



# The Oracle

## Marcie Tells Her Success Story



Megan S. Perez, Senior Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator, presents Marcella Nance with her FSS Certificate of Completion. Also pictured is Stewart Dale Spencer, former Resident Services Director, and (look closely), Marcella's pet lizard, Demeter.

Two years and seven months ago I took the first step to changing my life. I started in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program and moved into the Chapultepec Apartments. With a three-year old in tow, the only thing I knew was that I was going to finish my degree. Little did I know that my experience here would completely change who I am as a person and a parent.

The encouragement I received from all of the SMPHA staff, temporary to permanent, on and off site, moved me to do better for myself than just the goals I had put in place on my Individual Training and Services Plan. I learned how to manage money, and to better prepare for unexpected events in life, while I improved my credit. I'm glad I did. It came in handy when my car gave out last week!

Parenting classes, yes that's plural, I took three. Loving friends, Lisa, Gerri, Yoli, Melanie, Greg and Joy, Nancy and Felix, have given me different perspectives and opened my eyes to see myself in my son and helped to better understand that a child's actions are not the result of a bad child but poor parenting and

communication. They helped me to better communicate with my son, his father, my fiancé, and others.

Now, I've reassessed the priorities in my life and I am working towards my life goals of having a happy, healthy, loving and safe family and environment; trusting that my God has a purpose for me and all things that happen in my life; having a stable income with hours that allow family time; hold myself to higher standards so that I might be a positive influence on my family and those around me; and saving and investing for an inevitable retirement and comfortable future.

Long story short, I would like to thank everyone at Chapultepec as well as those at the main office and other sites for the love, support, and swift kick that was needed to get me back on my feet. To all the amazing friends I have made, don't worry, you can't get rid of me that easy, and I pray that y'all know the influence you had on me and mine!

With all my heart, I truly appreciate everything you all have done for me and hope one day to be able to repay the kindness. — Marcella Nance

*(Editors Note: Marcella graduated from Texas State with a degree in Aquatic Biology. She is working at a pet store called Earth Angel Pet Supply. Her goal is to manage her own pet store in the future.)*

### Notes from the Main Office

**UNAUTHORIZED TENANTS** in your unit are a violation of the terms of your lease in Public Housing and at Springtown Villa and a violation of the rules of the Housing Choice Voucher program. Violations will result in back rent, eviction, and/or prosecution for fraud. Our housing programs are subsidized by taxpayers. They expect us to ensure that residents pay their fair share of the rent. If you are unsure about the policy for visitors, contact your site manager. If you have a Housing Choice Voucher, contact the Section 8 office.



**BIG TRASH AND BBQ PITS** — We want to keep our housing looking nice and uncluttered. You must store BBQ pits behind your unit when they are not in use. If you have large trash items that need to be thrown out, please place them on the curb on Sunday night or early Monday morning. This applies to all housing owned and operated by the San Marcos Housing Authority. If you have a Housing Choice Voucher, contact your landlord.

## ALLEN WOODS HOMES—P.O.D.E.R LEARNING CENTER

The PODER Learning Center hosted their first Resident Resource Fair. The residents who attended were pleasantly surprised to find numerous agencies and companies with helpful information, pamphlets, goody bags, door prizes, and even free blood pressure checks. A few of the organizations represented include Gary Job Corps, Hays-Caldwell Women's Center, Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union, and Crescent Dental. Thanks to everyone for their support!



### School Tips for Parents

1. Talk in the school meetings about the child's progress in school.
2. Take into consideration the advice that the school may have.
3. Let the school know about any concerns or anything that you are worried about.
4. Always remember that you have rights as a parent. Don't let the school talk you into doing anything you aren't comfortable with.
5. If your child needs to take any medicine recommended by a doctor then make sure that he or she takes the medicine properly.

### Consejos de escuela para padres

1. Hablar en las juntas de escuela sobre el progreso de su hijo/hija.
2. Tomar en consideración los consejos que la escuela le de.
3. Informe la escuela sobre preguntas o preocupaciones que tenga.
4. Siempre recuerde que tiene derechos como padre/madre. No deje que la escuela lo fuerza hacer cosas que no le agradan.
5. Si su hijo/hija tiene que tomar una receta de doctor asegure que su hijo/hija lo haga apropiadamente.

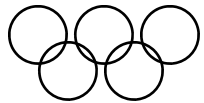


### Disney Magic

Disney Store "Volunteers" Eric Hawes, Kayla Hager, and Garrett Cox brought some magic to the PODER Kid's Summer Program! They began with an exciting game of kickball, then a competitive game of the Disney version of Scene It, and ended with a game of Simon Says. Children — of all ages — had a wonderful time and were encouraged to participate in all the activities. A big thanks to our intern, Allison Arciba for arranging these special guests that brought many smiles that day!







