

The Oracle



Gerri Moves on to the Next Phase



Megan S. Perez, Senior Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator, presents Gerri Moregon with her FSS Certificate of Completion.

Gerri Moregon entered the Family Self-Sufficiency Program in September 2009 with her two young children, Mason and Kylie. Upon entering the program, Gerri enrolled in school at Austin Community College and helped build the after-school program at Chapultepec Homes. As a tutor, Gerri worked with children at Chapultepec to complete their daily homework assignments and helped in getting food donations from residents for daily snacks. While attending school, Gerri worked on improving her credit report, budgeting her finances, and building a savings account. Last Fall, Gerri found full-time employment as the accountant and administrative assistant at Texas Old Town in Kyle. She enjoys helping couples of all ages see their dream weddings or vow renewals come together in a gorgeous setting. Gerri and her husband, Ricky, were lucky enough to see their own wedding dreams come true at Texas Old Town. She and Ricky hope to buy a house next year and perhaps grow their family a bit more.

Gerri has been an outstanding participant in the program and has been a strong part of the community. Even through difficult times Gerri has been positive and has never given up. Gerri states that one of the best parts of being in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program is the “power of community and how the community comes together for each other.” Gerri has been a joy to have and without her the after-school program would not have evolved to the success it is today. Residents helping residents is the key to a successful community. Thanks for being part of ours Gerri!

Notes from the Main Office

BED BUGS are a growing problem across the nation. Bed bugs don't appear to spread disease but they can cause skin irritations and unpleasant odors. You can get bedbugs from many sources. It doesn't mean you are not clean. Be especially careful when buying used furniture. *You can create a strong defense against bedbugs.* Laundering your bedding with hot water and drying it with high heat will kill bed bugs. But what about the parts of the bed you can't throw in the wash? Bed bug encasements are a great way to keep your mattress, box spring and pillows bed bug free. They won't prevent bed bugs but what they can do is prevent these areas of the bed from being infested. They take away places for bed bugs to hide. If you have a bed with legs, you can also put the legs in “Climbup Interceptors.” These little bowls are made in such a way that bed bugs get stuck in them — they climb into the bowls but can't make it up the legs of the bed. Climbup Interceptors are actually designed for bed bug detection but they take away one path bed bugs have to get into your bed.

People report having good luck using them for protection purposes. You also need to keep the bed isolated in other ways. Pull the bed away from the wall. Move nightstands so that they don't touch any part of the bed or bedding. Don't let bedding touch the floor. And don't put things on the bed (clothes, bags, shoes). These are not solutions to a bed bug infestation. But they can help protect you, especially from getting bed bug bites. (This article was adapted from www.bedbuginfo.com. A previous version was originally published in The Oracle in March 2011.)



THE FOURTH OF JULY is almost here! SMHA offices will be closed. Remember, the sale, possession, storage, discharge, or offer for sale of fireworks is considered a public nuisance and is unlawful (Sec. 38.054 of Code of Ordinances).

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

Honoring Memorial Day

U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Carlos Lujan visited the children of the PODER After School Program to help honor Memorial Day. Sgt. Lujan, an occasional volunteer for the children's program, served for 6 active and 2 inactive years in the Marines Corps Reserve. He had two meritorious promotions and was the top of his class. He talked to the children about the Marines and his time in Iraq. The children had a great time asking questions and learning important skills such as honor and integrity. A big thanks to a kind veteran!



Fifth Grade Fun

The fifth graders of the PODER After School Program were treated to a special outing with their mentors. They were each given a journal filled with advice from their mentors for the transition to sixth grade. The first stop was to the San Marcos Activity Center to play basketball. The boys had a blast playing a game with a team of athletic guys! The fifth graders then went to the Premium Outlet Malls to eat at the food court. Congratulations to Miranda Bamentos, Mhyson Williams, Miguel Salinas, Miguel Ruiz, Dylan McWatters, and Melissa Frias for graduating the fifth grade!



PODER Goes Green!

The garden at PODER Center is thriving thanks to the Vasquez family! Griselda Vasquez's effort of weeding, planting, and watering. She, along with the help of the PODER After-School Program children, have planted peppers, watermelons, cantaloupe, broccoli, and corn. A delicious salad ready for fall!



