



The Oracle

**Special Report:
Let's Play!**

Zera James Moves on to the Next Phase



Zera James moved to Texas from Chattanooga, TN in 2007. She entered our Family Self-Sufficiency program in 2008 and was ready to work towards her goals. She attended The Academy of Health Care Professions and received her license as a Registered Dental Assistant. Zera took a job with Longhorn Dental after completing her internship with them in February 2008. After a year with Longhorn she went to work for Gary Job Corps where she is presently employed. Zera's ultimate goal is to return to school and complete a Dental Hygienist program. Being a single parent of eight-year-old daughter Malayla, and her six-year-old niece Lavender, has helped Zera become a strong, determined woman and has helped her accomplish her goals in life. Zera has been approved for a home through Habitat for Humanity. She started putting the required "sweat-equity" into her home in January and plans to use the FSS Escrow funds she earned by

completing the FSS program to help make advance payments on her new home and to go back to school for her dental hygienist license. Zera's favorite quote is from an unknown author: "This life is the only life you're given. Look for opportunities to grow and never be discouraged. I know not what my future holds, but I know who holds my future." With her practical approach to life supported by her faith in a higher power that wants her to succeed, we are confident she will accomplish whatever goal she sets out for herself. We will continue to track her story and let you know how you can help her build her house!

Notes from the Main Office

Taking Care of Our New Playgrounds — If you haven't seen the two playground areas and the basketball court at the Allen Woods Homes, you should go take a look! Playground #1 is behind Apt. 124, playground #2 is behind Apt. 165, and the basketball court is behind Apt. 91. We installed these areas because we care about our kids. We want them to have safe and fun places where they can just be kids. However, no one should be at the play areas after dark. If you see anyone there, tell them to go home, especially if it is after curfew hours. If you see someone spraying graffiti or damaging property, call the non-emergency number of the SMPD (753-2108), and make sure you provide a good description of the offenders. We will be installing security cameras very soon.

NOTICE TO PARENTS: IF YOUR CHILD IS IDENTIFIED AS A PERPETRATOR OF VANDALISM AGAINST HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY, YOU ARE SUBJECT TO EVICTION. WE WILL NOT TOLERATE UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN. IF YOU ARE HAVING PROBLEMS CONTROLLING YOUR CHILDREN, CONTACT THE SERVICE COORDINATOR AT YOUR SITE TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE. SAN MARCOS HAS MANY EXCELLENT RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU. MAKE SURE YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF YOUR CHILDREN . . . AND NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

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

BIBLE STUDY SEES THE LIGHT

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" -Psalm 119:11.

These words and others have inspired a small group of residents in the Allen Woods Homes to begin a bible study at the PODER Learning Center. They discuss faith and how it can help people to cope with life's challenges and how it can encourage you every day. Everyone is welcome to join every Friday morning at 10 a.m.



Residents Get a Head Start on Taxes

The San Marcos Housing Authority partnered with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) to help residents file their tax returns without paying the high interest of Refund Anticipation Loans . . . The so-called "rapid refund," which isn't a refund at all but a loan using your refund as security. Students from Texas State University and other volunteers came to the PODER Learning Center to help fill out paperwork and file online.

Twelve residents and non-residents took advantage of the help and filed their returns for free. Thanks VITA!



Crescent Dental Brings Smiles!



Crescent Dental, a new dentist office serving families and adults located on Barnes Dr., promoted their services at the PODER Learning Center on Saturday, January 21st. They brought food, face paint, a bounce house, and sugar-free goodies

for anyone that made an appointment. It was a great family day at Allen Woods!

By: Miranda Barrios Bakes

It is the month of February 2012. and we are going into the month of love and a special holiday VALENTINES DAY where you get to tell your true love how much they mean to you. And not just that couples go on romantic dates and go on a walk and maybe purpose. that is why they call it the month of love other than that it is a lovely month in the entered year and it is my favorite holiday ever.



Poem by Miranda Barrientos, 5th grade





Springtown Villa



Devin Hussey, Conservation Technician from the City Electric Utility, was available to answer questions for our residents about reducing their electric bill.



Residents were invited to celebrate Jasu's birthday. Lino and Elly enjoy dancing a cumbia.

