

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

September 2007



Millennium Goal 7

Ensure environmental sustainability
(Care of God's creation)

Earth Charter Principle III

Social and Economic Justice

(9.a; Guarantee the right to potable water and safe sanitation...allocating the national and international and resources required.)

2.5 million people do not have access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

GOAL: Reduce that number by half and improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Theme from Catholic Social Teaching

Past printings of Issues and Actions addressed the multitude of concerns around the resource -- WATER. This issue will continue the discussion in order to encourage all efforts being made to conserve this resource. Recently a book, "365 Ways to Change the World", by Michael Norton has come to our attention and some of his insights will be shared here. He points out that along with the lack of safe drinking water in developing countries another problem exists, namely its limited accessibility. Women and girls must walk long distances daily to collect this precious commodity for their family's needs. A new device called "The Hippo Water Roller" could facilitate their daily task. The Roller weighs only 22 pounds, can transport 20 gallons of water and with additional purification products costs \$150.00 to purchase. Many lives could be improved with this mechanism. Go to the Internet and see for yourself the value and benefits it provides. ([www. Hipporoller.org](http://www.Hipporoller.org) & www.generation hunger. Co.za)

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Did you know???

- Our average use of water, per person, daily is between 80-100 gallons.  
Developing countries average a little over 2 gallons daily, the equivalent of one flush of a bathroom toilet.
- 40 billion working hours are spent carrying water each year in Africa, hours that could be spent growing vegetables, milking cows or in other productive activities.
- Unsanitary water is the leading cause of fatal illnesses in developing countries.
- Many Americans seem unable to grasp the fact that water is limited.
- Though most water resources and services are in public domain, some corporations hope to profit from water scarcity and clash with public stewardship principles in their battle to control our most precious natural resource.
- The question being asked now "Is water the 'oil' of the 21st century?"

Call to Action

- Talk to others about investing in the Hippo Water Roller. Make it a project for holiday buying.
- Join Sisters Kathy Littrell and Jacinta Fiebig. Each purchased a water filtering system thus eliminating purchasing bottled water and the unpleasant taste of local water.
- Visit <http://us.millenniumcampaign.org> to learn more about the MDGs



## ***The Greening of Saint Vincent's Day Home***

Saint Vincent's Day Home (SVDH) was originally built in 1863 and described as a very early Italianate Farmhouse. In 1892 the house was moved 50 feet to conform to the new urban street grid and updated architecturally by adding a corner tower and bay windows. Since that time additional property was acquired and there have been at least three construction expansion projects to date. Currently, Saint Vincent's sits on a little more than one half acre of land. Over the years, with a growing amount of power outages, our Building and Maintenance Committee have been slowly moving toward developing an electrical needs proposal to resolve the

Day Home's current and anticipated future consumption.

At our Board Retreat in April, it was decided that SVDH should apply for a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from the Child Care Facilities Fund for Alameda County. These funds will be used to hire a consultant who could assist the Day Home not only to consider our electrical needs, but also to join in the growing effort of *Going Green*.

The Board and Building Committee felt that we need a professional to assist us in the initial planning and development of *Saint Vincent's Day Home Energy Conservation and Green Initiative*. This would include the following:

1. Evaluate the electrical service needs of SVDH.
  - Determine current levels of electric power to the site.
  - Estimate probable increases in power needs to satisfy future alterations and additions to the grounds, building, equipment and program.
2. Conduct an energy efficiency audit to determine steps that can be taken to reduce the demand for power and gas consumption, such as improved insulation and more efficient appliances with lower consumption of therms and kilowatt hours.
  - Kilowatts in excess of SVDH's daily needs could be "credited" back to PG&E by net metering.
3. Investigate the possibility of generation of power from solar panel devices that can be appropriately integrated into the historic architectural design of the existing buildings. The Day Home has a bit more than 5,000 square feet of flat roofing that could be used for this purpose.
4. Introduce an element of energy conservation awareness into the early pre-school education, care and development services delivered to the children and families SVDH serves.
  - Green initiative could become part of the culture similar to introduction of the concept of respecting other children's space, table manners at meals, sharing of play equipment and putting things back in their proper places after use. Activities such as turning off the lights and appliances when not in use could become an integral part of the learning experience at the Day Home.
  - During our last major expansion project of bringing the Day Home up to code with the Americans with Disability Act, SVDH was not closed for even one day of service in 2001 – 2002. For everyone's safety, there was a large covered cyclone fencing that separated the construction site from the children's playground area. However, "peep holes" were installed

at a variety of heights so children, teachers and parents could comfortably follow what happens when you need to take down a building and all that is entailed by reconstructing new indoor spaces. We anticipate making this project as educational as possible to everyone that is involved at the Day Home.

*Submitted by the Sisters of Holy Family: Peace and Justice Committee*

*Guest Contributor: Sister Ann Maureen, SHF, Development Director, Saint Vincent's Day Home*