

THE RACLE

The Value of Volunteering

by Maria Calcaben

Author Elizabeth Berg once said, "There is incredible value in being of service to others." The value of volunteering comes in many forms. It could be the dollar amount of money saved by the company from the labor provided by dedicated volunteers. It could be the amount of opportunities that each volunteer receives to share their passion or knowledge with others. It could even be the number of lives that were changed or affected because of a volunteer.

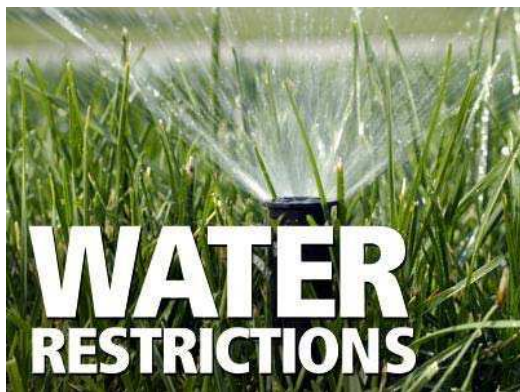
Here at the San Marcos Housing Authority, we have many programs and populations diverse enough for anyone to share their skills and we are privileged to thank them for their commitments. Our annual **Volunteer Award Banquet** was recently held at Red Lobster and volunteers that served 50 hours or more in 2013 were honored.

The staff of Springtown Villa would like express their gratitude to Lino Puente, Deborah Morris, Maria Elena Hernandez, Ramona Galvez, Cynthia Watts, Shirlene Bishop, and Bobbi Riel for helping to make a difference in their community. Bobbi Riel, a resident of the Allen Woods Homes, received the Top Volunteer Award with 79.5 hours of service. From bringing flowers to residents to painting for fundraisers to participating in the Resident Council, these volunteers helped make Springtown Villa feel like home!

C. M. Allen Homes personnel are grateful for the service of Monserrate Fernandez, Moserrate Madrazo, Russell Krummell, and Maria Oliva Santibane. Mrs. Fernandez, who cooks for all of the Kid's Café Program Sites, is a part-time employee but she volunteers far more hours than the hours for which she is paid. Once again, she is the Top Volunteer of C. M. Allen, volunteering over 1,200 hours in one year! All the volunteers dedicated their time to the children of the KAD Program, and to various activities at the KAD Korner Store, to help make our programs successful.

The folks who run the Family Self-Sufficiency program at the Chapultepec Homes would like to recognize Shaun Contreras and Mari Contreras for their commitment to the after-school programs at Chapultepec and C. M. Allen. With over 100 hours, Shaun Contreras was the Top Volunteer at Chapultepec. This power couple continues to bless the lives of our kids!

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The Housing Authority would like to remind residents at our public housing sites that, in accordance with drought restrictions being enforced by the City, residents will be charged for any fines appearing on our water bill. The Housing Authority pays for the water used at each site but residents are responsible for violations and any fines, criminal citations, or other penalties the City might impose to enforce the restrictions. In a letter to all water customers last November, Thomas Taggart, the Executive Director of Public Services, noted that the majority of recent rains did not fall within the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone or the Canyon Lake watershed and that ground and surface water supplies remain below normal. You can get more information at www.sanmarcostx.gov/drought.

ALLEN WOODS HOMES—PODER LEARNING CENTER

Love What You Do

"The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it."

Steve Jobs



Italia enjoys coconut water in Jalisco, Mexico.

Italia Moreno came from Laredo to attend Texas State University. Originally on the path to majoring in Journalism, a life-changing trip to a poor African orphanage touched her heart to lean towards a major in Family and Child Development. She began volunteering with the Housing Authority by doing a Veteran's Day activity with the children of the Chapultepec Homes in 2011. For the next few years, she would commit herself to the children of the Allen Woods Homes with her time, donations, and fundraising ideas. She became our 2013 Volunteer of the Year! Now as an intern, she is planning and creating successful, fun, and challenging activities for the children. After graduation, Italia plans to become certified as a Family Life Educator to help people better understand their family system and learn skills that will help them build healthy family relationships. She hopes to work for a non-profit abroad. Many children have benefitted from Italia's passion and we are thankful to have her interning with us!

A Child's View of Love

The PODER After-School Program students give their definitions of *love*:

"I think love is helping a new friend"
—Makayla

"I think love is giving cards. Keeping yourself healthy. I show my mom that I love her by telling her at night goodnight"
—Daniel

"I think love is love your mom kissing her and loving her"
—Josh

"I think love is helping me or other people. If I see a person in danger I will help them"
—Sarahi

"I think love is I love my family. I love my mom. Preaching I love God"
—Jaydyn

Buenas Amigas

Buenas amigas son difícil de encontrar.

Buenas amigas son fácil de querer.

Buenas amigas son regalos que duran por siempre y que se sienten como regalos de arriba.

Buenas amigas son una en un millón.

Buenas amigas son historias para compartir.

Buenas amigas son las que conocen el camino para tu felicidad, y caminan contigo hasta lograrlo.

Buenas amigas son vidas que se complementan.

Buenas amigas son risas y lágrimas.

Buenas amigas son emociones tan profundas que la confianza sigue creciendo con el paso de los años.

Buenas amigas son difícil de encontrar.

Buenas amigas son fácil de adorar.

Y tú has sido tan buena amiga conmigo . . . que no podría pedir nada más.

Collin McCarty

<http://www.donquijote.org/spanishlanguage/friendship/>



Springtown Villa

Get involved



Springtown Villa residents get involved in their community! Residents attended a CARTS (Capitol Area Rural Transportation System) community meeting at the San Marcos Intermodal Station on Guadalupe street to voice their opinion on CARTS services. Residents rely on this service to get to doctors appointments, grocery stores, and local pharmacies. In the picture on the left, Ramona Galvez (dressed in black) was able to voice her concerns to Edna Johnson, the Director of Urban Operation regarding senior service.



Mario Garcia, representative for SONAS Medical Supply, informs residents of the new medical supplies available to them through their insurance company. Residents were able to try some of the new products such as an ankle gauntlet, an element sport ankle brace, and a thermoskin carpal tunnel glove.



Meet Amber M. Nealy, the new intern at Springtown Villa! Here is her story:

I was born in Milwaukee, WI and grew up in a small suburb called Brown Deer. I graduated from Brown Deer High School in 2003 and moved to Austin a couple of years later. Once I arrived in Austin, I decided to attend Austin Community College and studied Social Work there. In 2012, I transferred to Texas State University and began work on my Bachelor's degree in Social Work. I am set to graduate May 8th of this year. I recently became engaged to a wonderful man and we plan on getting married in the fall of 2015. Before that, I intend to go to graduate school and obtain my Master's in Social Work. Upon receiving my MSW I hope to work in healthcare as a Medical Social Worker.

Welcome Amber M. Nealy