



The Oracle

The Journey of Pablo Gomez

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Seldom does one come in contact with the personality and spirit of someone like Pablo Torres Gomez. Pablo was the last of eleven children born on Charles Bagley's Ranch in Martindale on June 26, 1954. Times were hard and everyone in the family had to work. When Pablo was 13 years old, he had to drop out of school to work the Bagley's ranch to help provide for his family. At eighteen, he went to work for the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in San Marcos. He worked for the company for ten years. Pablo got up every morning at 4 a.m. to ride the 9 miles from the ranch to work. He was al-

ways on time. A disability has kept him out of the job market for a while but it hasn't kept him from working!

In 2005, Herod K. Ellison, then President of the Allen Woods Resident Assembly, asked Pablo if he would help build a community that would provide educational opportunities for families and children living in public housing. Pablo agreed and he and Mr. Ellison started the journey of building that community. Pablo started by helping at the PODER Learning Center. He kept the facility clean, delivered food packages to elderly neighbors,

and helped feed children in the Kids Café program. Pablo later enrolled in the Resident Self-Sufficiency program to acquire new skills and to help children with the Internet. Now, Pablo can search the internet for a wide variety of information. He completed the Money Smart program, he pays his bills on time, and he is working on improving his typing. The next time you see Pablo, tell him "Thank you for caring about us!"



NEW EVENING HOURS AT RESIDENT SERVICES CENTERS!

The Resident Services Department has expanded operations to school nights to help youth (junior high and up) and adults who are in school or training. If you need quiet study time, access to the Internet, or perhaps some personal tutoring, you can go to the PODER Learning Center (Allen Woods), the KAD Korner Store (C. M. Allen) or the Family Self-Sufficiency Office (Chapultepec). A schedule is posted each week but generally, the centers will be open from 6–9 p.m. from Sunday through Thursday, so long as classes will be in session at either Texas State University or the San Marcos public schools. We are here to help you succeed!





Red Ribbon Decoration Contest Winners Announced!

C. M. Allen:

Mariam Chaney & Molly Stillwell
(1st place co-winners)

Chapultepec:

Christine Williams (1st Place)
Ajalah Efem (1st Runner-up)

Springtown Villa:

Tamara Menke (1st Place)
Mary Hernandez & Gloria Galindo
(Runners-up)

Winners and runners-up received Wal-Mart gift cards and Award Certificates from the SMHA. There was no winner at Allen Woods.

Free College for our Elders

If you are at least 65 years old and interested in attending college in Texas, Texas State University and some others will cover tuition and fees up to 6 semester hours if you “audit” the classes. If you take the classes for credit, the school covers tuition but you would have to pay for the fees (approximately \$614 for 6 semester hours). Lab fees and books are extra. Texas residents, non-residents, and foreign students are eligible for this program. You must enroll in a college or university whose governing board has chosen to offer this program, enroll in a class that is not already filled with students who are paying full price for the courses (regular students get priority), and enroll in classes for which the college receives tax support (i.e., a course that does not depend solely on student tuition and fees to cover its costs). Call Lynn Ford, Administrative Assistant at 245-2480 for more information.



Free Medical Check From Progressive Home Health

Progressive Home Health from Buda will be visiting the San Marcos Housing Authority to check blood pressure, oxygen levels, heart rate, and glucose levels if necessary for elderly and disabled residents. This is a complimentary service and they will not be billing Medicare or Medicaid. They will be here on the 2nd Friday on every month, beginning Friday, November 14th, at the PODER Learning Center at Allen Woods from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. and at Springtown Villa from 11 a.m. to noon. If you live at another site and are not able to get a ride to Allen Woods, call our Elderly & Disabled Services Coordinator at 353-7343 for help. We encourage residents to make use of this free service!



If You Haven't Noticed

Great things are happening in public housing these days! All one has to do is look around. The streets are being repaved, side walks are being built, the drainage areas are being cleaned and improved, apartments are being renovated, the elderly and disabled are receiving support services like never before, children and teens are receiving educational support services, and families are receiving support services and educational assistance to help them build a new life. Go SMHA!



