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RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) NEWSLETTER - March 2004

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'Toilet Ambassadors' from Si Ling Primary School

The recent ratings of some public toilets (*Real stinkers: bus interchange loos, Strait Times, 9 Feb 2004*) highlighted that the issue of clean toilets are very important. It is also equally or more important to educate our next generation about good Toilet Hygiene & Etiquette.



Si Ling's Also OK! Programme is about taking a hands-on approach in maintaining the school's toilets; it is also about visiting public toilets for some 320 pupils from Primary 5 from 9th-12th March; and it is also about pupils from the whole school adopting the toilet theme for projects in their English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Health Education, Music and Arts & Crafts subjects.



This unusual project is aimed at driving home the message of social responsibility and good toilet hygiene habits. It is hoped that by the end of the project the pupils would have acquired sufficient knowledge and exposure to appreciate the need to keep toilets clean after use, and also adopt good toilet hygiene habits.

This project is launched under the "Si Ling's Also OK" programme, patterned after the national Singapore's OK Campaign. Working in conjunction with the school is the North West Community Development Council and the Restroom Association of

Singapore (RAS), a not for profit organisation set up to promote good toilet habits and clean toilets through public education.



To prepare the pupils, training will be given to the pupils under the criteria of RAS' Happy Toilet Programme, and that includes the visits to the public toilets. Together with their teachers, the Primary 5 pupils are required to apply what they have learnt and use their creativity to improve the ambience, maintenance and cleanliness* of the toilets within their school, which are assigned to them in different clusters. The best toilet will then be picked as the winner and be awarded Happy Toilet ratings by the RAS.



As part of the project's launch on 9 March 2004, the students will visit selected toilets that have been awarded Happy Toilets. They will get an understanding of how toilets are assessed by the RAS. Through this they will understand how toilets are properly designed, maintained, cleaned and how users should treat them.

Among the places these students will visit include Tampines Mall, Katong Park, ST Eating House, Aljunied Town Council's Hougang Hawker Centre and the Singapore Zoo, whose toilets have received 4 or 5 stars rating from RAS.

An Open House will also be organised for the invited guests, parents and the community to view these toilets on Thursday 27 May 2004, in conjunction with the school's official opening.

News Bites

'Yuck, can my child use that toilet?'



'*Stuck in S'pore No stroll(er) in the park*' appeared in the New Paper on Sunday on 14 March 2004. It was an article that highlighted whether Singapore is 'baby friendly'. Under the sub-heading '*Yuck, can my child use that toilet?*' there were three things that 14 parents interviewed wanted most.

The first is having enough 'child & family friendly' toilets i.e. diaper changing stations, seat to strap the child while the mother uses the toilet, child-size potty / urinals or child-size toilet seat, child height wash basin etc. The second is having a 'no-touch' toilet which is important for everyone. Lastly, also having 'child & family friendly' toilets in men's toilets (some shopping centres like Tampines Mall has a separate room for diaper changing, located in between the male & female toilets). We hope that these features become common place in Singapore very soon.

Southwest District 3 Desired Public Health Outcome



Clementi is the third stop of the overarching plan of Southwest Public Health & Hygiene Committee to roll out 3 public health goals. The first and second stops being Boon Lay and Taman Jurong respectively where their MP launched the goals for their constituencies.



The debut launch of Southwest 3 public health goals was at Harbourfront Centre Community Health Fair under Telok Blangah constituency. The Clementi launch's guest of honour was MP Mr. Arthur Fong. In conjunction with the latest NEA initiative "Rat Attack!" the grass root leaders and merchants intend to make the 18 constituencies within the CDC a cleaner and healthier place. The three initiatives are:

1. A Community that does not spread bugs!
2. Litter Free Environment
3. Clean, Sparkling Toilets

RAS was invited to be part of the activities. And during the launch on Sunday morning at the outside the busy market & food centre at Blk 352, Clementi Ave 2, Clean Toilets were also featured in a game and posters.



NVPC Campaign – Volunteer by doing what you do best!

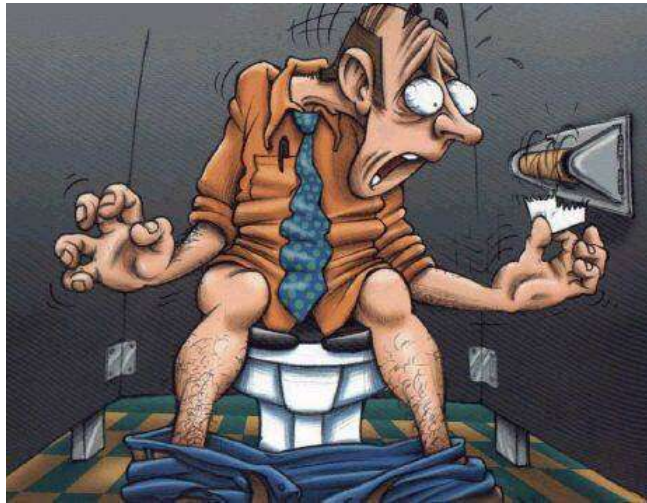


This new NVPC Campaign calls for Singaporeans to volunteer by sharing what they enjoy doing to make a difference in the lives of those in need amongst us.

