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RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) NEWSLETTER - September 2004

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Singapore's OK - Our Town Sparkles 2004 and Beyond



The Restroom Association of Singapore (RAS) continues to be a strategic partner in Our Town Sparkles. This year, encouraging the residents to take responsibility for public health and social hygiene will have to be an effort going beyond 2004.

Headed by Madam Cynthia Phua, MP for Aljunied GRC, she said: "While there had been improvements since the last campaign, there is still a lot that can be done. These are the areas where there is high human traffic and so we need everyone to pay even closer attention to public hygiene and social responsibility."



She said this year is unlike 2003 where there was the outbreak of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) to serve as stark reminder of the need for public hygiene and social responsibility. "We have to be vigilant for you never know when there can be another outbreak not only of SARS, but also the bird flu, mad cow disease and other airborne diseases," said Madam Phua.

Residents in the heartlands remain the central focus of the campaign as the Steering Committee, formed by the 14 PAP Town Councils, rolls out the various activities and public education programmes under a new 5Ps approach. The five Ps are Publicity and feedback; Public education; Public participation; Performance excellence; and Pride and responsibility.



For its part, RAS will be awarding Happy Toilets to Coffee Shops who keep their toilets cleaned and well-maintained. And RAS planned to help coffee shop owners by arranging for professional cleaners for their toilets, by way of Cluster Cleaning and the NEA Toilet Upgrading Programme (TUP).

What is 'Cluster Cleaning'? It is getting professional cleaners to clean and maintain a group or a chain of coffee shops' toilets. In doing this, the toilets are cleaned and the cost of cleaning is kept affordable.

In addition, as part of Social Responsibility programme for the younger generation, RAS will be implementing the Happy Toilet School Programme. A brief look at the programme, which invites all Primary Schools to participate:



- Phase 1 – Training of supervising teachers
- Phase 2 – School Assembly Talk
- Phase 3 – Visits to Happy Toilets
- Phase 4 – Decoration of School Toilets / Toilet themes for School Subjects
- Phase 5 – Reward and/or recognition of best efforts

News Bites

Drink-drive message goes down the toilet, 16.09.2004, 1.20pm

Urinals in pubs and hotels across New Zealand are the latest battleground in the war on drink-driving.

Signs in the urinals are heat-activated and will display a message when hit by warm liquid.

They will say either: "If you drink then don't drive you're a bloody legend" (with a picture of a taxi) or: "If you drink then drive you're a bloody idiot" (with a picture of a wrecked car).

The message disappears when the urinal cools down, ready to be re-activated by the next visitor.

The campaign is being run by the Land Transport Safety Authority with the slogan: "Which car will you piss off in tonight?".

Liz Taylor-Read at the LTSA said: "This will definitely be a 'moment of truth' experience for any bloke who goes to the toilet in one of the participating pubs.



"These advertisements are designed to get men thinking of the consequences of drinking and driving before they make the wrong decision."

She said crash statistics from the past 18 months show 81 per cent of drinking drivers in crashes were male.

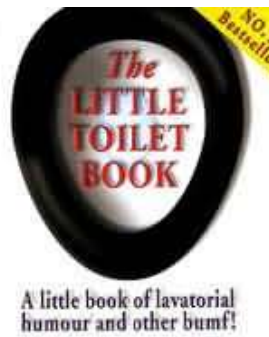
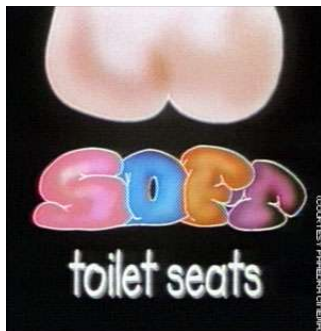
Last year, 131 people were killed in drink-driving crashes – compared to 108 in 2002 and 117 in 2001.

Drinking drivers kill and injure a substantial number of other people each year. Last year they injured or killed 580

of their own passengers, 310 occupants of other vehicles and 45 pedestrians and cyclists.

Members of the Hotel Association of New Zealand have volunteered to take part in the scheme. By the end of September almost 260 pubs and hotels will have the urinal billboards in place.

Bottoms Up



Who says going to the Toilet is boring?

Students Campaign for Disabled Toilet Access

A group of Bournemouth University students are to visit bars and clubs in the town to check they comply with the new Disability and Discrimination Act.

Adam Hyland, the disability officer for the students' union, will be checking pubs, restaurants, bars, swimming pool and cinemas as part of charity group Scope's Free 2 Pee campaign.

The students will start their evening at Bar So, in the Exeter Hotel, and visit at least five other venues before finishing at the student union nightclub The Old Firestation, on Holdenhurst Road.



