



REPAIRS COMPLETED AT THE CM ALLEN HOMES! by Stewart Dale Spencer

Nineteen months after the devastating Memorial Weekend Flood of 2015, the San Marcos Housing Authority has completed repairs on all damaged units at the CM Allen Homes. The SMHA has not had to deal with the impact of a major flood upon one of its properties since the days of the old Mitchell Homes, which were sold off several decades ago. Our initial clean-up efforts began with sweeping mud and water out of the KAD Korner Store on Sunday, May 24, 2015. Residents were doing the same thing in their homes.



We have learned much along the way. It was a learning experience for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development as well. Training is now available to help housing authorities develop plans to respond to various natural disasters but nineteen months ago we were on our own and doing our best to help residents cope. We quickly learned that almost every home would have to be vacated. Equally sobering was the realization that we had no resources to assist with that process. Those were confusing days.

All that is in the past now but the effects linger. Many families chose to return once repairs on their unit were completed but many others decided not to risk the chance of another flood, especially after the Halloween flood, only five months later. As of this writing, about 15 of the repaired units remain vacant and fear of flooding has been cited by some potential new families as a reason for not accepting a unit at CM Allen. We are working to get families into those units through various outreach efforts.

Our Maintenance department, headed by long-time employee Albert Hernandez, and our construction consultant, Leonard Hughes, did a stellar job at coordinating the initial clean-up work, navigating the permit process, meeting FEMA requirements, and monitoring the work of contractors. Albert Sierra, the Executive Director, chose to begin repairs as soon as possible rather than wait to see how much assistance would be available from FEMA and other sources. We started with lightly-damaged units. The first unit was ready about 2 months after the flood. I asked Edward Alcalá, Administrative Assistant, to respond to a few questions:

*When did repairs at CM Allen begin? "The initial work began the day of the flood when Albert Hernandez and I walked into every unit at CM Allen to take pictures of the damage, measure the water levels, and to make sure residents were not in any danger. The sub-contractors were also called that day and were asked to show up the following morning to start removing sheetrock to begin the drying process. The first units repaired were the ones with the least damage. The first repairs began on July 9." (See "Repairs" on Page 6)



ALLEN WOODS HOMES—PODER LEARNING CENTER



Sharing the Love



During February, residents showed their love and support for the neighborhood in a couple of ways. First, the Resident Assembly had their annual Valentine's Bake Sale. There were cakes, cookies, pies, and other treats (pictured right) for pre-order or purchase the day of the sale. Thanks to the dedication of the Resident Assembly members (Susan Tilatitsky, Juan Villanueva, Jesus Martinez, Brigitte Bell and Lola Bell) as well as former residents and current volunteers Kevin Lizama-Reyes and RJ Lizama-Reyes to bake these goodies, we raised over \$200 to go back into the neighborhood! The kids of the PODER After-School Program also shared love by creating Valentines for elderly and disabled residents at Allen Woods and Springtown Villa. They made the hearts extra special with the thought of their own grandmas and grandpas and how some of the recipients of these hearts never get any visitors. Thanks to the Terry Scholars at Texas State and volunteer Vivian Tong for passing out these special collage hearts (picture on the left)!



\$aving for the Future

Money management can be difficult for families today. At our February Family Night we talked about basic budgeting, saving wisely, and tips and tricks on shopping. The families did various activities to practice using these tools. One game included the parents making a shopping list while the kids went "shopping" and compared food prices. The families then "ordered" a meal from a McDonalds menu. By comparing how much they would have spent and the amount of meals they would get out of groceries versus going out to eat, it was clear that cooking at home is a much more practical (and nutritious) way to spend their money. The evening ended with the families creating financial goals together and how each member of the family would be able to contribute. The families also decorated a money jar they could take home and begin saving. Whether they were saving for vacation, emergencies, or for future family time, these families are much wiser about managing their money.



Sew Exciting

Intern Pamela Holmes hosted a craft class where the residents sewed their own lavender pillows. The soft, pocket-sized pillows were sprinkled with lavender oil to help residents relax at home or on the go. With a variety of patterned fabric to choose from, residents created their one-of-a-kind pillow!



Springtown Villa



Lots of residents turned out for the Valentine's Day party. It seems every year we have more people join us at our events and that makes us very happy! Residents are always thankful for the events and many help with decorations. We also want to thank our manager, Amanda Ramirez, for decorating and for always helping out. We also appreciate our sponsors who help with our events throughout the year.

Residents and the Resident Services intern, Brianna, are working on a blanket for the Resident Council. It will be part of a raffle to help raise money for our events. They also make other items that benefit residents.



