



SAYING GOODBYE

It's always hard to let go. Recently, we had to do just that . . . three times. Delia Hernandez, a former employee who served the SMHA for 32 years, passed away. She retired in 1999 but left a

lasting impression. She saw a lot of changes during her time with the Housing Authority. She was there when the first computer arrived in the office. In those days, we had to go to City Hall to use a fax machine. They had one of those new-fangled contraptions and were willing to share it.

Public Housing Manager Rose Miranda left us at the end of 2015 to help meet needs in her extended family. At about the same time, Monseratte Fernandez, long time Kids Cafe cook and multiple

winner of our Volunteer of the Year award, left to help meet needs in her family. Both will be dearly missed. A going away luncheon was held on New Year's Eve to say goodbye and wish them well. That's Rose on the right.



SAYING HELLO

It's always more fun to welcome new staff and we are pleased to announce that Sylvia Villanueva, former Housing Choice Voucher Specialist,

walked over from the Section 8 office to fill Rose's shoes. She is looking forward to helping people meet their housing needs. She said this was a great opportunity for her to move up within the Housing Authority and to progress as a person by taking on the challenges of a new job. She is learning new rules and procedures, is becoming more involved with helping her tenants, and is learning to "wear different hats," since her position includes additional roles and responsibilities.

In January, we welcomed five (that's 5!) new interns. The Resident Services department

met recently and their full-time staff has doubled. One employee and one intern are missing from this picture but you will meet all the interns in the March issue of The Oracle so don't miss it!



ALLEN WOODS HOMES — PODER LEARNING CENTER

New Resident Assembly



Allen Woods, meet your new Resident Assembly representatives! President Lola Bell, a long time and active Resident Assembly member, hopes to “accomplish everything talked about during the Resident Assembly meeting” by making sure to attend every meeting and passing the information to residents. Vice President Jesse Martinez is an active member in the senior community. He hopes his ideas, such as game days and senior gatherings, can “bring in more participation with the seniors” to the PODER Learning Center. Secretary Kevin James Lizama-Reyes and Treasurer RJ Paul Lizama-Reyes have been busy creating community calendars, passing out flyers, and volunteering at PODER. RJ hopes “to raise enough funds...to better the lives of the residents in Allen Woods” with fundraising ideas and charity events. Kevin states, “I can’t help but share in the joy and spectacular friendships created by the residents and community of Allen Woods Homes.” Resident Assembly meetings are the first Friday of each month at 10 AM. All residents are welcomed!

We ♥ Our Seniors!

Whether it is playing games, free health checks, or making friends over breakfast, the PODER Center has many activities for our seniors! Twice a month, Bee First Primary Home Care host free bingos and loterias. Vice President Jesse Martinez has helped kick-off Senior Game Days on Friday mornings. This month in February, Edwards Home Health will be doing a special presentation on being *Heart Healthy* with a free breakfast on February 17th. Look for other great senior activities on the community calendar, delivered to your door each month!



La Esquina Chistes

Un paciente le dice al doctor: Doctor, si me toco la oreja me duele. Si me toco la boca, me duele. Si me toco la nariz, me duele. Si me toco el brazo, me duele. Si me toco la rodilla, me duele. ¿Qué puede ser, doctor?

El doctor le responde: Pues, que tiene el dedo roto.

A patient says to the doctor: Doctor, if I touch my ear, it hurts. If I touch my mouth, it hurts. If I touch my nose, it hurts. If I touch my arm, it hurts. If I touch my knee, it hurts. What could it be, doctor? The doctor answers, Well, you have a broken finger!

-Lita: *La nueva cocinera es un sol.*

Beto: *¿Cocina bien?*

Lita: *¡No, lo quema todo!*

Lita: *The new cook is a ray of sunshine.*

Beto: *Does she cook well?*

Lita: *No, she burns everything!*



Springtown Villa

Hello from
our newest
resident,
Memphis
Morning,
to our
oldest
resident,
Hazel
Mayfield.



Smile



Resident Council officers Arleen Machado and Bill Cruz are always ready to volunteer, whether serving as officers or stapling the latest issue of The Oracle.



Charles Gay and Ramona Galvez were the first to sign up for a new phone.

We had over 30 residents receive a new lifeline phone from Life Wireless with the assistance of Cheryl Stewart and her son Jason Henson. Life Wireless will return on February 4 for those that did not attend this event.

Ramona was thrilled that her phone includes a camera!



C. M. ALLEN HOMES — KAD KORNER STORE



Cheryl Stewart and her son Jason

Hansen with Life Wireless helped people from CM Allen sign up for a free Lifeline cell phone. These folks get around! The first resident to sign up was Aniceto Samaro.



