



A Horse is a Horse (Of Course)

By Maria Calcaben

With fresh air in their lungs and a horse by their side, not even the hot Texas sun in the middle of ranch country could dampen our teens' spirits as they visited Restoration Ranch in Bastrop. This ranch "provides veteran families with an opportunity to learn from the horses, build connections within the local community, contribute to service-oriented projects and generally enjoy a safe-haven for personal growth and fulfillment through our experiential learning programs." (www.restorationranch.org) Our



group was greeted by board president Beth Rand, community outreach staff member and former PODER volunteer Marysol Frost, Social Work intern Jenna Edwards, and other hard-working staff and volunteers at the ranch including Kristoffer Ian Celera who captured these pictures. After a fun ice-breaker game and going over safety rules, the Housing Authority group put on their helmets and started working with the horses! The horses the teens worked with were rehabilitated horses. Two teens at a time would work one-on-one with horse handlers and military veterans Mike and Reno on skills such as leading the horses through gates, directing them around the corrals, and other commands. The rest of the group had the opportunity to create beautiful artwork on the horses themselves. The teens painted flowers, stars, handprints, and other designs to make horses Star and Lily shine and dazzle! They then got to help wash the horse which came as a cool relief on a hot summer day. After a quick lunch, the teens continued to work on more skills with the horses and later they demonstrated their progress by walking the horses through an obstacle course. The day ended with a water balloon fight, talking about what they learned at the ranch, and prizes. It was a great way for these kids to learn leadership skills and patience while having fun with horses!



A LOS NIÑOS ANTES DE ENSEÑARLES A LEER,
HAY QUE AYUDARLES A APRENDER
LO QUE ES EL AMOR Y LA VERDAD

A cartoon illustration of a young boy with dark hair, wearing a white shirt and a red bow tie, hugging a yellow rabbit. The boy has a small white pocket on his shirt. The rabbit is also wearing a red bow tie. They are both smiling.



Goodwill will be going over resume writing and job readiness skills!

6 PM – 7 PM @ PODER

A group of people are gathered outdoors, holding a large rainbow flag. The flag is partially visible, showing yellow, orange, and red sections. In the background, there are green balloons and trees under a blue sky with clouds.



Back at the center, the kids enjoyed many themed days including Dinosaur Day where the kids were cavemen and the Texas State football players were dinosaurs and Secret Agent Day where the kids had to rescue a princess and slide down a homemade water slide! They also had an opportunity to work with tennis Coach Michael Martinez at a free tennis camp at San Marcos High School. We want to acknowledge the wonderful volunteers and organizations that



Springtown Villa



This month the Resident Council and residents wanted to do something special to thank our site manager, Amanda Ramirez, for all that she does for us here at Springtown Villa. She has always gone above and beyond what was required of her ever since she started here with us. We wanted to make sure that she knew her efforts were not unseen. Thank you Amanda!



The Hays County Food Bank came to give a presentation on food and money. They gave helpful tips on how to shop on a budget and stretch meals for a longer amount of time. They recommended buying items in bulk and freezing



whatever you don't eat immediately. Before the lesson began, they did some stretches with our residents. Once that was done, they prepared a healthy avocado tuna salad wrap for our residents to enjoy!

Terri Jackson from Wellbridge Healthcare gave a presentation on managing mental health. There are many myths associated with mental health disorders. For example, "Personality weakness or character flaws cause mental health problems. People with mental health problems can snap out of it if they try hard enough."

Fact: Mental health problems have nothing to do with being lazy or weak and many people need help to get better. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- * Biological factors, such as genes, physical illness, injury, or brain chemistry.
- * Life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse
- * Family history of mental health problems.
- * People with mental health problems can get better and many recover completely.

Learn more at: www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/myths-facts/



C. M. ALLEN HOMES — KAD KORNER STORE



On behalf of the KAD Program, we wish to thank Reliable Air for their generous and kind donation of \$500. We are so grateful for their love and support of our summer program.

3 Ways to beat the Summer Heat

The following list can help you stay cool and beat the summer heat.

- ⇒ Drink lots of water!
- ⇒ Wear loose fitting clothing.
- ⇒ Fill a spray bottle with water and use it as a refreshing spray after being outdoors.



United Way's Summer Reading program activities were a big success. Kids enjoyed having fun while learning!



