

Winter
Edition
2013

Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville Newsletter

75th Anniversary of the Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville



Housing Choice Voucher Program

The Housing Voucher Program (HCV) continues to assist 2,163 families. An additional 45 families are assisted through the Moderate Rehabilitation Program for a combined assisted total of 2,208.



Miguel Herrera, Director

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The HCV Program includes 22 Homeownership Program participants that benefit with home mortgage payment assistance. It also includes 70 families that are being assisted through the Family Unification Program.

Project Based Vouchers are a part of the HCV stock. Three apartment complexes have Project Based Vouchers (PBV). PBV One is the Villa del Sol High-Rise. It has 59 voucher participants and is located at 700 E. St. Charles Street. PBV Two is Sunset Haven Apartments located at 301 Horizon Lane. Sunset Haven has 70 voucher participants.

The newest addition to our Project Based line-up is Citrus Gardens located at 2100 Grapefruit St. It has a total of 148 rental units, of which 74 units are designated for project based voucher. Citrus Gardens is fully leased and the official ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for March 26.



The Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville is pleased to announce that the Citrus Gardens Apartments are going to celebrate its grand opening in the month of March. The new Citrus

Gardens was developed by Brownstone Affordable Housing, Ltd and it has 148 units that are either 2, 3, & 4 bedrooms that come with a washer and dryer. Residents of Citrus Gardens have access to the Club House which includes a gym, a library, and a computer room. The apartments are managed by Mrs. Delma Lopez and Blanca Uresti.



Citrus Gardens

P.O. Box 4420
Brownsville, TX 78523-4420
2606 Boca Chica BLVD.
Website: www.hacb.us
Phone (956) 541-8315
Fax (956) 541-7860
SECTION 8 (956) 541-4834
LOW RENT (956) 546-2454



Las Brisas, Linda Vista, Scattered Sites, Rose Gardens & Sunset Terrace AMP V and Citrus Gardens Annex AMP III



*Site of new playground in
Citrus Annex*

We are working together in unity for a better housing development and encouraging all residents to follow the rules and regulations that are in their lease. Overall,

Amp III & V department is working to-

wards making our developments safer and a happier place to live.

The plans for Citrus Gardens are exciting. Pretty soon there is going to be a new playground installed in Citrus Gardens where the old office for Citrus Gardens used to be. The apartments in Citrus Annex will be receiving a facelift as we are planning to install blinds in all the developments. There is going to be more security when we install a new fence which is in the works. We hope to make the residents of Citrus Gardens as safe and secure as possible. Future

plans involve possibly doing landscaping work in all the developments, by planting new sod, trees and plants which will include a new sprinkler system.

There is exciting news for other developments as we plan to install a security fence at Las Brisas Development; as well as a new sign to welcome all our guests.

We are planning to cut the grass for all our residents; this is also going to happen soon. We are hoping to make all our residents as comfortable as we can. We want to encourage the tenants to help us maintain the developments clean.



*Juan Martinez,
Property Manager
and Vanessa Ruelas
Assistant Manager*



*Residents Association at Citrus Gardens Annex
celebrated Christmas with their Residents with a
"Rico Pozole"*

The Resident Association at Linda Vista celebrated Christmas with their Residents by hosting a dinner where they served Tamales.



Buena Vida, Bougainvillea, & Victoria Gardens AMP I



Right to Left: Marivella Compian Assistant Manager and Elsa Raya Property Manager

Staff at AMP I continues to encourage residents of Buena Vida, Bougainvillea and Victoria Gardens to do their part in maintaining the developments clean and safe. Resident meetings were arranged in the past months to remind the residents of the importance of keeping the units and all areas assigned to them clean, safe and in working conditions. They were also encouraged to work together as a community and take pride in where they reside.

We are working on several projects to improve the condition and aspect of our developments. Some of the plans are to do landscaping throughout the developments, install blinds in all the units and to do repairs to streets and sidewalks. There are also plans to expand the Buena Vida community and learning centers to better serve our residents.

Walk-throughs are being conducted at the

developments by the property managers to help address all issues that need to be corrected both by the staff and the residents.

At AMP I we look forward to continue serving our 246 families and to provide to them decent, safe and sanitary housing.



"Landscaping Project at Victoria Gardens"

Buena Vida Resident Association



It's a New Year and Buena Vida ended last year on a good note. The Buena Vida Association organized a Christmas Party or traditional Posada for its residents in December. They were able to enjoy live music, delicious food, and a few lucky ones even got to take a Christmas Gift home. The residents at Buena Vida are part of a tight community that enjoys organizing "get-togethers" when the opportunity arises. Currently the residents at Buena Vida are able to attend Nutrition Classes offered by Mrs. Ceci Bautista through the Texas

A&M Agri-life Extension every Monday at the Buena Vida Community Center. The Buena Vida residents also have the opportunity of attending an art class every first Tuesday of the month in the Buena Vida Community Center as well.