Residents came together during an event sponsored by Jordan Home Health Services. They received valuable information on home health services, enjoyed a Bingo, and ended with goody bags and pizza!



The KAD After-school Program returns Monday, February 1! 😊

CM Allen's Resident Assembly Officers for 2016

President — Maria Oliva Santibanez

Vice-President — Jo Ann Uriegas

Secretary — Monse Madrazo

Treasurer — Juan Alonzo

We are happy to announce that the Resident Assembly is up and running! The 1st Monday of every month they will be getting together to discuss activities for the CM Allen community. After two floods, the officers understand the importance of community involvement. With it, an atmosphere of love and fellowship follows. This is why they strongly encourage residents to get involved any way possible. One of the first projects they are tackling is the rebirth of the garden. Volunteers have stepped up to help, but they are still looking for more assistance.

CHAPULTEPEC HOMES & ADULT LEARNING CENTER



Jerika Banks started the Family Self-Sufficiency program just after she turned 18 years old. At that time, she was a stay-at-home mom, but after the family dynamic changed, she started working a part-time job at the outlet mall. She became an asset to the company and was soon moved to a full-time position and later to a key-holder position. While she lived here, she learned to manage her money more effectively and worked to improve her credit rating. Just before she graduated the FSS Program, Jerika took on a part-

time position with Randolph-Brooks Federal Credit Union and was recently promoted to a full-time position. We see nothing but success in her future!

Grayson is a true hero at Chapultepec! During the weekend, while riding his scooter, he noticed smoke coming from a Henry Bush Child Development Center playscape, which is in



the middle of the Chapultepec site and part of the Head Start program. Grayson called his mom who alerted the fire department. According to information from Head Start, the fire was set by kids that do not live here. Thanks to Grayson, the fire department was able to put the fire out before more damage could be done. Great Job Grayson!

Looking to stay on top of news and information pertaining to

FSS? Want to be

the first to hear about great opportunities and free stuff?

Current participants and FSS Graduates can request to join our new Facebook group: "SMHA Family Self-Sufficiency Program"

facebook.com/groups/smhafss/





FROM THE MAIN OFFICE



- SMHA offices will be closed on Monday, February 15 for President's Day.
- All Christmas decorations must be removed by Jan. 15. Since that date has already passed we will allow until Feb. 10 to remove all festive décor from the exterior of your building.
- Trash bins must be stored behind your unit. BBQ pits should not be left in the middle of the yard when not in use but make sure they are completely extinguished before moving them near any walls or vegetation.
- Store bikes, toys, and play furniture in the storage unit, behind or inside your home when not in use.
- The only furniture allowed on the porch is patio furniture.
- Junk vehicles are not allowed. Unregistered and non-working vehicles will be towed.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JANUARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Financials: Public Housing revenue remains under budget because of the the vacant units at CM Allen but expenses are down for the same reason. Section 8 has a deficit of \$11,309 but that will be made up by HUD by the end of the Fiscal Year. Springtown Villa has a surplus of \$28,000.

Occupancy: Public Housing is at 96%, Section 8 is at 99%, and Springtown Villa is at 95%.

Public Housing Assessment System Report from HUD: The Housing Authority was rated as a "Standard Performer." We lost our "High Performer" status because of lower scores in two areas. With regard to our financial status, the loss of reserve funds required to deal with the flood recovery reduced our score by 3 points compared to last year. We also lost points in the management area because of lower occupancy rates late in Fiscal Year 2015, when we fell just below 96% for a few months. Our total score was 87, which is just below the 90 required for High Performer status.

CM Allen update: Thirty units are repaired and occupied. Four units are under contract. Five buildings (ten units) are coming up for bids. We are working to help the St. Bernard organization secure additional repair crews to speed up the work. So far, we have spent \$296,000 on recovery and repairs. We have received payments from FEMA and the TML Risk Pool fund totaling \$227,619. Some former CM Allen residents have been unable to get out of their leases at other facilities, which has delayed their return so they will not be able to return to their original unit but will be offered another unit of the same size. Some former residents may be able to get released based on medical issues, in accordance with provisions contained in the standard Texas Apartment Association lease. Some things that survived the May flood without damage could not survive the second flood in October. This includes tile flooring as well as cabinets that had been removed and placed on the floor while the walls were being repaired. We also had to replace brand new water heaters hit by the October flood. Albert Sierra noted that TML provides replacement costs while FEMA covers only about 40% of replacement costs. However, FEMA may be able to cover the TML deductible. In-kind donations are reducing our costs. We are still waiting to see how much financial assistance will be provided by United Way. We remain hopeful that all repairs can be completed by the end of June.

