



Happy New Year!

The Oracle



**NEW LOOK
INSIDE!**

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Another Family Self-Sufficiency Success Story!

Before joining the FSS program in October 2005, Jewelette Frye served in the Air Force for four years in Weather Forecasting. After being honorably discharged in 2001, Jewelette began her educational career at Texas State University. Jewelette graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics and English. Her initial plan was to pursue a Master’s degree and then someday obtain a PhD. However, while working at Sam’s Club, Jewelette was intrigued by an open position with the Sam’s Distribu-

tion Center in New Braunfels. After consulting the FSS Coordinator for advice, Jewelette, applied for the position and began a new career path as a Verifier, a position where she could use her skills in mathematics. While in the FSS program, Jewelette used all ser-

vices available to her, such as credit and budget counseling, educational guidance, job search assistance, and peer counseling. Jewelette attended many support group meetings and spent lots of time in the FSS Office asking for advice on different job prospects, educational paths, and life’s bumps in the road. Jewelette graduated the FSS Program in September. She earned enough FSS Escrow money to make a down payment on a home but has not decided where she wants to live.



Real Estate Assessment Center Inspections Rescheduled for January 27 & 28

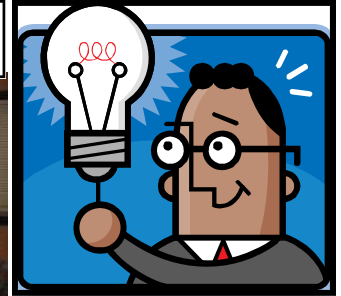
Public Housing units will be inspected on January 27 & 28. Please help us by doing these things no later than January 15.

- Remove Christmas lights and any extension cords running out through the windows. Our maintenance workers will check all sites after January 15. If they have to remove the lights for you, the charge is \$20.
- If you have any electrical wires or any kind of television or computer cables exposed on your floors, they must be taped down so they are not a trip hazard.
- At least one window in each bedroom must not be blocked by furniture, etc.
- Smoke alarms may not be disconnected or covered and must work properly. If yours does not work, please contact your site manager as soon as possible.
- Report any outstanding maintenance items or damages. If you caused the damage, we will allow you a reasonable time to pay any charges as a result.

Volunteer Awards Banquet: A Little Goes a Long Way



They are the hands that cook meals for your children. They are the feet that pass out flyers. They are the minds that have changed your neighborhood. The San Marcos Housing Authority celebrated the achievements of volunteers that have often been invisible. The volunteers from Allen Woods, C. M. Allen, and Springtown Villa were treated to a lunch at Tres Hermanas, awarded certificates and gifts, and honored with words by Executive Director Albert Sierra. Their names will be placed on the permanent plaques at the site offices. Volunteer of the Year for 2009, Pablo Gomez, is shown on the left. Volunteer of the Year for 2008, James “Bo” Wimberley, posed on the right with Gene Martin (LBSW). They received gifts, including their own plaques, and their names will be on the special plaque at the main office of the Housing Authority. These fine people have positively affected the lives of many of their neighbors.



Do you have a story? A recipe? Maybe a funny joke or drawing? *The Oracle* would like to hear from you! Send your name, contact information, and material to Maria Calcaben, Resident Services Dept. You can drop it off at your site office or email it to maria@smpha.org. You could be published in the next newsletter and on our website!

Serenading the Seniors at Springtown Villa



The residents of Springtown Villa embraced the colorful sounds of violins, trumpet, and even a guitarrón played by the students of The Mariachi Academy. Led by their director, Mr. Frank De Leon, the students played their competition pieces for a large crowd mixed with their parents and Springtown residents. From counting elephants to serenading a lover, each song was uniquely sung in Spanish and enjoyed by all. What a treat!

Housing Authority Staff Filled with the Christmas Spirit



No Scrooges at this party! San Marcos Housing Authority employees and their guests celebrated their annual Christmas Party at Papa Pastas. Guests were treated to a delicious three-course meal and a White Elephant gift exchange where you can pick a gift or steal someone else’s. Pictured on the left (from left to right) are Irma Adame, Eva Sanchez, and Frances Santoya. Pictured on the right are Amy Valles and her children Avery and Cody.



Kid's Korner

“How the Cat Got It’s Tail” by Kayla Martin age 10

Long, long ago when the Earth was first made, cats had a stub instead of a tail. A smart 3 month old kitten named Siamon (pronounced Simon) lived in a forest.