BEFORE ←



→ AFTER

How Was Your Texas (formerly National) Night Out?



Residents had a great time at the during the state-wide block party “Texas Night Out.” (Note to Bobcat fans: The Longhorn tent was donated by a resident!)

Kids from the Housing Authority Meet Civil Rights Legend



Former United Nations Ambassador and civil rights activist Andrew Young delivered a free public lecture at Texas State University on October 21 in the outdoor mall of the LBJ Student Center. Ambassador Young spoke about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the late President Lyndon B. Johnson to an enthusiastic audience. After the lecture, Ambassador Young took time for a picture with Gracie Rocha and Cruz Madrid, both of whom participate in youth activities at the C. M. Allen Homes.

Texas State Students Keep a Promise

Cade Humphries and members of the Student Association of General Contractors from Texas State University have adopted the playground at the Allen Woods Homes. Soon, we will formally name it “Bobcat Backyard.” On a sweltering Saturday in October, the students worked on the next phase of the master plan to improve the park. Performance Contracting, Inc. of Housing donated the wooden playscape. McCoy’s Building Supplies of San Marcos and Brooks Stone Ranch of New Braunfels provided supplies at a discount. TSU Community Relations Director Kim Porterfield and the Allen Woods Resident Assembly provided support services. Resident volunteers were also given free tickets to the Bobcat Homecoming game!





SAN MARCOS HOUSING AUTHORITY

WHO WE ARE

Board of Commissioners:

Earl Moseley—Chairman
Gloria Salazar—Vice-Chair.
Stacy E. Green—Resident Commissioner
Richard Cruz
Rev. Samuel Montoya

Administration:

Executive Director
Albert Sierra
Financial Services Manager
Lana Bronikowsky
Maintenance Director
Albert Hernandez
Public Housing Manager
Misty Sanchez
Resident Services Director
Stewart Dale Spencer
Section 8 Director
James Snell

Housing Offices:

Allen Woods Homes
353-5058
C. M. Allen Homes
353-1116
Housing Choice Voucher
353-5061
Springtown Villa
396-3363

Resident Services Centers:

Allen Woods Homes
878-0773
Chapultepec Homes
353-5062
C. M. Allen Homes
392-6273
Springtown Villa
353-7343

WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT

The San Marcos Housing Authority provides decent, safe, and sanitary housing for about 555 low-income families and individuals, including the elderly and disabled. Our Resident Services Program consists of several initiatives designed to support Self-Sufficiency & Family Development, Elderly & Disabled Services, Crime & Drug Prevention, and Resident Organization & Community Development. All Resident Services initiatives are united in the overall goals of improving the quality of life for public housing residents, reducing dependence on the welfare system, and empowering our residents to take charge of their lives and of their environment.

*The Oracle is produced and published monthly by the Resident Services Department of the San Marcos Housing Authority. Managing Editor — Herod King Ellison; Senior Editor — Stewart Dale Spencer. Contact SMHA Resident Services, 701 South LBJ Drive, San Marcos, Texas, 78666. Phone — 396-3364 * Website — www.smpba.org*



Rebecca Goes To Washington!

On September 4, Senior Self-Sufficiency Coordinator Rebecca Espinoza boarded an airplane for the first time, bound for Washington, D. C. Rebecca recently became a member of the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC). Membership in the AASC allows access to data and workshops targeted at service coordinators, with a more recent focus on the growing need of services for elderly persons. While in Washington, Rebecca had the privilege of being introduced to Jan Monks, AASC Founder and President. During the pre-

conference session, Rebecca took part in a poverty simulation where she played the role of a teacher. Service coordinators got to see how poverty affected the day to day life of a small community. Other sessions attended by Rebecca were “Bridging the Gap Between Management and Services,” “Outcome Measurement”, “Partnership Development,” and “Advanced Healthcare Planning.” Rebecca was among 200 out of the 1,000 attendees able to visit the House of Representatives. On her last night in Washington, she joined other service coordinators for a night tour of Washington. Among the stops was the White House, where the usual white outdoor lights were replaced with pink lights in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

