

Notes Voice of the Planning Meeting
Thursday, January 4, 2007
3:30 p.m. Vincentian Support Services Conference Room

Attending: Kathy Jorgensen, Tom Finnerty, Walt Gray, Al Moreno, Chris Anderson, Father Bill Fitzgerald, John Feit and Lucy Howell
The meeting was opened with a prayer honoring Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton led by Father Fitz.

Old Business:

VOP Database:

Inge Casey reported that the transfer of the VOP database has been made with ongoing corrections to some of the e-mail addresses. Inge will now be responsible for sending out VOP communications using the new address VOP@svdp-phx-az.org. Inge is also working with Susan deQueljo for posting of VOP items/links at www.stvincentdepaul.net. Lucy reminded the committee that if they wish to contact her directly Howishome@aol.com should be used

Conferences without VOP:

Lucy has sent letters to 23 Conference presidents (some new, some continuing) who do not have someone with e-mail accepting information from VOP asking for the name of one member with e-mail for VOP. Conferences have also been reminded that VOP representatives are happy to make a 15 minute Power Point presentation about VOP to them.

Meeting with Councilman Stanton/Section 8 Vouchers:

John Feit reported that Councilman Stanton is working to educate influential community leaders in Phoenix about the need for additional vouchers in Phoenix as compared to smaller, older cities. The goal is to have pressure applied to the Arizona congressional delegation to increase or adjust the Section 8 allocation to give Phoenix a fair share based on its status as the fastest growing city in the U.S. and low wage profile. John plans to meet with Councilman Stanton again and encourage the holding a Town Meeting to raise awareness of this need.

Lucy has been in contact with Jackie Taylor of the AZ Coalition to End Homelessness and Meggan Medina of the AZ Department of Housing re Section 8 vouchers. Both expressed support for any effort to increase Section 8 availability in Phoenix.

Lucy asked Kathy Jorgensen and Walt Gray to raise the issue at the Basic Needs Coalition meeting on Friday, Jan. 12.

New Business:

The following State legislators will be called and asked for appointments as noted. Two members will visit legislators together. Legislative committee assignments were part of the handouts.

Information for the 17 new members of the legislature should be posted on the web on Jan. 8 (www.azleg.state.az.us). Information for returning members remains the same.

Tom suggested calls be made beginning Jan. 15. At the minimum, folders containing the SVdP Legislative Agenda and information about the Society should be left in each office. (Call Lucy if you need more folders).

*Indicates committee member setting up appointment. Ron Meyer and Steve Jenkins can be asked to join meetings when second member needed.

House Republicans:

Speaker Jim Weiers	Kathy Jorgensen*, Tom Finnerty
Majority Leader Boone	Lucy Howell* and?
Majority Whip McCormish	Lucy Howell* and?
Rep. Jackie Thrasher	Kathy Jorgensen*, Tom Finnerty (payday loans)
Rep. Adam Driggs	Lucy Howell* and Inge Casey
Rep. Jim Kavanaugh	Father Fitz* and?
Rep. Michele Reagan	Father Fitz* and? (payday loans)
Rep. Marian McClure	Kathy Jorgensen* and Lucy Howell (payday loans)
Rep. Peter Hershberger	Lucy Howell*, Tom Finnerty (Kidcap/TANF bills)

House Democrats:

Minority Whip Gallardo	Walt Gray*, Kathy Jorgensen (payday loans)
Rep. Sinema	Tom Finnerty* will leave packets for both
Rep. Lujan	Tom Finnerty*
Rep. Meza	Lucy Howell*, Tom Finnerty
Rep. Martha Garcia	Walt Gray*, Al Moreno
Rep. Di Simone	Lucy Howell*, Inge Casey
Rep. David Schapira	Lucy Howell*, Tom Finnerty
Rep. Ed Ableser	same
Rep. Chad Campbell	same
Rep. Cloves Campbell	Walt Gray* and?
Rep. Ben Miranda	Walt Gray* and?

Senate Republicans:

President Bee	Tom Finnerty*, Walt or Lucy
Majority Leader Verschoor	Tom Finnerty* same
Majority Whip Huppenthal	Tom Finnerty* same
President Pro Tem Blendu	Tom Finnerty* same
Senator Carolyn Allen	Father Fitzgerald*, Lucy Howell (healthcare)
Senator Leff	Lucy Howell*, Inge Casey
Sen. Linda Gray	Lucy Howell*, Kathy Jorgensen (KidCap)
Sen. Waring	Tom Finnerty* and Lucy Howell (low income hsg credit)

Senate Democrats:

Sen. McCune Davis	Kathy Jorgensen*, Lucy Howell (payday loans)
Sen. Burton Cahill	Father Fitz* and ?
Sen. Chevront	Tom Finnerty* (will leave folder)
Sen. Richard Miranda	Walt Gray* (will leave folder)
Sen. Landrum Taylor	Kathy Jorgensen*, Lucy Howell (Kidcap/TANF)

AZ Congressional Delegation Meetings/Folders – Deferred to next VOP meeting on Monday, Jan. 29

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Brochures:

As noted in the VOP column of the January VSS Newsletter, District Presidents will be receiving packets of EITC brochures to give to Conference presidents. This program can be worth thousands of dollars to low income families but requires filing documentation with the IRS return. The brochures give phone numbers for free tax preparation services in the valley which will include the EITC if qualifying. Brochures are in English and Spanish. Committee members asked that EITC information be repeated in the Feb. Newsletter and that brochures be available at the March General Membership Meeting. A goal for Conferences is to have information about Food Stamps and the EITC on hand for all home visits.

Other Business:

Arizona Prisoner Re-entry Program:

Chris Anderson reported that a broad array of community organizations are involved in the effort to development a community support system for the 16,000 non-violent releasees who are placed in our communities without supervision. The goal of the support system is to include coordination of services, wraparound services and professional case management as needed. The committee will soon be applying for grants to fund this initiative.

Walt Gray stated that he would like to see St. Vincent de Paul have a seat on the MAG Continuum of Care Policy Committee. He intends to request this and would like to be our representative on homelessness. Coordination with the Arizona Catholic Conference was also suggested as bills are filed this session. Walt also suggested that the SVdP National Office look at the position on immigration stated by the Hispanic Caucus.

A hand out on the fair trade movement was provided by Inge Casey. It was suggested that this information might be distributed to our board as an information item.