

hospitality sweet

IN A TOWN KNOWN FOR EXCESS, CLEAN THE WORLD'S RECYCLING OF HOTEL SOAP DOES SO WELL THAT IT JUST OPENED ITS WEST COAST PLANT HERE. BY LISA ARCELLA

The next time you find yourself at the nondescript corner of Valley View and Desert Inn Roads, take notice of a sign in front of the building there that reads CLEAN THE WORLD. Inside, there's a worldwide revolution taking place with Las Vegas at the forefront of a movement that is rapidly changing the way hotels view excess.

Clean the World is the brainchild of businessmen Shawn Seipler and Paul Till who, after reaching success with recycling half-used hotel soap in that other tourist hot spot, Orlando, wanted to bring the concept to Las Vegas. Clean the World just opened a second US recycling operations center here to service the West Coast because we were so receptive—and successful.

It all began when Seipler and Till were sitting in their hotel rooms after yet another business trip in 2009. "I just started wondering about what would happen to the soap and the little bottles of shampoo and conditioner after my stay," Seipler says. "That was the spark that led Paul and me to start calling hotels and realizing they were just being thrown away. We found very amateur methods of recycling soap on the Internet that involved grinding the soap down into a paste and reforming it into a new bar. But the

real 'aha' moment was when Paul found studies that show diarrheal disease was the second leading cause of death among children worldwide, after pneumonia. And both of those can be prevented by anywhere from 40 to 65 percent with the proper use of bar soap and proper sanitation."

In the time since, the organization has gained 1,200 hotel partners in North America who have collected 660 tons of soap, which have been recycled into nearly 9 million bars of soap that were redistributed in this and 45 other countries.

"On paper it made sense to take soap and give it to children around the world," Seipler says. "But when I got to places like Haiti, what was on paper went to the heart. There, we went to orphanages and schools and saw

continued on page 68



Toiletries from Las Vegas resorts that donate to Clean the World



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUELYN ALLEN (BOTTLES), COURTESY OF CLEAN THE WORLD (CHILDREN)



Children in Haiti receiving recycled hotel products from Clean the World



Caesars' Jessica Rosman

continued from page 66

the desperation. That's when we realized, 'Wow, this is what Clean the World is all about.'

Although the program began in Seipler and Till's Orlando homebase, they always had their eye on Las Vegas with its approximately 150,000 hotel rooms. But the challenge would be convincing hotels on the Strip to pay a small fee to have

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Clean the World pick up bins at their properties and retraining housing staff to collect, rather than toss, leftover soaps and half-used bottles.

But for Jessica Rosman, who is contract manager for strategic sourcing for Caesars Entertainment and oversees all of the company's recycling, Clean the World immediately seemed like a very logical partnership. Once she showed a video to the housekeeping staff, it became an absolute no-brainer.

"We were sitting in a room with 150 housekeepers watching the video, and they were crying," she says. "A lot of them come here to have a better life, from countries where a lot of the soap is going back to. Customers are starting to be aware of the program, but it's the employee engagement and desire to do good that motivates us to be a part of this."

Once they signed on, other properties, such as Wynn Las Vegas, Encore, Venetian, Palazzo, and Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas have followed suit. It was a little surprising to Seipler how well the

program was embraced in town. "We were essentially outsiders," he says. "But Las Vegas was the next most natural spot for us, and we would not have been able to do it if the individuals in town who are running those properties hadn't been open-armed about our mission. I have absolutely fallen in love with the people here. There's no doubt that this program is something they are really trying to help become successful."

Caesars was so excited about the program that its separate nonprofit philanthropic arm, the Caesars Foundation, has even donated \$250,000 to Clean the World. "It's one of those gifts that has been so well received at the property level," says Thom Reilly, the foundation's executive director. "To listen to just how excited the housekeepers get about it, it's neat. We started with our properties in Vegas, and we are spreading it to all our companies now." **V**

INSIGHT

Clean the World's website, cleantheworld.org, allows students to upload videos of their soap drives. Caesars Foundation gives more than \$50 million a year to charitable causes.

Charity Register

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE

MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION FASHION SHOW LUNCHEON

Event: The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Southern Nevada hosts its annual fashion show luncheon, featuring the fashionable designs of Emilio Pucci.

Details: November 3, Wolfgang Puck's Spago at The Forum Shops; snv.wish.org

TONY HAWK FOUNDATION'S STAND UP FOR SKATEPARKS

Event: Enjoy a fun afternoon for a great cause, featuring musical performances, games, and skateboarding and BMX icons.

Details: November 5, Red Rock Casino, Resort & Spa; standupforskateparks.org



CAMELOT AT THE MAGICAL FOREST

Event: Don your holiday finest for a black-tie fundraising gala hosted by Opportunity Village and featuring Sean's Park.

Details: November 5, Opportunity Village; opportunityvillage.org/camelot.php

WOMEN'S CLUB OF SUMMERLIN

Event: Join Sue Bryan and the Women's Club of Summerlin at their benefit for the Dare to Dream Grant Program.

Details: November 5, JW Marriott; womensclubofsummerlin.org



DINOSAUR BALL

Event: Toast the Natural History Museum's 20th anniversary with a cocktail reception, dinner, and awards presentation to celebrate those who make it all happen.

Details: November 11, The Mirage; lvnhm.org/dinosaur-ball