DESCIFRAR LAS PALABRAS: FRUTAS

1. Pequeño, roja y dulce: **RESFA**
2. Tiene mucha Vitamina C: **JANARAN**
3. Crujiente, y dulce o amarga: **NAZAMAN**
4. Amarillo y suave: **POLTANA**
5. Verde o morada, chica y redonda: **AVU**



A Night to Remember



The children from the San Marcos Housing Authority After-School Programs had a great time at the Rio Vista Pool on Friday June 1st. It was the End-of-the-School-Year Pool Party celebrating all the hard work done during the school year. Parents and children were encouraged to have fun swimming, eating, and congregating! For these kids and their families, summer started with a great splash!

Springtown Villa



A butterfly lands on Joe's finger.



Ramona enjoys the butterflies



Above Joe and Maria Elena touch a snake



Cathy tries to catch a butterfly



Arm full of tortoises!



Residents enjoy a visit to our local Nature Center



Time keeper



READY
SET
GO!



Irene wins



Thank
You!
Volunteers!



Elizabeth
Jenna
Linda
Heather
Taylor
Clara
Alicia
Brittany

C. M. Allen Homes—KAD Korner Store



Kids of KAD participating on a hands-on activity provided by Erica Gallardo who works in partnership with Communities in Schools.

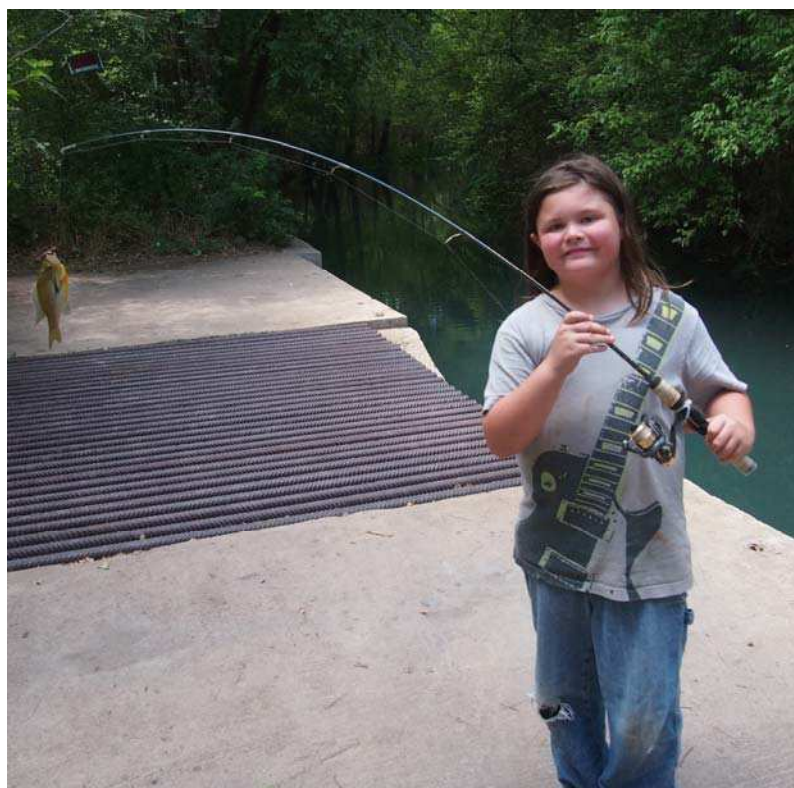


CM Allen residents enjoy the senior social — day full of laughs, good food, and great prices.



The Community Garden is looking good with beans, peppers, tomatoes, and squash.

KAD kicked off its youth summer fishing club on Thursday, June 21st and some could say the first fishing trip was quite successful. Jason Renna caught the first fish of the summer and was pretty excited about it. This little sunfish was caught near Thompson Island using some earthworms as bait. The new fishing club is a great way to introduce kids to new outdoor activities as well as teach them about the wildlife all around us. A volunteer will be taking small groups of kids to the river over the course of the summer to go fishing. If your child is interested in joining the fishing club, please come by KAD and pick up a permission form.



Family Self-Sufficiency



Thank you to Alma Ramirez, Financial Education Instructor, from Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union, who came and worked with FSS participants and their children on developing a budget, a savings plan, and what to do if a financial emergency comes up. FSS Classes are held every third Thursday of the month at 6:30p in the Chapultepec Adult Learning Center.



