

## Ramp from page C1

And now that she's reclaimed her right to out-doors, Hutchinson dreams of a van with a chairlift. "Maybe God will hear my prayer," she said.

It was a local social organization that heard her prayer for a way out of her house. Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency, headquartered in Pontiac and serving throughout the two counties, included Hutchinson's home in its pilot program of five ramps.

Jerry Sedick, OLHSA's associate director, said the need for this service is "overwhelming." The Agency built its first ramp

last December using grants from the United Way of Oakland County and the Area on Aging.

As much as OLHSA needs funds, Sedick said, it needs volunteers to do the construction work. Willingness, he said, can be more important than skill. While it takes about a week or so to do the job, he said, volunteers who can give any amount of time are vital to the program's operation.

Volunteers can contact Sedick at (248) 209-2650.

**Commercial sources**  
There also are commercial

sources for residential wheelchair ramps. Among them are Wright & Filippa, Inc., of Rochester Hills, and Caring Solutions, of Farmington Hills.

A.J. Filippa, CEO of his company, said cost of an average ramp without complicated turns is about \$3-4,000. His company generally uses treated wood for permanent installations. Temporary ramps are priced at a fixed fee for installation and removal and a minimum of three-months rental, totaling about \$1,700-\$2,200.

Filippa points out that city building permits are required and various state regulations must be followed. Do-it-yourselfers ought to know that every inch of rise necessitates 12 inches of ramp; every 30

feet of ramp require a resting platform. Railing spindles must be on a maximum of 4-inch centers to prevent child head entrapment.

At Caring Solutions, executive assistant Janet Parker said her company likes to build the ramp at the rear of the house whenever possible, for appearance and security. When the ramp must be at the front of the house, "We try to integrate landscaping to reduce the harshness of the appearance." She said her company even has built ramps inside attached garages. Her company's average ramps, she said, can be in the \$2-6,000 range.

Both companies say that under certain conditions, some insurance plans can help with the cost of the ramp.

## Marketplace



**Spring wreath:** This one-of-a-kind door wreath announces spring with its paper and fabric daisies, lilacs and lilies all highlighted by a big ribbon. The custom wreaths are available at Artistic Expressions, Custom Florals by Patricia, in Birmingham. Prices depend on customer's requirements and flowers used. This one is \$145. For more information, call (248) 644-8439. Marketplace spotlights items available at retail stores in the Observer & Eccentric coverage areas. To submit an item for consideration, send a photo of it to "Marketplace," 805 East Maple Road, Birmingham 48009. Please include a contact phone number.

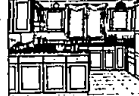
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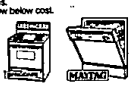
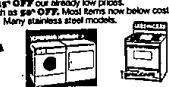
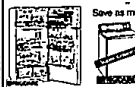


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