# Springtown



# Villa



Springtown Villa hosted its first "Summer Olympic Games." Prior to starting the games, residents lined up to pass the "torch" in *fair game and good sportsmanship*. The games included a scooter race, a basketball throw, bowling, horseshoes, ping-pong ball target throw, and balloon darts. Residents were invited to an award luncheon provided by the Resident Council. During the luncheon, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons were awarded to the winners.



Thank you Timberland for sending your employees to volunteer. Our benches and flowerbed look great!



Cathy Mejia from CenturyLink provided internet training for residents at Springtown Villa.





# C. M. Allen Homes—KAD Korner Store



KAD kids learning how to fish when Texas Parks and Wildlife visited the KAD Summer Program.



High school students Pedro and Benito Castillo seen here visiting the Engineering Building during the Texas State Campus College Tours.



A group of youth and parents helping out at the Annual GED Graduation in Kyle, Texas. They serve refreshments after the service and helped take care of the little ones during the ceremony.



Texas State University Science Department provided hands-on activities educating our youth on astronomy and physics.



Glenda from SuperCuts provided free haircuts for our youth. Here we see Allissa, who poses for a before and after picture.

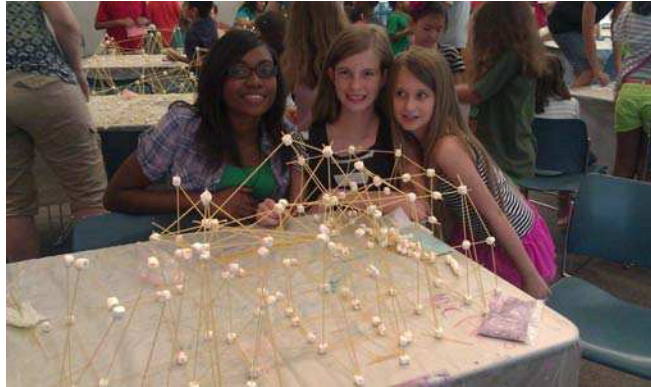


Amerigroup Real Solutions made a presentation and set up a display to educate our seniors about effective Health-Care during a senior social.



Det. Frank Alvarez from the Hays County Sherriff's Department educating KAD's youth about respect, gang violence and the importance of getting a higher education.

# Chapultepec -- Family Self-Sufficiency



During the summer program at Chapultepec Homes, students were taken on various trips around San Marcos. The students made creative art figures out of marshmallows and noodle sticks at the San Marcos Public Library. They enjoyed movies like *Brave* and *Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted* at Starplex Theaters and trips to Sunset Lanes for a few games of bowling. There were also special activities at Chapultepec. Delia from Capitol Area Food Bank of Texas gave a presentation of how to read and understand food labels and taught the students how to make a "Cereal Sundae" out of low fat granola, low fat yogurt, fruit, and chopped nuts. Our intern Josey also taught the students how to make ice cream from scratch!! So Yummy!!!



## Reminders:

\***Chapultepec Resident Assembly** is held on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapultepec Adult Learning Center. Resident Assembly is a time for you to voice your opinion about things going on in your neighborhood and make changes happen!

\***FSS Classes** are held on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapultepec Adult Learning Center. By attending classes you will earn one participation point and will receive vital information to help you complete the FSS Program successfully! Childcare is provided along with snacks! If you have ideas about class topics, please contact Megan at 396-3364.





## MEET OUR NEWEST INTERNS

Josey Isaacs is a student at Texas State University. She is doing her internship at the Chapultepec Homes to complete her requirements for a degree in Sociology. She moved to San Marcos four years ago after graduation from Smithville High School. Josey will not only

graduate from Texas State University in August but will also welcome a new baby boy into the world. Josey plans to move to Colorado Springs with her husband where she will spend the first year of her child's life as a stay-at-home mom. After a year, she plans to find employment working with and helping children. Then after a few years of experience and time off



from school, she plans to attend nursing school to become a Pediatric Registered Nurse. Josey enjoys cooking and baking as well as crafting. She loves being outdoors, hiking, swimming, and exploring the wilderness. Josey says, "I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience here in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program and appreciate the opportunity I have been given to expand my knowledge and skills to help build my career."

Hey there! I'm Greg Harris, the new Intern at Springtown Villa! I am in Senior Standing at Texas State University and studying Family and Consumer Sciences, if everything goes according to plan I will graduate in December. I



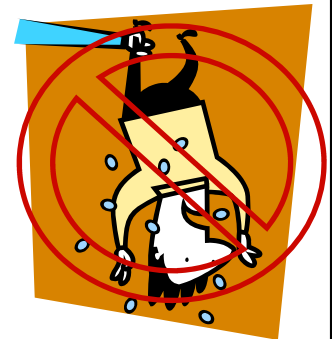
am an Eagle Scout and have spent much of my teenage years volunteering with many different organizations and camping all over the US and Canada. I'm here at Springtown Villa to help the staff and residents with any need that should arise. I have greatly enjoyed my work here because of the people and the fact that I can see how my work affects them and where they live.