Will Page, president of the student union, said: "This is a light hearted but serious attempt at making service providers aware of the difficulties disabled people have when accessing the toilet when away from home.

"Free 2 Pee wants disabled people, non-disabled people and businesses to work together to eradicate 'disablism' and ensure that disabled people are free to go out and have fun at any club, pub, cinema, restaurant, pool, park and bowling alley in the UK."

New WTO Members

In 2004, World Toilet Organisation (WTO) added four new members to the list, they are:

1. North American Restroom Association (NARA)
2. Thai Toilet Foundation (TTF)
3. Shanghai City Appearance and Environmental Sanitation Administration Bureau (SCAESAB)
4. Turkey Toilet Association (TTA)

North American Restroom Association (NARA)

NARA was recently established (Sept 04) and is currently a nonprofit subsidiary of the International Paruresis Association. It's mission will cover issues relating to Restroom Design, Restroom Availability, Health Impact Clearing house, Restroom Technology and Municipal Friendliness rating.

Steven Soifer Ph.D., LGSW, is the President of the International Paruresis Association (IPA) and the Co-Founder, NARA. For more information on NARA's members, please visit www.paruresis.org and www.metroped.org



Voted the nation's finest restroom in 2004 was the Mediterranean-style loo at the Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

"Where else can you use a restroom and simultaneously pretend you are a pharaoh amongst the pyramids, Caesar surrounded by Rome's classical architecture, the pontiff or a CEO?" said Ruth Kohler, the center's director

Thai Toilet Foundation (TTF)

As for TTF, it is headed by Senator Mechai Viravaidya. Better known as 'Mr. Condom' Senator Mechai has raised awareness of safe sex in Thailand, and received numerous international awards for his unselfish work, has started TTF. He intends to promote Clean Toilets the same way he did for condoms.

He once said "The condom, not the diamond, is now a girl's best friend." In time to come, could it be 'Clean toilets will no longer be a taboo, and becomes a person's best friend?'

SCAESAB

Shanghai City Appearance and Environmental Sanitation Administration Bureau (SCAESAB) will be launching its toilet activities with a big bang. Come May 2005, SA will be holding a World Toilet Forum & Expo. SCAESAB strives to become a role model, and the theme will be 'Gracious Living for a Modern City'

Shanghai has 2,085 government-run public toilets. Half of them are in downtown areas. There are 1,740 toilets in public places such as supermarkets and entertainment centres open to the public. That adds up to roughly one toilet for every 300 square metres.

Public toilets in Luwan, Huangpu and Hongkou districts have water-free urinals that do not need flushing and are odour-free.

Another problem being addressed is the imbalance between male and female toilets. The number of female toilet cubicles is equal to that of male cubicles.

Turkey Toilet Association (TTA)

TTA had wanted to start many years ago, but could not due to lack of funding and support. Finally, after four years, it has managed to kick off. There is much to learn about toilet culture in Turkey, and TTA will be lending a hand.



Public Toilets are marked with "WC" or "00" and the words Bay (Mr, male) or Bayan (Ms, female), or with pictograms, or with gender-marker items such as a tobacco pipe for men and a fan for women.

Most of the toilets you'll encounter in Turkey are of the standard Western Civ raised-commode type, and the newer models (like the one shown here) have two-flush mechanisms which make a small flush for liquids and a large flush for solids in order to conserve water.

WORLD TOILET SUMMIT 2004 IS ONE MONTH AWAY

Slice of Life from World Toilet Summit 2003, Taipei, Taiwan



Looking happy, karaoke, more singing and eating. Where are the toilets?

Now back to 2004. The World Toilet Summit, to be held in Beijing, China, from 17 to 19 November, expects over 500 participants to attend.

The theme of the Summit is 'Human, Environment & Living' and besides local Chinese experts, there are also many international speakers. We can see from the following how Toilets affect us in more ways than one:

Societal Impact of Toilets

1. Toilets – A Tool of Social Change, Improved Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder, Sulabh International, India
2. The Horizontal Society, Mr. Simon Tay, Chairman, National Environment Agency, Singapore
3. The Toilet Culture of the Japanese, Mr. Koo Ue, Secretary General, Japan Toilet Association, Japan

Setting Standards

4. Start-up of a Toilet Association, Francisco Bernardo III, Restroom Association of the Philippines
5. Loo of the Year as a Marketing Tool, Mr. Richard Chisnell, Director, British Toilet Association, United Kingdom

Toilets in the Rural Environment

6. Dry Toilet – Sanitation of the Next Generation, Mr. Megha Raj Regmi, Dept. of Water Supply & Sewage, Nepal
7. Natural Toilets, Mr. Jukka Lindroos, President, Pikku Vihrea, Finland
8. Improving the Lives of People with Rural Toilets, Dr. Nguyen-Huy Nga, Dy Director, Ministry of Health, Vietnam
9. Improving the Lives of People with Rural Toilets, Dr. Nguyen-Huy Nga, Dy Director, Ministry of Health, Vietnam

Slice of Life from World Toilet Summit 2003, Taipei, Taiwan II



Tourist Attractions (?). C'mon, where are the toilets?