Resident Council News:

Seventy-one percent of our residents participated in this years election for Resident Council! Here are the results:



President- Lino Puente
Vice President- Ramona Galvez
Secretary- Santos Espinoza
Sergeant at Arms- Gloria Galindo



After viewing a house-keeping video, Nancy Christofferson started helping some of our residents decorate their homes. Nancy and her assistant Ramona helped Santos with his window treatment. When they were done, he said, "Oh, it looks great! May I take you to lunch or will you just marry me?" Nancy kindly responded, "I'd better do lunch because if I got married, I would not have time to do all my projects and go to all my thrift shops!" So they had lunch and her assistant Ramona came along too!



Nancy, Santos and Ramona



Nancy and Ramona

Nancy's Corner



A PLACE FOR ME

This is a special place for me

That needs my humble skill

A certain job that I must do

That I know I can fulfill

I hope that I can make a difference with all our students

There is a special mark I must leave by my example of sincerity and kindness for them to see

However small it may be

A conversation to explain to them the right way

A smile that I would gladly give

To encourage them the best way to live

I wouldn't change it for a moment

The job I am here to do

Tomorrow there will always be a place for me it's true

C.M. Allen Events



Family Science Night, sponsored by Texas State University, was enjoyed by kids and parents.

Above, right: Mrs. Vasquez wins a fruit basket at a senior activity.

Below: Mr. Montelongo is clearing out the Community Garden before spring planting. Call 392-6273 if you want to reserve some space.

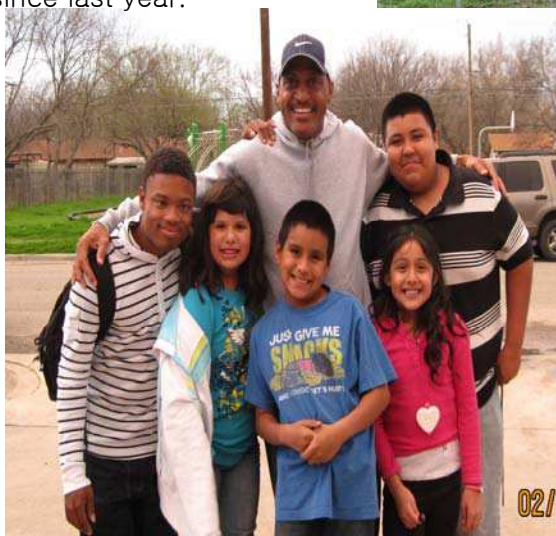


Below: A **surprise** visit by Lee Bowman, a former Tutor and Assistant Service Coordinator. He has been working in Iraq since last year.



Above: A former KAD member visits KAD after a Texas State campus tour. Way to go Miranda!

Below: Kappa Delta Chi, and KAD members during Valentine activities.



Family Self-Sufficiency

A big thanks to Heath Herrera from HH Fitness who came to present information to all FSS Participants about healthy eating

habits and effective
exercise routines to get
you energized for the day!



On the left is Heath Herrera and resident Tamera Thompson. To the right is Chapultepec Administrative Assistant and HCV FSS Participant Rebecca Reyes and FSS Applicant Cyndi Campos.



Bobcat Build will be returning to Chapultepec on March 31st. Donations of bottled water and healthy snacks would be greatly appreciated. They will be landscaping in the front of the Chapultepec Office.

*Children will not
remember you for the
material things you
Provided but for the
feeling that you
cherished them.*

- Richard L. Evans

Chapultepec Resident Assembly meetings are held on the first Tuesdays of the month.



FSS Classes are normally held on the third Thursdays of the month.

Let's Play!



It was a cold and windy morning on the opening of the playground, but that didn't stop the children from playing! There were about five families to be the first to enjoy the playground by climbing, sliding, crawling, hanging, and enjoying the delight and innocence of childhood. The new Allen Woods playgrounds were built to bring the community together and to have a safe place for children to play. Please note that the playgrounds close at dark and we all must respect the equipment and allow all children to have their turn to play on the playground. A special thanks to the Allen Woods Resident Assembly for their support in the planning of this project. Let the fun begin!



PARTNER PAGE

OUR NEWEST PARTNERS!