# PARTNER PAGE

## Texas' Tax Free Weekend

The tax free weekend for general merchandise purchased in Texas is scheduled for August 17-19, 2012 and applies to the following items:

- Clothing and footwear under \$100
- School supplies under \$100
- Backpacks under \$100 for elementary and secondary students
- Includes layaway items



### Smart Shopping Strategies for Tax Free Weekend:

In general, using common sense is the best way to [save even more during tax free week](#). This means comparing prices at different stores, which you can do online, and also using coupons - in addition to the tax free savings - whenever possible.

In addition, don't make the mistake of buying items that you don't need just because of the sales tax holiday. After all, the sales tax rate in Texas is 8.25%, so that's the amount you would be saving by shopping during the tax free weekend. By comparing prices at different stores, which you can do online, and also using coupons, you might find that a fabulous pair of cowboy boots is actually cheaper the week before or the week after the tax free weekend in Texas, so make sure you do your homework before spending your hard-earned cash.

Keep in mind, too, that not all general merchandise items are included in the sales tax holiday. In fact, many sporting goods are not included in the sales tax holiday at all in Texas, like cleats, football pads, and protective helmets, so make sure that you read [Texas' Sales Tax Holiday web page](#) before heading out to the mall. (Source: <http://singleparents.about.com/od/taxfreeholidays/qt/TX.htm>)

## SAN MARCOS PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Free Computer Classes

The San Marcos Public Library offers free computer classes in Computer Basics, Internet Skills, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel. The classes are self-paced with volunteer instructors and a textbook to be used during class. Call 393-8200 to register. The library also has 37 public access computers available for use with a library card and eight guest computers. Find more information about the library and its programs online at: [sanmarcostx.gov/library](http://sanmarcostx.gov/library)

### Add a Library Card To Your Child's School Supply List

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month! Make sure a library card is part of your child's back-to-school supplies. San Marcos Public Library membership is free to residents of Hays County and children in the San Marcos school district. A photo ID and verification of mailing address are required to obtain a library card. Friendly librarians are always available to help you find the books and information you need. The library is open seven days a week and until 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.



**Do You Suspect Abuse?  
Call the HELpline...**

**1-512-396-HELP (4357)  
1-800-700-HCWC (4292)**

- Services for victims of sexual abuse & family violence.
- All our services are free & confidential.
- Servicios para adultos y niños del asalto sexual y del maltrato.
- Todos los servicios son gratuitos y confidenciales.



# SAN MARCOS HOUSING AUTHORITY

*Photo by Kayla Spencer*

### Board of Commissioners:

Rose Brooks, Chairperson  
Lorraine Burleson, Vice-Chair.  
Stacy Green—Resident Rep.  
Ovelia Mercado

### Administration:

Executive Director  
*Albert Sierra*  
Accountant/Program Mgr.  
*Lana Bronikowsky*  
Maintenance Director  
*Albert Hernandez*  
Public Housing Manager  
*Rose Miranda*  
Resident Services Director  
*Stewart Dale Spencer*  
Section 8 Coordinator  
*Frances Garcia*  
Springtown Villa Manager  
*Lorenza Lopez*

### Housing Offices:

Allen Woods Homes (Main)  
353-5059  
C. M. Allen Homes  
353-1116  
Chapultepec Homes  
396-3364  
Housing Choice Voucher  
353-5061  
Springtown Villa  
396-3363

### Resident Services Centers:

*\*Family Self-Sufficiency*  
396-3364  
*\*KAD Korner Store*  
392-6273  
*\*PODER Learning Center*  
396-3367  
*\*Springtown Villa*  
353-7343

## WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT

The San Marcos Housing Authority provides decent, safe, and sanitary housing for about 565 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, Youth Services, 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 by the Resident Services Department of the San Marcos Housing Authority. Concept by Herod King Ellison. Senior Editor—Stewart Dale Spencer. Contributing Editors—Maria Calcaben, Gracie Campos, Bonnie Pecina, & Megan Perez. Contact: SMHA Resident Services, 701 South LBJ Drive, San Marcos, Texas, 78666 \* 512-396-3364 \* [www.smpaha.org](http://www.smpaha.org)*

## Who We Are

### **Leticia Peralta: A Hidden Gem**

Leticia has a small office tucked in between two other offices but don't let that fool you. Leticia has big responsibilities helping Lana Bronikowsky with the accounting for the San Marcos Housing Authority. That means processing a lot of payments from several different programs, making sure that we meet all Federal, State, and local accounting standards. She finds completing her assignments to be rewarding and has been able to handle all of the challenges so far. Leticia loves being around water, gardening, and reading scary books. She also plays kickball for a co-ed league and women's league. Leticia is from Kyle and had been unemployed for a while. She feels lucky to find a job that helps people. She likes learning about the grants that assist people in affordable housing and that help adults go to school. Leticia says she believes that "Everything we go through in life is to help someone else get through theirs." We like her attitude!