Here is of our special moments at Springtown Villa. Here are some of our residents receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday. We would like to give thanks to Deacon Gilbert Lambardo for coming and offering services to our residents. He has been coming every Saturday morning at 9 AM for several years to offer Catholic services and communion.



We have a new, regular event at Springtown. Eric West, one of our residents, came up with the idea of having a Movie Day every Thursday. On this day, *The Secret Life of Pets* was showing. Coming up soon is *Stand by Me*, *Leap Year*, *Rise of the Guardians*, and *The Sixth Day*. Resident input will guide future selections.



C. M. ALLEN HOMES — KAD KORNER STORE



Read to Succeed



Volunteers from United Way's "Read to Succeed" program read to our kids and made masks with them during our after school program. We are very thankful to them for coming out. United Way of Hays County supports programs that strengthen early childhood learning and development opportunities. The Read to Succeed program focuses on increasing literacy skills and instilling a love for reading in the youngest members of our community.



Don't forget to join us for our yard sale at the KAD Korner Store on Saturday, March 18, from 9 AM — 3 PM. Thank you in advance for your support!



Pahola with Kappa Delta Chi held a canned food drive for our after-school program. They volunteer every day and help raise funds for KAD. They provide guidance to our local youth through mentoring and tutoring initiatives. Special thanks to our friends!



CHAPULTEPEC HOMES & ADULT LEARNING CENTER

Our February Resident Assembly theme was Make your own Sundae. The parents and kids had a great time and we discussed many exciting events and fundraising ideas we plan to do throughout the year.

Some of these activities include: starting a community garden, outdoor family movie night, date night, couponing classes, and a game night.



We had several residents volunteer for positions for our Resident Assembly Committee. This month, we will place those officers into their new positions and gear up for a spring/summer full of fun!

Meet Shelley. She is a new FSS participant at Chapultepec Homes.

Shelley is very excited to be a part of the FSS program and our community: *"I absolutely love being involved, and this community has been such a great resource for my family in the short months we've been here!"*

She will be presenting a couponing class at CALC as one of our fundraisers. We will keep you posted on the date and time!



SMHA Resident Services fundraiser on March 21st at AquaBrew

AquaBrew will donate \$3 from any burger purchased that day to Resident Services. Chapultepec residents and their family and friends can bring their receipt for that day to the office and we will get credit for our Resident Assembly fund!

Check them out: AquaBrew is located a half-block south of the square at 150 S. LBJ Dr. If you don't have time to dine-in, call in an order to go: 512-353-BREW (2739)

Repairs (continued from Page 1)

*How many contractors were involved? "We had a total of ten sub-contractors, each with a crew of about three. We

also had the help of volunteer groups: AmeriCorps, St. Bernard, and World Renew."

*What type of work was done? "Work began with removal and disposal of sheetrock, insulation, cabinets, doors and trim. Plumbers removed water heaters damaged by flood water and replaced them so remaining residents would have hot water. A/C contractors cleaned mud from condensing units and serviced units for remaining residents. [This was also done for empty units to help with the drying process.] Most appliances were replaced. Several A/C units were replaced; the rest were serviced. All kitchen base cabinets and counter tops were replaced. Most interior doors, jambs, and trim were replaced. Floor tile was replaced in about 35 units. All baseboards were replaced and electrical outlets were raised and replaced."

*How did the second flood affect the repair process? "The second flood only had a slight effect on the recovery process. Sheetrock had already been removed so no further sheetrock damage occurred. However, several of the recently installed

water heaters were damaged. Of the units that had been fully repaired by that time, only two had a small amount of water and mud on the floors. All repairs were completed on December 29, 2016."



TEXAS STATE[®]

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Seeking Women who are receiving TANF and Public Housing Assistance


Cedric Scott (first name pronounced See-drick) a doctoral student at Texas State University is conducting a research study (2017392) focusing on post-secondary education pathways in TANF and public housing programs. The goal of the study is to examine post-secondary education options as pathways to economic sustainability for women receiving TANF and public housing assistance and to explore women's experiences in these programs through individual and group interviews.

Participation in this study is voluntary, interviews conducted in 2 - 3 rounds and lasting approximately 45 - 90 minutes each. If you are interested in participating in this research study or you want additional information, please email Cedric Scott at cs1555@txstate.edu.

TexasState University Institutional Review Board approved this research study (2017392) on 2/6/2017.