TEXAS EDUCATION FOUNDATION AND GARY JOB CORPS



Beginning April 1, 2012 TEF/Job Corps, in conjunction with Gary Job Corps, will begin an agreement with the San Marcos Housing Authority to make their services more accessible to participants residing within the San Marcos Housing Authority community. The agreement will enhance the services offered by all three organizations in order to better serve the community at large. Job Corps offers general education and vocational training to people typically aged 16-24, with certain exceptions for individuals over 25 on a case by case basis.

The general education offered by Job Corps includes the options of obtaining a GED or a High School Diploma and completing driver's education. Job Corps offers three areas of vocational training; these areas are Human Services and Information Technology, Construction and Manufacturing, and Health Sciences.

Qualified students receive pay while attending Job Corps, as well as free meals and uniforms. Counseling, medical, and placement services are also provided after a student completes training in the field of their choice. Advanced training and college level training is also available to students upon completion of initial basic training.

If you would like to receive training in order to be successful in highly employable career field, Job Corps may be the program for you.

For more information, please speak to the Public Housing Office or call one of your local Job Corps representatives, Travis Upchurch (512-665-7327) or Belen Martinez (512-787-3441).

Head Start / Early Head Start Program

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR:

- * Children who are 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2012 for families who qualify including children with disabilities
- * Infants and Toddlers ages birth to three

Services Offered:

Health, Nutrition, Education, Family Services

Income Guidelines for 2012 - 2013 School Year

Family Size	Income 100%	Income 130%
1	\$11,170	\$14,521
2	\$15,130	\$19,669
3	\$19,090	\$24,817
4	\$23,050	\$29,965
5	\$27,010	\$35,113
6	\$30,970	\$40,261
7	\$34,930	\$45,409
8	\$38,890	\$50,557



FOR EACH ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER, ADD \$3,960



Community Action, Inc.
of Central Texas
— DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES —



CTMC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Central Texas Medical Center will offer several \$1,000 scholarships to area high school seniors. The scholarships may be used for costs of attending a university, college, community college or vocational/trade school. Proof of enrollment and a tuition statement must be submitted in order to receive the scholarship. The scholarship awards are based on community involvement, work or organization experience, financial need and academic achievement.

"CTMC is pleased to recognize and award students who have worked hard for their scholastic achievements," said Clay DeStefano, CTMC administrative director of PR and Marketing. "We look forward to rewarding deserving students again this year with funds that will help them in their college career." In 2011, CTMC awarded a total of nine \$500 scholarships and one \$1,000 scholarship. The hospital has awarded the scholarships since 1997.

Application forms are available at www.ctmc.org, by clicking on "CTMC High School Scholarship Application" page, under "Education and Events." Items required with the application include the applicant's high school transcript, one letter of recommendation, and an essay describing the applicant's most meaningful achievements and how they relate to a chosen field of study and future goals. Interested students must send or deliver their completed forms to CTMC, located at 1301 Wonder World Drive in San Marcos. Applications must be delivered or postmarked on or before Saturday, March 31, 2012.

For more information, please contact CTMC's Scholarship Coordinator, Jerilyn Miller at 512-753-3687 or Jerilyn.miller@ahss.org.



SAN MARCOS HOUSING AUTHORITY

Photo by Kayla Spencer

Board of Commissioners:

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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.

*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*

How Hard Work Pays Off



Behind the half door of the Section 8 office, you may see Sylvia's smiling face greeting you. Sylvia Villanueva was born in Del Rio but grew up in New Braunfels. Sylvia loves shopping and loves her dog Lady. After graduating from Canyon High School, she moved to Port Arthur and attended Lamar State College to major in nursing. During that time though, something else was pulling at her heart. Sylvia wanted to be closer to her mother, who was living in San Marcos, so she decided to leave the Coast for the Hill Country. She went to Workforce Solutions and was placed in a temporary position with the Housing Authority. Because of her hard work and dedication, she was offered a regular full-time job when it became available just two months later. She exclaims, "I was searching for a position that would enable me to use my organizational skills and ability to work well with people. I found it!" She has been working with Section 8 for almost three years now and is always doing what she can to make the program better. Thank you Sylvia for being a great example of how hard work can pay off!