Human Factors on Design

10. The Humanised Toilet, Mr. Frank Wu, President, Taiwan Toilet Association
11. The Human Interface of Public Toilets, Dr. Michael Siu, School of Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
12. Design will impact toilet maintenance, Mdm Cynthia Phua, Chairperson, Aljunied Town Council, Singapore

Town Planning and Governance

13. Toilet Urbanisation through Design, Dr. Clara Greed, University of West of England
14. Code of Practice for Toilets, Ms. Jasmine Schmidt, Dir. Of Support Services, Simon Foundation for Continence, USA

Slice of Life from World Toilet Summit 2003, Taipei, Taiwan III



Are these public toilets in Taiwan? Bet'cha they are

Impact on Public Health

15. Effects of Public Toilets on Public Health, Dr. Jean-Paul Deslypere, Epidemiology Research, SingHealth, Singapore
16. Disease Transmission through Inadequate Plumbing (SARS), Mr. Henry Hung, World Plumbing Council
17. New Technology – Mould Killing, Mr. Luigi Mocchia, MD, Perstop Chemitec SpA, China
18. New Technology Against Toilet-borne Diseases, Dr. Terry Yeates, Int'l Marketing Business Manager, Arch Chemicals, United Kingdom



World Toilet Summit 2003

World Toilet Summit promotes smart, green design

BY YINGRID HO
The China Post

The World Toilet Summit 2003 and International Symposium on Tourist and Mountain Toilets are being held today in Taipei. Around 34 toilet experts, tourism officials, environmentalists, naturalists and architects from 13 countries are attending the 3-day conference.

One of the highlights of the conference is the visit to a public toilet compound built on the hills of the Yangmingshan Park. The compound, which comprises three toilet blocks, numbered 1, 2, and 3, was only established by the Taipei City Government last September.

Frank Wu of M.H. Wu & Associates, the architect of the three blocks and also the president of Taiwan's Toilet Association, explained, "these three toilet blocks are characterized by five breakthroughs that cannot be found in any other public toilets in Taiwan: smart design, a cozy environment, sustainable facilities, multi-purpose space and a green concept."

Aiming to meet the needs of a barrier-free environment for the disabled, the toilet blocks include specially designed toilets for the disabled, a colostomy bag wash basin, T-shaped handles, higher urinals, emergency buttons that connect to the ranger's office, luminous sensors, baby changing boards, children's toilets and baby holders.

According to Wu, the restrooms are very spacious, ensuring wheel-chair accessibility with a diameter of 1.5 meters. A smaller washing basin attached to the closer sidewalk is for hand washing when the users are still sitting on the toilet. The colostomy bag basin is for the disabled who carry a colostomy bag, which needs to be changed every two hours. The disabled toilet can also be used as a family restroom, to encourage parents to use the facilities with their kids.

The usage of Yangmingshan toilets is quite high, said Huang Wenguang, assistant director of the Taipei City Government Park and Street Lights Office. As an outpost at a popular location, the Yangmingshan National Park receives hundreds, even thousands of visitors everyday, depending on the season. The toilet house has become a symbolic welcoming message to tourists from Taipei residents.

"The buildings are actually part of a research and development project," said Huang, citing 2001 as the year of Taipei Toilets, when Mayor Ma had his team to clean up public toilets, demonstrating the importance of hygiene.

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so that lighting is automatically adjusted to reduce electricity use and that wastewater is reused in toilet flushing.

"There are two water supply boxes outside each of the blocks, one collects rainfall and spring water, another reserves pumped water," Wu explained. "The free rainfall and waste water is used for flushing, and the costly pumped water will only be used when the recycled resource has run out. That's why there are no cisterns installed on top of the toilets here," he added.

"Having overcome all of the technical and financial difficulties," said Wu, "we have demonstrated to the world that Taiwan is willing to upgrade our public facilities, and is dedicated to building up a friendly and green environment."

"Public convenience on rugged mountains and crowded tourist sites is the major focus for this year's seminars at the World Toilet Summit 2003 and International Symposium on Tourist and Mountain Toilets in Taipei from October 10 to 12.

(Right) Frank Wu, an architect of M.H. Wu & Associates, stands at the No. 2 Yangmingshan public toilet block and explains that the three public toilet blocks built in the Yangmingshan National Park are a demonstration to the world that Taiwan is willing to upgrade its public facilities and is dedicated to building a friendly and green environment.

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To register:

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