One day Siamon climbed up a tree. He jumped down and realized he got a bruise. He wondered why he didn’t land safely. He then walked down a path and met a fox. Siamon asked the fox “Can you help me please? Every time I jump out of a tree I get hurt.”

The fox replied to him “I am Lilly. I would help you right now but I am busy right now so maybe later.”

Siamon then started walking the path again and met a wolf. Siamon asked the wolf, “Can you help me please? Every time I jump out of a tree I get hurt.”

The wolf replied to him “My name is Kyle. Come here I think I know what might work.”

Siamon nervously walked towards Kyle. Kyle gripped on Siamon’s stub tail and slowly pulled on Siamon’s stub tail. Siamon’s stub started to stretch until Siamon yelled “LET GO OF MY TAIL!! THAT HURTS!!!”

Kyle let go and said “Climb the tree and jump down to see if it works.”

Siamon climbed the tree and jumped down. He had landed on all four paws! Siamon yelled through his tears of joy, “IT WORKED!! IT WORKED!!”

Kyle said “Then I must go. You’re very welcome.”

Before Kyle left, Siamon said “Thank you very much.” Siamon’s whole body was full of

joy!



Chapultepec All Stars

“Star Students” are kids in the Chapultepec after-school program who attend every day, practice good manners, and complete their homework.

This month’s star students are:

- Keishan McKinney
- Desirae Ybarra
- David Melchor
- Brandi McKinney



January Birthdays



Allen Woods

- Kara Marin—29th

Chapultepec

- Eliga Davis—14th
- Skylar Barerra—22nd

Free Guitar Lessons

Now you can be a guitar hero or a power drummer just like your favorite band! The PODER Center is teaching free guitar and drum classes every Tuesday and Thursdays at 4:00pm for kids. Get your guitars and we’ll have you strumming in no time! As for the

drums, just come and play. If you’ve got the will, you’ll get the skill. Don’t just dream about it



when you can make it happen. Call 396-3367 for more information.



The Corkboard: Announcements, Games, and Laughs

A Chance of a Lifetime: GED Preparation Information Classes

Are you finally ready to take that leap? Are you willing to see how far a little more education can take you? If you want to know more about the GED examination and FREE preparation classes, plan to attend one of the January **INFORMATION SESSIONS** at the library :

1. Tuesday, January 12
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM
2. Thursday, January 14
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
3. Thursday, January 21
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM
4. Tuesday, January 26
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

After attending one of the GED information sessions, you will

have the opportunity to register for GED preparation classes at one of these events:

1. Tuesday, February 2
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
COMMUNITY ACTION TRAINING CENTER
2. Thursday, February 4
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
SAN MARCOS PUBLIC LIBRARY

YOU MUST BE REGISTERED TO ATTEND CLASSES.

GED preparation classes meet at the **LIBRARY LEARNING CENTER**, 625 East Hopkins, Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday, 10:00 AM to 12 NOON.

GED preparation classes also meet at the **COMMUNITY ACTION TRAINING CENTER**, 1633 State Highway 80, Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM.

For More Information contact: **SAN MARCOS PUBLIC LIBRARY LEARNING CENTER**, 625 East Hopkins, 393-8215.



Testimony from a Volunteer

My name is Cruz Madrid. I'm a high school senior and I've been here at KAD for roughly 3 years now. Without the KAD after school program, I wouldn't have ever learned how to get involved in the community like I know how to now. It has also taught me skills that I wouldn't have learned anywhere else, like



how to be responsible for myself. It can help anyone. You can see a lot here that you wouldn't see anywhere else, like how to work well with kids your age as well as younger ones. I'm very appreciative to the people that run the KAD Program.

Youth Advocate Honored

San Marcos Mayor Susan Narvaiz , the City Council, and the San Marcos Youth Commission recently honored Bonnie Pecina as Youth Advocate of the Month for her outstanding work with children at the San Marcos Housing Authority. From left to right: San Marcos Mayor Susan Narvaiz, Youth Commission Chair Craig Corbin, Bonnie Pecina, and students Angelina Castillo and Gracie Rocha. Back row, left to right: City Council members Pam Couch and Kim Porterfield, Texas State student liaison Fidencio Leija, Council members Chris Jones and Gaylord Bose, Stewart Dale Spencer, Council Member Fred Terry, Stacie McGee and Gene Martin.



 **Mi Vida, Mi Comunidad** 

“La Muñeca Fea” by Santos Espinoza

En un viaje misionario que hizo nuestra iglesia para la frontera de Mexico en un tiempo de navidades les llevamos regalos de Christmas a los niños de la region. Un cuarto chico en el que estabamos adornando los presentes con papel, habia una ventana como seis pies de alto. Afuera los niños saltaban para ver que era lo que traíamos.