Stewart Dale Spencer made a presentation regarding applications to the Human Services Advisory Board and the Youth Commission for funds in support of Resident Services Programs. He also provided a summary of new collaborations with Texas State University that are benefitting our residents. He reported that the after-school program would resume at CM Allen on February 1 and that last semester we were able to expand and improve the program at the Chapultepec Homes with the assistance of Bonnie Pecina and her connections with Kappa Delta Chi, since they were not able to serve at CM Allen. He said a highly-qualified intern will take over the Chapultepec program.



Community Action, Inc.
of Central Texas

Head Start Program (zero-to-five)

Would you like your child to have a **Head Start** in school?

Head Start is a high quality Early Care and Education Program that focuses on school readiness for children birth to 4 years old including support services for: disabilities, mental health, nutrition, health, parent training, and more!

For more information, please inquire at the following locations OR you may apply online at www.communityaction.com

A.Washington CDC
0-3 Year Olds
103 Hays Street
Center# 512-353-1507

Henry Bush CDC
3 Year Olds
722 So. McKie St.
Center# 512-396-3533

Bonham Pre-K
4 Year Olds
1225 Hwy 123
Center# 512-757-8243



Head Start Services are free for families who qualify!
◊ Child Care ◊ Health ◊ Nutrition ◊ Education ◊ Family Services ◊
◊ Transportation for children with special needs ◊ (Please ask for details)



**SAN MARCOS
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

GED Class Registration - No More Excuses!

1. February 9 at 9:30 AM or 1:30 PM or 6:30 PM
2. February 11 at 9:30 AM or 1:30 PM or 6:30 PM

Registration is a two-part process. Plan to be here two hours each day. Attendance at both sessions is required to complete registration, orientation, and assessment.


Leap Day, on February 29, has been a day of traditions, folklore, and superstitions ever since Leap Years were first introduced by Julius Caesar.

Women propose to their men — According to an old Irish legend, or possibly history, St Brigid struck a deal with St Patrick to allow women to propose to men - and not just the other way around - every four years. This is believed to have been introduced to balance the traditional roles of men and women in a similar way to how Leap Day balances the calendar.

12 Pairs of Gloves — In some places, Leap Day has been known as "Bachelors' Day" for the same reason. A man was expected to pay a penalty, such as a gown or money, if he refused a marriage proposal from a woman on Leap Day. In many European countries, especially in the upper classes of society, tradition dictates that any man who refuses a woman's proposal on February 29 has to buy her 12 pairs of gloves. The intention is that the woman can wear the gloves to hide the embarrassment of not having an engagement ring. During the middle ages there were laws governing this tradition.

Leap Day Babies World Record — People born on February 29 are all invited to join The Honor society of Leap Year Day Babies. According to the Guinness Book of Records, there are Leap Day World Record Holders both of a family producing three consecutive generations born on February 29 and of the number of children born on February 29 in the same family. (Continued on Page 8.)

February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 CM ALLEN RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 10 AM	2 GROUNDHOG DAY (AGAIN)	3 SPRINGTOWN RESIDENT COUNCIL 3:30 PM	4	5 ALLEN WOODS RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 10 AM	6
7	8	9 COOKING CLASS 5:30 PM CHAPULTEPEC	10 CHAP. RESIDENT ASSEMBLY 6 PM	11	12	13
14	15 PRESIDENT'S DAY SMHA CLOSED	16	17 SPRINGTOWN RESIDENT COUNCIL 3:30 PM	18 FSS CLASS 6 PM CHAPULTEPEC	19	20
21	22	23 SMHA BOARD 5:30 PM ALLEN WOODS	24	25	26	27
28	29 LEAP DAY SMHA OPEN					

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Unlucky in Love — In Scotland, it used to be considered unlucky for someone to be born on Leap Day, just like Friday 13th is considered an unlucky day by many. Greeks consider it unlucky for couples to marry during a Leap Year, and especially on Leap Day.

St Oswald's Day — Leap Day is also St Oswald's Day, named after an archbishop of York who died on February 29, 992. The memorial is celebrated on February 29 during Leap Years and on February 28 during common years.

(Source: <http://www.timeanddate.com/date/leap-day-february-29.html>)

LEADERSHIP

Board of Commissioners

Frank Arredondo—Chairperson
Mary Barnhart—Vice-Chairperson
Catherine Welsh—Resident Comm.
Gloria Salazar—Commissioner
Richard Cruz—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