices. Early in the construction phase of the Chateau, Joe Nocera, President, Gerry Fugiero, Operations Director, their architect, project director and contractor willingly met with volunteer members of the Andover Commission to review the blueprints and discuss specific needs. The recommendations made by the commission were welcome and implemented. In presenting the commendation, Commission member, Maddy St. Amand stated that the Chateau at River Road is a model to businesses in the Merrimack Valley and thanked the owners for their close attention to detail and full collaboration with Kaija Gilmore, Inspector of Buildings.

From left: Town Manager Buzz Stapczynski, Selectman Mary Lyman, Chateau owner Joseph Nocera, general manager Gerry Fugiero, Commission Members: Maddy St. Amand, Chairman Justin Coppola Sr., Justin Coppola Jr. and Donna Gorzela and building director Kaija Gilmore.

On Tuesday, May 25, the Andover Commission on Disability presented a plaque of commendation to the owners and management of the Chateau Restaurant at River Road. The award is the first of its kind to be presented to a local business for recognition of the needs of the disabled and its design that accommodates their particular needs. Access has been a major focus of the commission since it was established in the mid-nineties. The federal legislation known as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) went into law in 1990, yet 14 years later, more than 60% of businesses have structural obstacles that prevent the disabled to enter and function as consumers. The Nocera family, owners of the Chateau,

Town Manager, Buzz Stapczynski reflected that the Chateau very clearly set a new standard for greater Andover businesses and commended the owners on being the first recipient of such an award by the Commission on Disability.

With the upcoming implementation of the Main Street Project in Andover, business owners and property owners are urged to reassess their entrances and provisions for disabled access. Commission members are available to interpret ADA specifications in order to reach compliance with existing federal and state laws.

The Andover Commission on Disability meets the fourth Thursday of each month at the town library. We invite all people interested in the work of the commission to attend our open meetings and hear what we are doing in Andover.

Memorial Hall Library Access Grant (cont'd from page 1)

The grant will fund the ADA-compliant signs on doors and rooms and directional signs at entrances, on each level, and above the public desks. Once the signs are installed, every person using the library will find it easier to navigate around the building and find materials and other resources. The library is also working to redesign new circulation and reference desks. Each desk will have a lowered area for people in wheelchairs or patrons who want to sit. The desks are scheduled for installation in September.

Newsletter Feedback Welcomed

Send comments to coppolaj@comcast.net or leave message @ 978-475-0363