Buena Vida Residents at their Christmas Party

Capital Fund Program

Greetings from the Capital Fund Staff

The Capital Fund Program continues to utilize grants for major rehab of units at Brownsville Housing Authority. This past quarter the Capital Fund Program continued comprehensive renovation of units with funds awarded via Federal Fiscal Year 2010 Grant in the amount of \$1,266,982.00. These funds have allowed us to complete the modernization at Linda Vista Housing Development and to commence modernization of 19 units at Citrus Annex Housing Development.

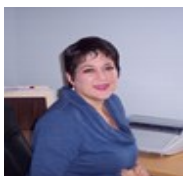


The modernization consists of gutting out all of the interior walls and ceilings, and replacing the framing which has been damaged by termite. The plumbing and electrical is being upgraded to be in compliance with modern technology and city codes. All kitchen cabinets are being replaced, and installation of Heating Ventilation/Air Condition (HVAC) is included. A total of nine units at Citrus Annex were completed at 100%.



Left to Right: Jesus Ramirez, Construction Superintendent, Lucy Garza, Director of Capital Funds, Gerardo Ortiz, Executive Assistant, and Gonzalo Gonzalez, Master Plumber

Sanchez-Vela Subdivision



We have completed construction of the 13 houses in the NSP Program. All 13 houses have passed the required inspections and we are getting ready to start closing. We have submitted the files to TDHCA for review and are in the process of completing and updating information as requested by the State. We are still submitting expenses for reimbursement and extended the contract to August 31, 2013, which is the final deadline to close on all 13 houses.



Scholarship Opportunities

ATTENTION GRADUATING SENIORS:

We currently have the Housing Alliance of the Valley Employees Scholarship available at the Family Self Sufficiency Office for high school seniors graduating this year 2013. Please stop by our offices located at 2606 Boca Chica Blvd to pick up an application. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact either Cesar Barrera or Ana Trejo at 956-214-1525 and 956-214-1527.





Top Five Financial Tips for 2013



The Finance Department Offer the top five ways for you to get on track with your personal finances 2013



(1) Set a budget and stick to it.

If you haven't done it already, make a list of all your spending for an entire month, and then review it for ways that you can curb expenses for the rest of 2013. You'd be surprised at how much that daily boutique cup of coffee adds to the expense sheet.

(2) Eliminate Debt.

Remember debt is a four letter word. Bring it under control or eliminate it all together. Pay down on credit cards, home equity loans or lines of credit. This will free up your money for a variety of good things—like more financial security.

(3) Create a Rainy Day Fund.

Life is full of uncertainty and surprises— an unexpected illness, a job loss or even the arrival of a new baby in the family. The rule of thumb is to have at least three to six months of living expenses socked away for when the unexpected occurs.

(4) Save, Save, Save.

If recent economic difficulties weren't reminder enough, this is a perfect time to evaluate your investment goals and objectives and begin to save, if you haven't already. You could be saving for a house, college education or retirement—or for all three!

(5) Invest in Yourself.

When it comes to personal finance, you also need to protect your livelihood—your largest source of income. Stay ahead of the curve, and any potential job elimination, by continually investing in more education and training that will prepare you for advanced employment opportunities and career changes if needed.



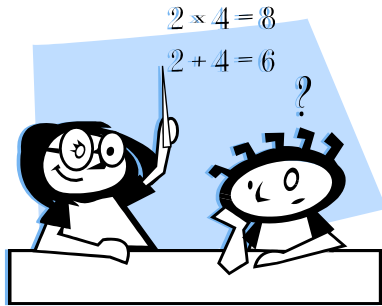
Consejo del Inspector

Recordatorio: Recuerde revisar sus detectores de humo frecuentemente, que estén funcionando y en buenas condiciones.



Consejo del Gerente

Recuerde: reporte cualquier cambio ya sea en la composición familiar, información personal, incremento o reducción de ingresos a su gerente o trabajador social.



Family Learning Centers

It's the beginning of the year and our five family learning centers continue to operate with the help of the 21st Century Grand and the Brownsville Independent School District. We currently have learning centers opened to our residents at the following developments: Buena Vida, Citrus Gardens Annex, Las Brisas, Linda Vista, and Victoria Gardens. Our learning centers are run by dedicated individuals that have experience working with children in a school setting. Besides tutoring the tutors also participate in fundraising with the students in order to be able to take fieldtrips that will expose our students to hands on learning opportunities. Aside from attending their respective learning centers for afterschool tutoring our students are currently being exposed to an array of activities that include leadership skills, team building and art classes with the following entities: the Boys and Girls Club of Laguna Madre, Vazaldua & Associates with the support of the RGV Empowerment Zone Grant, Girl Scouts, and Art Classes with Mrs. Laura Sanchez, a retired art teacher.