Al repartir los regalos los niños estaban excitados muy contentos y feliz. Sobre la mesa habia unas que no envolvieron (presentes). Esta linda niña vio una muñeca, los ojos se le hisieron grandes, agaro la muñeca y la abrazo junto a su

pecho, ¡arroyandola como a un bebito! Otras niñas se la querian quitar pero ella la abrazaba fuerte para que no se la quitaran.

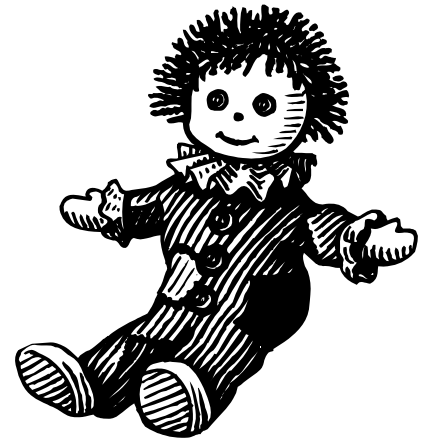
¡Dicen que los hombres no lloran Mentiras! Soy muy sentimental y al ver eso se me llenaron los ojos de lagrimas.

¡La muñeca estaba desnuda sin ropa y adempmas pelona! Nada mas tenia agujeros en la cabeza donde habia estado su cabello en sus mejores dias. ¡Esa muñeca era la cosa mas fea para mi, pero para ella era un tesorano!

Aqui en U.S.A. lo tenemos todo. Todo lo que necesitamos, pero

siempre queremos mas. Algo que ya no queremos lo botamos a la brasura. Nunca pensamos que aqui estamos bendicidos. Aunque no somos ricos, no nos falta nada.

(Mr. Espinoza is a resident of Springtown Villa.)



Site Announcements



FSS Participants:

- January 11 Chapultepec Resident Assembly, 6:30 pm
- January 15 Support Group, 6:30 pm, Topic: *Budgeting Your Income Tax Refund*

Allen Wood Residents:

- January Kids sign up at the PODER Learning Center to play basketball in the “Golden Youth Alternative” Program. Call 396-3367 for details.

C.M. Allen Residents:

- January 6 Blood Pressure Check & Information with Charmain Thompson, LVN
- January 7 Resident Assembly meeting at 6:30 pm
- January 13 “Six Pillars of Character” sessions with the youth program begin

Springtown Residents:

- January 8 Blood Pressure Check with ProGressive Home Health, 11:00 am
- January 13 Resident Council meeting at 3:30 pm

¿Te gustaría aprender Inglés?

Even Start Program

4766 Highway 123
 Lunes—Jueves 9 am—12 pm
 Lunes—Jueves 6:30 pm—8:30 pm
 Registración comienzan el 4 de Enero.
 Tiene que atender dos noches a la semana
 Call 392-7547

ESL Class

625 East Hopkins St.
 Lunes—Jueves 1 pm—4 pm
 Martes y Jueves
 6:30 pm—8:30 pm
 San Marcos Public Library
 Call 393-8215





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

Resident Services Centers:
*Chapultepec Homes
Family Self-Sufficiency
396-3364
*KAD Korner Store
Youth Development Services
392-6273
*PODER Learning Center
Resident Self-Sufficiency
396-3367
*Springtown Villa
Elderly & Disabled Services
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. Managing Editor—Maria Calcaben; Senior Editor—Stewart Dale Spencer; Creative Consultant—Herod King Ellison. Contact: SMHA Resident Services, 701 South LBJ Drive, San Marcos, Texas, 78666. Phone — 396-3364 * Website — www.smpaha.org*

Amanda Ramirez: The Voice of Resident Services



Put a face to that friendly voice that greets you every time you call the Chapultepec office: Amanda Ramirez, the Housing Authority's newest member, is the Family Self-Sufficiency Assistant Coordinator. Between filing, answering questions, taking phone messages, filing paperwork, meetings, and typing memos, Amanda greets everyone who comes into the office with a friendly smile. With a background in customer service, she has a desire to help those in need. She also helps with the kids that participate in the Chapultepec after-school program. She feels that this activity is helping strengthen the community spirit of the Chapultepec Homes. Amanda is a San Marcos native. She and her husband, Moses, were just married in September. She has big dreams of starting a family, owning a house, and broadening her horizons with Resident Services and the San Marcos Housing Authority. Keep up the smiles and the good work Amanda!