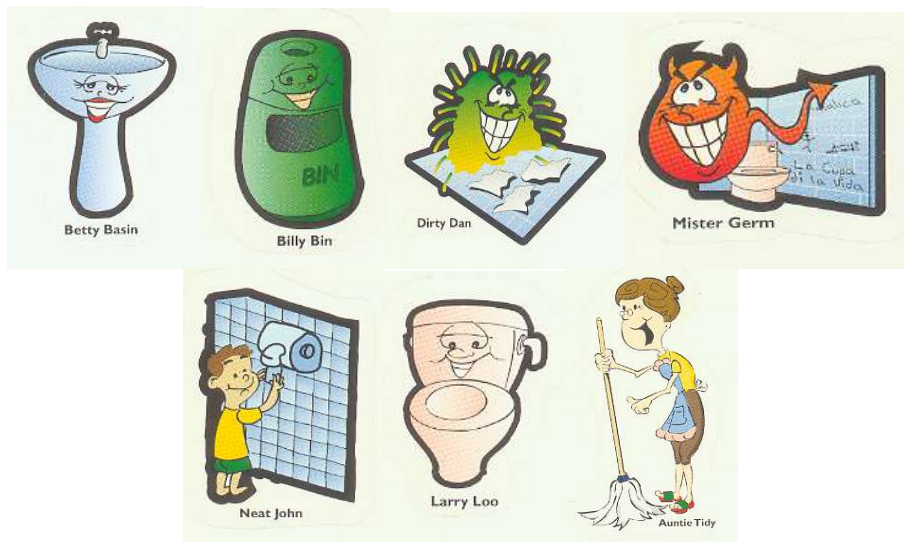
"Volunteering enriches your life. At the same time, it helps you to reach out to touch the lives of others in meaningful ways. It is one of the best ways of contributing to the community. Volunteering is often more heart work than hard work. As the theme of this Campaign illustrates, all it takes is to do what you are already doing," said Mr Heng Chee How, Mayor of Central Singapore District and MP for Jalan Besar GRC. More information at www.nvpc.org.sg

*****Commercial Break*****

Sometimes, when we surf the net, we come across some interesting pictures. We are serious in what we are doing, but we also believe that at times having a sense of humour is just as important. Kudos to the authors of these images:



Now where have we seen these before.....



*****Commercial Break*****

Tourism & Toilets – An Australian Perspective



The following are excerpts, and the full text can be found at <http://www.worldtoilet.org/articles/articles.htm> We acknowledge this contribution from William Chapman, the president of the Australian Toilet Association.

Like many countries placing great emphasis on the economic advantage of tourism, the provision of infrastructure supporting tourism is of paramount importance. Tourism can involve both local as well as visitors from other parts of a country and overseas. Facilities provided are related to the attractiveness of the tourists' area being promoted, its environment and its capacity to absorb visitors of high or low numbers.

Good toilets are a necessity as part of any tourism infrastructure in attracting good supportive comment and visitation by tourists. The size, appearance, design and maintenance of toilets will also be related to other infrastructure at the particular site as well as its surrounds.



Tourist toilets have for many years assisted in the development of towns in Australia due to the wide open spaces and the large distances between our towns and cities. Similarly the promotion of remote areas having unusual and attractive natural features has required the development of world class infrastructure which has contributed greatly to improved toilet facilities.

It is a proven fact that good toilets attract tourists to an area and assist in relaxed travelling. A good toilet supports and enhances the service

provided to tourists and helps attract people to an area. Commercial shopping facilities that do not provide this basic service will not support on going attraction. The same can be applied to a toilet structure.

National Toilet Map

In 2001 the Federal Minister for Aged Care launched the National Public Toilet Map, which identifies the location of more than 13000 public toilet facilities in Australian towns and cities, including rural areas and along major travel routes.



The Map can be easily accessed through www.toiletmap.gov.au Maps of specific locations can be downloaded and printed from the Website for later use.

Although the Map will be of use to all persons requiring information about public toilets, the Government recognizes that incontinence can be an isolating condition, which makes travel difficult. For this reason the Map (the centrepiece of the Governments' A\$15M national continence strategy) was designed specifically to assist persons experiencing incontinence with travel and daily living arrangements. The Minister recognised that for fear of not being able to find a toilet quickly, people with this ailment prevented them from taking part in kinds of activities others take for granted. Members of the general public and tourists wishing to identify the nearest public toilet locations find the Website useful.

People living with incontinence and / or their carers, can plan toilet locations for short or long trips and people with disabilities can identify toilets with disability access.

People who do not have access to a computer can obtain maps from councils and potentially other outlets such as motor vehicle associations, tourist information centre and support services

The Public Toilet Map through a detailed legend can assist with:



- Finding toilets in a locality
- Finding the opening hours of toilets
- Identifying toilets with disability access separately for male and female
- Identifying service stations with toilets
- Identifying Shopping Centres and fast food outlets with toilets
- Planning a trip or holiday by identifying suitable locations for a break
- Planning a trip around town for social or business purposes
- Improving the independence and quality of life for persons experiencing incontinence

The map should be recognised as a necessity for all tourist promoting countries particularly for travelling ageing populations.

For the full text, please visit <http://www.worldtoilet.org/articles/articles.htm> or visit the Australian Toilet Map at www.toiletmap.gov.au

Your Help Is Needed

Restroom Association of Singapore is a non-profit organization and we need YOU! We need you to give public toilets a voice to tell the public that their simple but good toilet behavior such as “flushing the toilet after use, and not flicking excess water off their hands onto the floor” can facilitate and convert dirty public toilets to clean public toilets.

BE OUR VOLUNTEERS

Just call 65 6841 1621 to register personally! OR: Obtain a form from our website at www.toilet.org.sg and email it to info@toilet.org.sg or fax to 65 6841 2891.