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 ★ MOVIES IN THE ★
 ★ PARK ★
 ★ EVERY TUESDAY ★
 ★ DURING ★
 ★ SUMMER ★
 ★ SAN MARCOS ★
 ★ PLAZA PARK ★
 ★ July 3 ★
 ★ The Smurfs ★
 ★ July 10 ★
 ★ Kung Fu Panda 2 ★
 ★ July 17 ★
 ★ Hugo ★
 ★ July 24 ★
 ★ The Muppets ★
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SUMMER ACTIVITIES BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE

CITY OF SAN MARCOS PARKS & REC DEPARTMENT

SUMMER FUN— FOR AGES 7-14 YEARS OF AGE OR STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED FIRST GRADE. SUMMER FUN RUNS FOR 8 WEEKS FROM 7:30A-5:30P. 1 FIELD TRIP PER WEEK AND LUNCH IS PROVIDED DAILY. CONTACT 393-8400 FOR MORE INFORMATION. COST IS \$32 PER WEEKS FOR SAN MARCOS RESIDENTS AND \$50 PER WEEK FOR NON-RESIDENTS.

NATURE CENTER OUTDOOR KIDS CAMP— AGES 9-12 JULY 9-13 FULL DAY CAMP * AGES 4-6 JULY 16-20 FOR HALF DAY CAMP * AGES 5-8 JULY 23-27 FULL DAY CAMP. FULL DAY CAMPS INCLUDE DAILY VISITS TO RIO VISTA POOL. CONTACT 393-8400 FOR MORE INFORMATION. COST FOR FULL DAY CAMP IS \$130 AND COST FOR HALF DAY CAMP IS \$80.

ROCK ON!

By Stewart Dale Spencer

After 30 years in the social services field, 17 of which were spent here at the San Marcos Housing Authority, I am retiring. I plan to pursue opportunities in my second career, Adult Education, on a part-time basis. I will also do some consulting work in program development and grant acquisition here and there. Nevertheless, my primary motivation for retiring is the opportunity to help raise my granddaughter, Kaliska. Some readers know her father, Jason. He served as an AmeriCorps volunteer at the Chapultepec Homes in 2001-2002. As a child, he participated in Kids Against Drugs activities. His wife, Victoria, also served as a volunteer in the after-school program at Chapultepec as she worked toward attaining her teacher certification.

My work at the Housing Authority has been very rewarding. Our Executive Director, Albert Sierra, has always been very supportive of my efforts to develop programs and activities that would benefit our residents and make it a place of healing and opportunity. It was he who asked me to develop a self-sufficiency program for the Chapultepec Homes, which was about to undergo a major renovation in 1991. To achieve our goals, I had to learn how to get and administer grants. Over the years, as our programs expanded, the Housing Authority devoted additional funding, as it was able, to supplement the grants.

When I first came to the Housing Authority, we had one social services office, three part-time youth advocates, and a small game room. Early on, it became my goal to have a full-time social services person at all four of our main housing sites. Today, by the grace of God and the hard work of many other people, we have four full-time Service Coordinators, a part-time Administrative Assistant, numerous interns and volunteers, the PODER Learning Center, the KAD Korner Store, the Chapultepec Adult Learning Center, a Community Room at Springtown Villa, four computer labs, and three vans, including a special handicap-accessible mini-van. Various contractors supplement our services, with the Kid's Cafe being the most prominent. The amount and variety of services and facilities that we have been able to make available to our residents never fails to amaze people who examine our programs. We have won numerous awards and other housing authorities call us for advice. Personnel in the HUD Area Office in San Antonio have told us that our programs are more like those of the large housing authorities. A recent visit by HUD to the Chapultepec Adult Learning Center will result in a "best practices" write-up for effective use of Community Development Block Grant funds.

