

Voice of the Poor Planning Committee
Notes
Monday, January 14, 2008
3:30 p.m Vincentian Support Services

Attending: Kathy Jorgensen, Tom Finnerty, Ron Meyer, Chris Quintenz, Father Fitz, Julie Douglas, Walt Gray, Frank Barrios, Lucy Howell. Ben Medrano of St. Timothy's was welcomed to the committee.

The meeting was opened by Father Fitz leading the committee in a participatory prayer for our elected representatives.

Members reviewed the dates of **SVdP District meetings** in January and February. The following members will visit districts with information about VOP in an outreach effort (1) to confirm who is representing each Conference for VOP (lists from Lucy) and (2) to recruit VOP where there is no one and (3) goal of a minimum of 2 VOP per Conference.

District 1	TBD	(Flag, Sedona, Winslow)
District 2	TBD	(Kingman, Parker, Lake Havasu)
District 3	2/12	9 a.m. Our Lady of Lourdes (Kathy Jorgensen)
District 4	2/5	7 p.m. St. James (Kathy Jorgensen)
District 5	1/15	6:30 OLPH (Father Fitz)
District 6	2/13	6:30 St. Thomas Apostle (Julie Douglas)
District 7	2/13	6:30 Vincentian Support (Frank Barrios)
District 8	1/15	6:30 St. William (Walt Gray)
District 9	1/10	6:30 Holy Cross (Lucy Howell)
District 10	1/29 or?	12:30 St. Germaine (Julie Douglas)
District 11	TBD	(North Scottsdale)
District 12	TBD	(Tempe, Mesa)

Julie is also calling new presidents as a follow up and introduction to VOP.

Love Your Kids Day – 2/14/08 (KidsCare Healthcare enrollment of eligible children)

Lucy has had response from a number of Conferences whose zip codes are within those identified by the State as having numbers of eligible children who are not enrolled in KidsCare: Walt Gray, District 8; St Jerome's, San Francisco de Asis in Flagstaff, Cottonwood, Prescott Valley and Queen of Peace in Mesa. Lucy has put interested Vincentians in touch with the volunteer coordinator for the program, Katie Curtis at (480) 332-4630. Website is www.loveyourkidsaz.org

Congressional office visits Tues. 2/26: Ron reported that he has confirmed contacts and fax numbers on the 10 offices to be visited. He asked those attending to indicate their preference as to which offices they wish to visit. We will have enough people this year to space visits an hour apart for individual participants. Susan de Queljoe is preparing packets for the visits. Ron invited those participating to an early dinner on Monday, 2/25

in the hotel to review the schedule and who will be responsible for saying what in each visit.

Talking points for congressional visits: A draft of the four areas specific to Arizona to be discussed (**Fair Share for AZ; Homelessness; Immigration and Healthcare**) was reviewed. Re Fair Share – we will focus on two issues only – Section 8 (affordable housing) and LIHEAP (utility assistance) as these are the priorities for our Conferences. Frank Barrios will contact the lobbyist for the City of Phoenix and invite him to participate with us and/or some of us meet with him either Monday afternoon or Tuesday a.m. prior to going to the Hill. Frank also reported that Gloria Hurtado has told him that Phoenix officials are continuing to meet with staff in local congressional offices re CBDG, LIHEAP and Headstart requesting Phoenix' fair share. (Section 8 is handled under Housing by the City). Frank will call the housing contact again and request a current update on Section 8 vouchers in AZ..

Re immigration, the emphasis will be on support for enabling legislation for a Pilot Guest Worker Program in AZ for the purpose of getting workers legally employed. It will need to include a screening process, will be temporary and will not include a pathway to citizenship. The Hispanic Caucus (including Congressmen Pastor and Grijalva) are working on something along these lines.

Ron will work on condensing the talking points to one page – short and sweet. Kathy suggested that bar graphs be used as a visual re where AZ falls in these programs.

Communication with State Legislature: Tom Finnerty is working on a one page communication to our elected representatives and is following the 2008 and 2009 budget proposals from the governor and legislative leadership. Kathy Jorgensen brought handouts of cuts proposed for DES showing cuts of \$8.5 million proposed by the governor vs. \$59.6 million proposed by leadership.

Of concern to VOP are budget cuts (1) proposing rescinding of up to \$1 million from unclaimed lottery funds earmarked last year for homelessness (2) reduction of eligibility for KidsCare from 200% of FPL to 175% of FPL (3) Elimination of General Assistance and (4) reduction of income eligibility for prenatal care for low income women. In the meantime, we need to reinforce our positions with friendly members of the legislature.

Employer Sanctions Law Debate: Father Fitz reported on the debate between Rep. John Kavanaugh and a representative from the AZ Chamber. Some of the sources of Kavanaugh's information, particularly Rep. Pearce and FAIR should be viewed with skepticism. Father Fitz followed up the debate with a letter to Rep. Kavanaugh which was given out to the committee.

Other business: Inge Casey described a recent workshop on immigration sponsored by Mennonites. She also brought fliers about Mike Farrell's speech against the death penalty on 2/15 in Tucson. Ron Meyer gave members copies of "The Living Stations of the Cross", a Lenten reflection based on the suffering of those we serve.

Frank Barrios passed out information about his new book, "Mexicans in Phoenix". Both Frank and Father Fitz were asked to bring copies of their books to the next meeting on 2/11.

Two hours classes in financial literacy are being held at the SVdP Center twice weekly through June.

DES is operating 4 VITA sites in AZ starting 1/28: Tues., Wed. and Thurs. from 10 until 2 p.m.

4323 W. Olive, Glendale 85302
6010 N. 57th Dr., Glendale 85301
4635 S. Central Ave. Phoenix 85040
195 W. Irvington, Tucson 85714

Father Fitz led the committee in a closing prayer.

Next VOP meeting: Monday, Feb. 11 at 3:30 p.m. in Vincentian Support Services.
NOTE: This is a change of date from Feb. 18 when the center will be closed.