MUSIC at the Library

George Ensle



**Tuesday
March 14th
7:00 PM**

San Marcos Public Library 625 E. Hopkins 512.393.8200



Just a reminder. Satellite dishes are not allowed at Housing Authority sites, regardless of how or where they are installed.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on February 28. Here are the highlights:
- Financial Reports as of January 31:** Four months into the Fiscal Year, Public Housing had a surplus of \$27,363. The Housing Choice Voucher Program has a surplus of \$1,760 in administrative expenses. Springtown Villa has a surplus of \$45,585.
- Occupancy Reports:** Public Housing is at 90%, Housing Choice Voucher is at 100%, and Springtown Villa is at 93%. There was some discussion about the lower than usual occupancy rates. Executive Director Albert Sierra reported that management staff are having difficulty finding enough qualified families to move into the CM Allen Homes to fill the remaining, repaired units, as well as newly vacated units. Some families have declined out of a concern for the possibility of future flooding. Sierra said that staff had done some outreach to increase available applications. With regard to Springtown Villa, Sierra reported that a few residents had come to the top of the waiting list in the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs and had moved out. Those units will be filled very soon.
- New Business:** 1) The SMHA remains exempt from Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to the City for FY 2016 because our in-kind contributions to support community-wide services exceed our calculated PILOT payment. Those contributions are primarily the space for the Head Start program at the Henry Bush Child Development Center at the Chapultepec Homes (where the value is far greater than the minimal rent paid by Head Start) and the space and utilities for the Meals on Wheels distribution site at the Allen Woods Dining Room. 2) The Section 8 Payment Standard for an efficiency apartment (zero-bedroom unit) was set at \$678. This was requested by HUD even though the Section 8 program has never had a request to approve a zero-bedroom unit. 3) SMHA's "Standards of Conduct" has been updated. All new business items were approved by the Commissioners.
- Director's Report:** Sierra reported that he met with a consultant that was hired by Texas State University to explore options on a possible acquisition by Texas State of the Allen Woods property. Evidently, Texas State understands that any arrangement would have to make it possible to replace 100% of the currently available units. He said there was some discussion about putting an entire funding package together that would make it possible to replace and modernize the housing at CM Allen -- and get it above the new Base Flood Elevation -- and at Chapultepec, and to perhaps add additional housing to serve a mix of income levels. One arrangement may involve a land swap for a new family development on property currently owned by Texas State off Ranch Road 12.

The Power of the Arts By Maria Calcaben

On Teen Night last month, previous intern Jordan Philips connected with Texas State Theatre Department and introduced a small group of kids to the magic of the theatre! Five kids were treated to a showing of "The World According to Snoopy," presented by Texas State students. For all of the kids, it was the first time they had ever seen a professional play. The kids were impressed to experience the sights and sounds of the live theater in the new Texas State Performing Arts building. The scenery was filled with moving light boxes, the kids laughed at Snoopy's jokes and Woodstock's dancing, and the whole theater was filled with the sounds of a live orchestra. Fifth-grader Mia Dilone absorbed the whole experience, smiling as the cast sang and looking sad when Charlie Brown was gloomy. After the performance, the kids were treated to a meal at Wendy's by their chaperones. Thanks again to the Texas State Performance Center and Theatre Department for this special opportunity!



SMHA CALENDAR - March 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
The name of March comes from Latin Martius, the first month of the earliest Roman calendar. It was named for Mars, the Roman god of war who was also regarded as a guardian of agriculture and an ancestor of the Roman people through his sons, Romulus and Remus. Martius, was the beginning of the season for both farming and warfare.			1 SPRINGTOWN RESIDENT COUNCIL 3:30 PM	2	3 ALLEN WOODS RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 10:00 AM	4
5	6 CM ALLEN RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 1:30 PM	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 SPRINGTOWN RESIDENT COUNCIL 3:30 PM	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 FSS CLASS ALLEN WOODS DINING ROOM 6 PM	24	25
26	27	28 SMHA Board of Commissioners 5:30 PM	29 CHAPULTEPEC RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 6 PM	30	31	1  WORLD COMES TO AN END 1:30 PM

LEADERSHIP

Board of Commissioners

Richard Cruz—Chairperson
Mary Barnhart—Vice-Chairperson
Gloria Salazar—Commissioner
Gerald Brown—Resident Comm.
Rose Brooks—Commissioner

Executive Director

Albert Sierra

HOUSING OFFICES

Allen Woods Homes (Main Office)
512-353-5059
CM Allen Homes
512-353-1116
Chapultepec Homes
512-396-3364
Housing Choice Voucher
512-353-5061
Springtown Villa
512-396-3363

RESIDENT SERVICES

Chapultepec Adult Learning Center/
Family Self-Sufficiency
512-396-3364
CM Allen KAD Korner Store
512-392-6273
Allen Woods PODER
Learning Center
512-396-3367
Springtown Villa
512-353-7343