Arizona Water Activists Karing for the Environment (AWAKE)

Arizona, USA

2006
3 parts to the project

➢ Think Globally

➢ Act Globally

➢ Act Locally
Problem 1: Think Globally

- To help underprivileged children in India
- Provide clean, potable water
I went to India and saw all of the poverty-stricken areas.

It was very touching and this experience changed my mind set totally.
Think Globally

- I realized how lucky and privileged I am to have a great education in the United States.
- I started looking at problems with a different perspective, a global perspective.
  - How can I help the kids living in India, when I am living in Arizona?
I was motivated to start the Asha Kids Chapter in June 2004.

We were 15 kids initially.

We decided to organize Walk-a-thon on Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday on Oct 2.

We have successfully organized 2 walk-a-thons in Oct 2004 and Oct 2005.
Sponsors

- Wrote business letters, solicited local businesses and grocery stores for donation.
- Publicize
- Gandhi quotes
- Person dressed as Gandhi lead walk
Sponsors

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS
- M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence
- Consulate General of India, San Francisco
- India Association
- Indo-American Foundation of Arizona
- India Plaza

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS
- Trader Joe's
- Lee Lee oriental market
- Basha Supermarket
- Sams Club
- Dr. Pearson Orthodontics

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS
- Quaniperm
- Sarasy Software consulting company
- Changing Hands Bookstore
- Changing Hands magazine

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS
- Taj R Us
- Royal Taj restaurant
- Chloe's restaurant
- Ashoka
Walk-A-Thon 2004-2005

- About 200 people attended each year
- Total of $4,200 was raised
- The money will be used for providing clean potable water to underprivileged kids in India.
Walk-a-thon 2004 picture
Walk-a-thon 2005 pictures:
Did a lot of work before we could send the money to India
Studied all the Phoenix Adult ASHA chapter projects.
Identified three projects which fit our goals
Communicated with the school principals to solicit proposals
Act Globally

- Children’s Love-castles Trust (CLT)
- Sai Kripa
- Vivekanananda
Reverse osmosis system built for the children in the slums of India.

Right now 3,150 kids in India are getting potable water from this project.

These are kids from 10 surrounding villages
Water impact

- The impact of water onto the community can be found in many ways
- For example in health and lifestyle issues
- Especially in a desert like Arizona, water is a prized possession
History of Pima Native Americans

- Corn and Fish
- Gila River water depleted
- Diet changes: Enriched flour and lard
- Up to 50% of type 2 diabetes in the world
So where did the water go?

- To support 2.7 million people like me
- Man made artificial lakes
- To golf courses!!!
Phoenix - a golf mecca!

Over two million golfers tee up at the lush fairways

Phoenix, Arizona is ranked number one for golf courses.

Over 325 golf courses and counting in the State of Arizona
Education

- Need to educate the people about water conservation
- Created games and hands-on activities for kids
- Raised awareness in a booth at a local festival where 3,000 people attended.
- We have a booth at the feathered friends festival, Apr 8 2006 when 4000 to 5000 people are expected.
- Earth day April 22, 2006 – AWAKE is planning on a water conservation booth
"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

~Native American Proverb

- With this mind set the environment could be improved worldwide
Arizona

- Arizona is now in a drought
- Last winter season, the San Francisco Peaks in Flagstaff, Arizona were bare
- The San Francisco Peaks are very sacred to over 14 local Native American tribes
Problem 2: Act Locally

- Ski resort owners want to put artificial snow made of reclaimed water on the San Francisco Peaks.

- This could be potentially hazardous to humans and the environment because the artificial snow is made out of unclean reclaimed water.
The Native Americans have been in court against the ski resort owners.

They have lost the case, but are in the process of appealing it at the San Francisco Court of Appeals.
So?
Act Locally

- I founded the Arizona Water Activists Karing for the Environment (AWAKE)

- AWAKE did tests for contaminants on the reclaimed water
Tested 30 local lakes and ponds, four samples each.

Obtained 3 controls – 2 Chandler, Arizona tap water and 1 bottled water

17 out of 30 man made and reclaimed lakes had coliform!

All 7 reclaimed water lakes had coliform (intestinal waste bacteria)
Results

- Water contained coliform bacteria
- Water tested had a high hardness
- Low dissolved oxygen and pH level

This means that the reclaimed water tested is unhealthy to humans and the environment
Safety Precautions

- Used gloves
- Autoclaved the samples for proper disposal
- Chemicals were disposed of appropriately
- We were very thorough in our research and repeated our tests four times each to make sure that the results were reproducible.
Solution to the problem

- After doing the tests we ran a petition drive
- This drive is still ongoing and we want to reach the goal of 500 signatures
- We also wrote a letter to the Governor of Arizona explaining to her all the work we have done
- We wrote to the Mayor of Flagstaff explaining to him about the dangers of using unclean reclaimed water
- We also wrote a letter of support to the Save the Peaks Coalition telling them of all of our research
Let us move towards a better world by conserving water!!
Please visit our website at:

http://www.geocities.com/awake_az/

Thank You,

AWAKE
Links

Legal Issues of Reclaimed Water Websites:

- http://www.cltindia.org

Medical Issues of Reclaimed Water Websites:

- http://www.boingboing.net/2003/01/30/human_sewage_recycle.html
- http://www.ci.gilbert.az.us/water/popups/reclaimedwater.cfm
Future Plans

- Raise awareness at the Feathers Friend Festival at the Gilbert riparian habitat on the importance of water on April 8, 2006. We will continue this endeavor annually.
- Organize a large scale cleanup of the Salt River. The project will bring together the ASHA kids group and some local school clubs.
- Continue the annual Walk-a-thon in honor of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Arizona is a desert and consists of many man made lakes and ponds. We would like to study more lakes and ponds and expand the number and types of tests.
Future plans contd.

- Raise money to provide drinking water to more ASHA for education schools. Hopefully we will also be able to support more schools around India in the future.
- Continue with the petition drive. We will work with the Native American community to organize a Youth Awareness Day in order to inform youth about the use of artificial snow.
- Plan to become more involved in our local government. We want to make a difference in our community by giving input on environmental issues.