As I look back on my handiwork, I am humbled by the fact that without the help of many fine people, most of it would not have been possible. San Marcos is blessed with an extensive social services network and despite the need for written agreements, most of the services are secured with a phone call or a handshake. Rather than list all of "my" accomplishments, I prefer to thank people like Dolores Crittendon, also recently retired, who helped me start the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. I can't list everyone but I want to mention a few other folks, in addition to the employees and residents of the San Marcos Housing Authority, who helped me along the way: Jonathan Engel, Terri Schiemenz, Frank Cantu (Community Action), Carla Merritt, Sue Cohen (Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse), Marla Johnson, Elva Gonzalez, Michele Ducote (Hays-Caldwell Women's Center), Julia Ramsay-New, Craig Corbin (Greater San Marcos Youth Council), Michelle Harper (United Way of Hays County), Suzi Fields, Audra Moore, James & Jennifer Buratti (Edible San Marcos), Russel Hodges, Jovita Ross-Gordon, BJ Friedman, Sylvia Crixell, Staci McGhee, Cade Humphries, Deborah Stedman, Emily Payne, Carl & Karen Brown, Karen Meaney, Gloria Martinez, Kyong Hee Chee, Kim Porterfield, Mary Helen Martinez (Texas State University), Alma Briggs, Pat Tessaro, Jerry Gracy, Jane Moore (Hays County Food Bank), Karla Cantu (Capital Area Food Bank), Karen Smith, Janis Hendrix, Rodney Cobb, William Ford, Debbie Dietz, Robin Wood (City of San Marcos), Horace Whitlow (Laser Service USA), Ron Kulik (RMK Consulting), Karen Thompson, Diane Stock, Carmen Todd (CenturyLink). I especially want to thank Albert Sierra, who has been my supervisor and my mentor, and Gene Martin, who came to me as a social work volunteer 20 years ago and developed in a trusted colleague. Their contributions to my personal and professional development cannot be measured in words.

Finally, I take this opportunity to announce publicly that Gene Martin will take the reins of SMHA Resident Services as of July 2. I know he will continue the tradition of always looking for ways to do more and do it better.



Here I am reading a book to Kaliska while sitting in a beautiful rocking chair given to me by my co-workers at my retirement luncheon. How cute is that?

PARTNER PAGE

Texas State University and San Marcos Housing Authority reunite for Fun and Fit Summer Camp 2012!

"Fun & Fit is a program that provides children with positive experiences in physical activity and helps children participate in healthy lifestyle choices." (Jayme Blaschke, www.txstate.edu/news) From the university setting to the student coaches, the Fun & Fit program is designed to help collaborate methods of learning. The college students learn to manage and teach a class and the children benefit from the positive setting and lessons. Coach Karen Meaney, the camp director, does an excellent job organizing and communicating with the San Marcos Housing Authority for an overall success of the program. Allison Arciba, Resident Services Intern for Allen Woods, was able to participate in the joy and energy present among the children on the first day of Fun and Fit. The children of the Housing Authority, along with children from the Boys and Girls Club, were divided into smaller groups and taught CPR, Cooperation Participation Respect. The teachers and coaches instructing the children with energy and compassion help make each game fun for the children. Other activities include ways to make healthy food and promoting higher education. College becomes a more attainable goal because the children are on the university campus and are introduced to the Texas State University community. Reiterating their new knowledge to their peers and family helping to promote the importance of healthy lifestyle choices is something our communities can look towards!



BROADWAY BANK
We're here for good.
gsmcyc
Greater San Marcos Youth Council



STUFF THE BUS
School Supply Drive

August 7th . 8th . 9th . 10th

HCWC
HAYS-CALDWELL WOMEN'S CENTER
Serving Victims of Abuse

On July 7, 2012

HELpline: (512) 396-4357
or (800) 700-HCWC (4292)

You Know Your Car Needs It...



Get Your Car Washed to Raise Funds for HCWC!

And More - Breakfast Tacos, Chair Massages!

Conley Car Wash in San Marcos will donate 10% of all services on Saturday, July 7, 8 am to 6 pm, to help victims of abuse. We will be selling breakfast tacos donated by Lolita's in the morning. While you wait, indulge in a chair massage for only \$10 from 10 am to noon with all proceeds going to HCWC too.

Conley Car Wash is located at 1200 Thorpe Lane in San Marcos.



SAN MARCOS HOUSING AUTHORITY

Photo by Kayla Spencer

Board of Commissioners:

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

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 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.

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Who We Are

Hannah Beckett is one of our interns from Texas State University. She is from Waller, Texas. She moved to San Marcos five years ago to pursue a degree in Social Work. After she graduates in August, Hannah plans to continue her education in the Masters program at Texas State. She enjoys hunting, fishing, and the outdoors. She will be working at the KAD Korner Store all summer and helping out with the Youth Summer Program at the C. M. Allen Homes. She has been doing a great job and has gotten to know many of the residents.