United Way
United Way of Hays and Caldwell Counties



CHAPULTEPEC HOMES & ADULT LEARNING CENTER



Celebrating The 4th! The Resident Assembly hosted a July 4th Celebration. The kids enjoyed coloring and watching a movie.



August Happenings at Chapultepec :

Thursday, August 10

Resident Assembly, 6 PM

Thursday, August 17

School Services for Disabled Children - Presented by Michelle Ledesma of Head Start, 6 PM

Monday August 21

Helping Kids Stand up to Peer Pressure and Bullying - Presented by Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse, 6 PM

Resident Assembly Garage Sale

On Saturday July 15th, members of our Resident Assembly braved the heat and set up a community garage sale. They sold various items that were donated and raised over \$95.00 to be used for upcoming events and community projects. Residents were also able to rent out a table and sell their own items! This was a great fundraiser and community event.



We have fans again! San Marcos Fire Station 5 conducted a Fan drive for Family Eldercare Austin recently and gave us 21 fans. We are so thankful for the donation because we had run out of fans. Chapultepec is the distribution location for San Marcos. The San Marcos Fire Department is partnering with Family Eldercare to distribute fans to seniors, adults with disabilities, and families across 14 Central Texas counties during its 27th annual Summer Fan Drive. Eldercare requests donations of new 20-inch box fans and 12-inch or larger oscillating fans. Donors can also make financial contributions to Family Eldercare at www.familyeldercare.org. SMFD will accept fan donations at any of the San Marcos Fire Department stations until the fan drive ends on August 31.

Family Eldercare is a community mission-based organization that provides services to seniors and adults with disabilities and their caregivers in the Greater Austin Area. Family Eldercare's staff and volunteers first gathered 50 fans for Austin seniors in 1990. They will have delivered over 95,000 fans this summer.

Shamarie Simmons is Grateful to the FSS Program

In 2014, I joined the Family Self-Sufficiency program. This program helped me to achieve my goals. It also helped me to manage my daughter's high school years and help get her through that financially, emotionally, and academically. I continue to work toward my goal of becoming a teacher. FSS helped me financially but it also taught me how to help others. I learned a lot about myself and the people around me. I truly recommend FSS to any family that is trying to finish school or to get their life in order so they can achieve their goals. I would like to thank everyone that oversees the program. They always had kind words and a helping hand when things seemed really hard and confusing. I hope I did the same for others as well. I would also like to say that things are not always what they seem and that there are always ways to get around the obstacles that come before you. I'm glad I was a part of the program and I am grateful to those who always offered a helping hand, kind words, and words of wisdom. Sometimes we forget to thank those kind souls when we are coping with life's challenges. - Shamarie



[Editor's Note: The "Program Coordinating Committee" helps the SMHA oversee our efforts to help residents become more self-sufficient. The Committee was meeting that day and was able to join us at the "Success Tree." From L-R: Melissa Trevino and Jamie Velazquez from Goodwill Central Texas, Stewart Dale Spencer (SMHA), Shamarie Simmons, Crystal Wilson & Maria Calcaben (SMHA), and Carla Meritt from the Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse. Not pictured are Elva Gonzalez from the Hays-Caldwell Women's Center, Terri Schiemenz, from Community Action of Central Texas, and Bonnie Pecina & Brianna Lopez (SMHA).]



COLLEGE OR BUST?

SMHA resident Makayla Sayles receives a certificate from the SMHA Board of Commissioners in connection with a scholarship award from the San Marcos Housing Authority and the Nelrod Education Fund. From L-R are Gerald Brown, Gloria Salazar, Liz Treviño, Makayla Sayles, Albert Sierra, and Rose Brooks.

We had advertised the story about the Nelrod scholarship in our newsletter but neither Makayla nor her mother Amanda had seen it because of their busy schedules. At the beginning of June, the CM Allen Service Coordinator, Bonnie Pecina, went to Amanda's home to ask if her kids were going to be participating

in an activity going on at the KAD Korner Store. Bonnie has a history of being very proactive about getting people involved in things. Amanda happened to mention that Makayla was getting ready to attend her graduation from San Marcos High School in a couple of days. Bonnie told her about the Nelrod scholarship and helped her get it completed and submitted by the deadline.

Makayla will be attending Blinn College in Brenham. Ultimately, she wants to become a pediatrician but she will start her career in a nursing program. She expects to become Licensed Vocational Nurse in two years. School begins on August 28. She is going to have to stay in an apartment for at least the first six months because of the long waiting list for limited dorm space. She has a financial aid package but this scholarship is going to make a big difference for her. She won't have to go bust to go to college.