"Students from Las Brisas, Victoria Gardens, and Section 8 rehearsing for commercial"

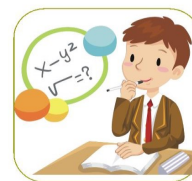


Learning Centers Charro Days Celebrations with the now traditional "Antojitos Mexicanos"



Mario Sanchez a student at the Linda Vista Learning Center and a sophomore at Hanna High School attended Skills USA competition in February at TSTC in Harlingen. He placed 2nd place in Automotive Service Technology qualifying him to move on to state competition.

Congratulations!



Family
Learning
Center



Monday to Thursday
Hours: 4:45-8:00

If your children need help with homework afterschool they are welcomed to attend the Family Learning Centers. There they will be able to get help with their homework as well as utilize the resources available to complete school projects. Please register your children with the tutor at the learning center in order to extend other opportunities that may arise. Thank you.



Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program was proud to help Mr. Jose Luis Estrada graduate from the program. Mr. Estrada worked on his FSS goals from day one. His first goal was employment and he began working at Sears. For his second goal he chose a Certification from UTB/TSC. He enrolled at UTB/TSC and he received his Certificate in Construction Technology-Carpentry in December 2010. Mr. Estrada also applied at the Brownsville Affordable Homeownership Corporation to buy his own home. There he was able to improve his credit score and qualify for a new home. He purchased his new home in August 2009. The



F.S.S. program is ready to help more families accomplish their dreams and goals. There are two requirements to be part of the FSS program. First you have to be a tenant/participant of the Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville and be at least 18 years of age. Our doors are always open. For more information you can contact Cesar Barrera or Ana Trejo at 956-214-1525 and 956-214-1527 respectively.

HACB Buena Vida Resident Association



Hola, yo soy Laurencia Villarreal y soy la Presidenta de los Residentes de Buena Vida, Bougainvillea, Victoria Gardens y a su vez Presidenta del Consejo Asesor de Residen-

tes. Los residentes me han hecho saber que están muy contentos con la nueva mesa directiva. Esta nueva mesa ha cambiado muchas cosas. Ahora se le hacen sus festejos a los residentes en días festivos como el día de madres, el día del padre, el día de dar gracias, y Navidad. Todos estos festejos se hacen con música en vivo. Por lo



Residentes de Buena Vida jugando Lotería para recaudar fondos para la asociación

tanto llevamos acabo actividades como loterías, y venta de platos de comida para recaudar fondos. A su vez los mismos residentes me apoyan ya se con donaciones o vendiendo boletos. También contamos con el apoyo de nuestra coordinadora Ana Trejo. Ella esta trabajando muy bien y siempre esta disponible para cualquier cosa que se nos ofrezca y siempre contamos con su apoyo. Gracias, Atte. Sra. Laurencia V.



Laurencia Villarreal, Presidenta del Consejo Asesor de Residentes y de la asociación de Buena Vida

Reuniones Próximas

Juntas de Residentes

Citrus Gardens Annex
En el Salón de Aprendizaje
Segundo Martes de cada mes a las 4:00
Marzo 12, 2013
Abril 9, 2013
Mayo 14, 2013

Linda Vista en el
Salón Comunitario
El tercer Martes de cada mes a las 5:30 pm
Marzo 19, 2013
Abril 16, 2013
Mayo 21, 2013

Buena Vida en el
Salón de Buena Vida
El cuarto Martes de cada mes a las 5:30 pm
Marzo 26, 2013
Abril 23, 2013
Mayo 28, 2013

Board of Commissioners

Patricio Sampayo
Chairperson

Noe Guerrero
Commissioner

John Cowen Jr.
Commissioner

Ludivina Garza
Tenant Commissioner

Administration

James Hargrove
Interim Chief Executive Officer



El Consejo Asesor de Residentes se reunirá cada primer jueves del mes a las 10 am en el Compassion Center (97 Miralfores).

Patrulla Voluntaria de Buena Vida se reunirá el primer miércoles de cada mes a las 10 am en el Compassion Center (97 Miralfores)



Departments

Oscar Atkinson
Procurement

Lucy Garza
Capital Fund Program

Miguel Herrera
Housing Choice Voucher Program

Mary Ann Lozano
Human Resources

Berta Orive
Finance

Lilia Valdez
Enterprise Program

Public Housing Managers

Elsa Raya
Buena Vida, Bouganvillea, and
Victoria Gardens

Juan Martinez
Linda Vista, Las Brisas, Rose Gardens, Sunset Terrace,
Citrus Gardens Annex, and Scattered Sites

The Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville Newsletter enhances communication between residents and the Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville Staff. The statements made in this newsletter are in no way a representation of the beliefs and opinions of HUD. No Federal funds were used to print this Newsletter.