



Seasons Greetings!



LOOK INSIDE!	
STORY & PAGE	
<i>Meals on Wheels Luncheon</i>	2
<i>Dia de los Muertos</i>	2
<i>NAHRO Scholarship</i>	2
<i>Springtown Welcomes Fall</i>	3
<i>Faces of the Future</i>	3
<i>Colors of Freedom</i>	3
<i>Frances' Story!</i>	4

Where There's a Will, There's a Way: The Tracy Martinez Story

Tracy Martinez enrolled in the Resident Self-Sufficiency program last April. Faced with many struggles and having worked so many dead end jobs, she moved into public housing determined to change her life.

Tracy has three children. One child has a disability. She is enrolled as a fulltime student at Texas State University working

on her degree as a Physicians Assistant while her husband, Demencio, supports the family. Tracy recently made the Deans List. Way to go Tracy! She plans to transfer to the University of Texas at San Antonio in the fall of 2011. Tracy says "anyone can do it" and that she will help anyone

who wants to attend college to apply for financial aid and fill out the application. That is what you call "paying it forward!"



NEWS FROM THE MAIN OFFICE

☑ **HUD inspections** are coming up in January. Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspectors will be looking at public housing dwelling units and offices to make sure we are taking good care of federal property. Getting a good score helps us obtain future funding for physical improvements and services to residents. Therefore, please report any maintenance issues to your site manager so we can make necessary repairs. The inspectors will select units at random. *January 14 is the big day* so please help us to help you by making sure your home is clean and has no outstanding maintenance or safety problems!

☑ The holidays are here! December is a busy month so keep in mind that Housing Authority offices will be **closed on December 24 & 25**. We will also be **closed on January 1**. Many employees use vacation time around the holidays so we will probably have only a skeleton crew on December 23 and 31. Please try to take care of any outstanding business at the office early in the month. **Merry Christmas to All!**

Appreciating Volunteers Rolling into the New



A successful luncheon hosted by the Combined Community Action for the Meals on Wheels *Volunteer Recognition Luncheon* celebrated the hard-working volunteers not only in San Marcos but in surrounding towns such as Wimberley, Martindale, and Kyle. Mayor Susan Narvaiz praised the success of the program. James Dolby and Lola Bell, in the far left picture, are shown with Herod Ellison, who performed several songs for the event. The middle photograph has some familiar faces from the PODER Learning Center: (from left to right) Pablo Gomez, Frank Hall, and Matias Montemayor. In the far right picture, Herod Ellison is pictured with Beatrice Pacheco who coordinated the luncheon. A big thanks to all the Meals on Wheels volunteers!



The 23rd Annual Sights and Sounds of Christmas Festival will begin Thursday, December 3. Admission will be \$1 for children ages 2 through 10, and \$2 for age 11 and up. Children younger than two will be admitted free. A limited amount of three-day passes will be issued for \$4. Get a free photo with Santa!

Observing Dia de los Muertos



Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a traditional Mexican celebration to show respect for family who have passed away. Five kids and one parent from the C.M. Allen Homes went with Bonnie Pecina to learn more about this special celebration hosted by Dr. Jaime Chahin at Texas State University. The picture on the left is an altar decorated with pictures of those that have died, flowers, fruits, trinkets, and other items related to the deceased.

How Education Pays Off



After high school, will you be ready to take the next step to success? The Texas Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials is offering a **\$1,000 scholarship** to graduating high school seniors who will be pursuing a post-secondary education. **The deadline is February 19, 2010.** Don't wait to the last minute! Contact the Resident Services Coordinator at your site for an application form and more details!