Amanda is setting a good example for her daughter because she is also a participant in our Family Self-Sufficiency program, showing Makayla that you should never stop trying to improve.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Commissioners met on July 25. Present at the meeting were Gerald Brown, Gloria Salazar, Liz Trevino, Rose Brooks, and Albert Sierra.

The meeting began with a presentation of the Fiscal Year 2016 audit by representatives from Bill C. Rocha, Certified Public Accountant from San Antonio. According to the auditors, as of September 30, 2016 the Housing Authority had about 4.2 months of reserves. HUD recommends a 6-month reserve. The overall balance was decreased over the previous year due to flood expenses. They said they found no issues, deficiencies, weaknesses, or noncompliance. They said that the Housing Authority was in a good financial position and that there was good oversight by the management and board. The net position of the Housing Authority as of September 30, 2016 was \$1,404,000.

The Commissioners presented a scholarship award to Makayla Sayles, a recent graduate of San Marcos High School and a resident of the CM Allen Homes. (See story on page 6.)

Financial Reports: As of the end of June, the Public Housing fund has a revenue surplus of \$91,173. Albert Sierra reported that he had submitted a grant application to the city for the recovery of approximately \$775,000 of flood expenses and that, if received, this money would go back into reserves. About half of it would go to the San Marcos Reinvestment Corporation and the other half back to Public Housing. Section 8 has a surplus of \$6,791 in administrative expenses. Sierra explained changes that had taken place over the past year as a result of the reorganization of duties and some personnel changes in the Section 8 Department. Springtown Villa has a surplus of \$36,707.



Parenting Classes

Topics will include: communication, encouragement, discipline, parenting styles, etc.

**Beginning August 10th
5:30-6:30PM**

**Call Bonnie Pecina at
512-392-6273 to sign up!**

COOL SAN MARCOS LIBRARY STUFF!



Monday, August 21

Let's watch the eclipse together! Come at 12 PM for instruction on viewing safety. Stay to see the biggest crescent at 1:10 PM. Solar glasses will be handed out while supplies last.

Occupancy Reports:

Public Housing is at 94%, Section 8 is at 97%, and Springtown Villa is at 93%.

New Business: The audit report was officially received by the Commissioners. Sierra said that the auditing contract is normally a 3-year contract. He said that he anticipated soliciting proposals next year.

Commissioner Brown commented upon the condition of one of the Housing Authority trucks. Sierra said he had been waiting on the outcome of the final flood expenses but he anticipated that a new truck would be added to the fleet this fall. Sierra reviewed the Capital Fund budget, which was revised as a result of notification of the actual amount the Housing Authority will be receiving this year. The original budget was for \$409,000 but the Housing Authority will receive \$391,123. Sierra reviewed the budget line items. With regard to funds devoted to dwelling unit repairs and improvements, most of the money will go to Allen Woods and some to Chapultepec. The Commissioners accepted the new budget and approved the submission of the contract to HUD.

Directors Report: Sierra said that a July meeting between Texas State University officials and their consultants, regarding the possible purchase of the Allen Woods Homes, has been postponed. He said that the Housing Authority's position continues to be that it will not go into debt to replace any of the housing that would be lost if Texas State purchased the property.

SMHA CALENDAR - August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August was originally named Sextilis in Latin, because it was the sixth month in the original ten-month Roman calendar, when March was the 1st month of the year.		1	2	3	4 TAX-FREE WEEKEND	5 TAX-FREE WEEKEND
6 TAX-FREE WEEKEND	7	8	9	10 PARENTING CLASSES BEGIN KAD - 5:30 PM (must register)	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 CLASS: School Services for Disabled Children CALC - 6 PM	18	19
20 	21 CLASS: Peer Pressure CALC 6 PM	22 SMHA Board of Commissioners Allen Woods 5:30 PM	23 CLASS: Job Readiness PODER 6 PM	24	25	26
27	28 SMCISD 1st Day of School	29	30	31 CLASS: Food Wise CALC - Thursday @ 6 PM Space limited! Sign up at: http://bit.ly/FWClass		

LEADERSHIP

Board of Commissioners

Gloria Salazar—Chairperson
Gerald Brown—Vice-Chairperson
Rose Brooks—Commissioner
Liz Trevino—Commissioner
Maggie Moreno—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