Springtown Villa Welcomes the Fall

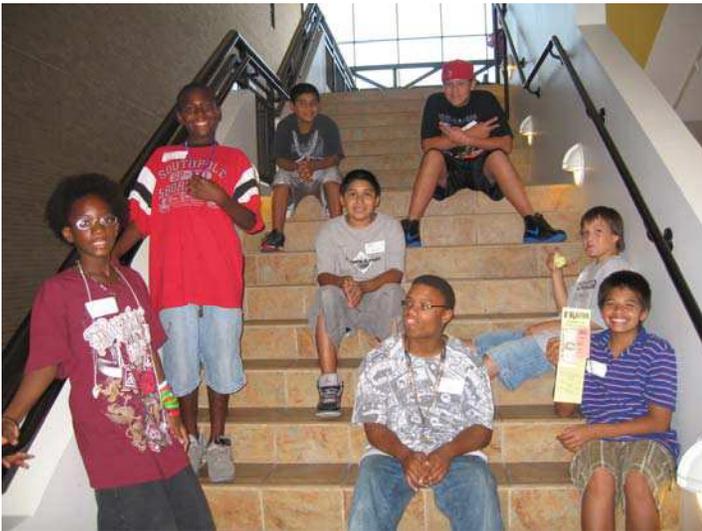
Residents at Springtown Villa enjoyed the beginning of Fall by celebrating with numerous activities. Kids from the Allen Woods Homes were able to trick-or-treat at some welcoming doors. In the picture at the bottom left corner, Beverly Roby passes out candy. The Springtown

Villa Resident Council also provided treats in bags. Mary Hernandez (top left frame) passed them out to the kids. That evening, residents enjoyed a Fall Festival hosted by the Resident Council with games and prizes. The top right picture shows Maria Hernandez running

the darts and balloon booth. The bottom right picture shows the excitement of Bette Gulley, Melissa Davis, and Florence Ferguson at a successful rummage sale. Funds went towards a wide-screen television in the community room.



The Faces of the Future



Take a good look at these young men. They are the future of our community and our nation. Kids from the C. M. Allen Homes had a chance to explore college life during a field trip to Texas State University. The Housing Authority wants to encourage our youth to open their minds to all the possibilities. If you want your kids to get more involved in community life and to learn about exciting career opportunities, contact the Resident Services Coordinator at your site. The future waits for no one! So why should you? Get 'em started today!

The Colors of Freedom

Kids at the PODER Learning Center showed pride in their country and respect for veterans by coloring flags for Veterans Day. When they finished, the flags were placed on the lawn of the PODER Learning Center. A sea of reds, whites, and blues showed their appreciation and remembrance for our local veterans.





SAN MARCOS HOUSING AUTHORITY

Board of Commissioners:

Gloria Salazar—Chairperson
Earl Moseley—Vice-Chair.
Stacy Green—Resident Rep.
Rose Brooks
Rev. Samuel Montoya

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 Santoya
Springtown Villa Manager
Mary Ann Ramirez

Housing Offices:

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

Service Coordinators:

*Chapultepec Homes
(Family Self-Sufficiency)
396-3364
*C. M. Allen Homes
(KAD Korner Store)
392-6273
*Allen Woods Homes
(PODER Learning Center)
396-3367
*Springtown Villa Apts.
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, 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 monthly by the Resident Services Department of the San Marcos Housing Authority. Creative Consultant — Herod King Ellison; Managing Editor—Maria Calcaben; Senior Editor — Stewart Dale Spencer. Contact SMHA Resident Services, 701 South LBJ Drive, San Marcos, Texas, 78666. Phone — 396-3364 * Website — www.smpba.org*

Frances Santoya: A Hand for Her Fellow Man



Frances' calling to help people began in the Texas town of Carrizo Springs, where she was born and raised. Her parents were migrant workers so she learned the value of a dollar as she grew. She graduated from Northland College in East Grand Forks, Minnesota in 1992 and worked in the *maquiladoras* in Mexico for seven years but her heart called her back to serve her fellow Texans. From running the program by herself in Carrizo Springs to maintaining eleven rural counties as a Section 8 Specialist for the Alamo Area Council of Governments, she has worked in the Section 8 Program for eleven years. She became our Section 8 Coordinator at the end of the summer. Frances describes working with our tenants as "a wonderful experience." Not only does she love helping people but she also likes scrapbooking, watching movies, and spending time with her family. Thanks for being a part of the team Frances!