

CASA de AMIGOS

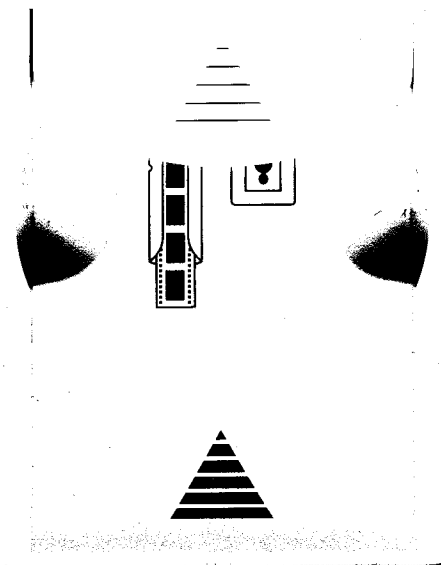
1101 E. Garden Lane
Midland, Texas 79701
Phone 682-9701
Mary Hinkle, Director
December, 1979

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of our friends from the staff of Casa de Amigos!

Thanks to many volunteer workmen and several generous donations, the developmental playground at Casa de Amigos is nearing completion. This playground will add a new dimension to the Casa program; it has been designed to be used specifically in conjunction with the tutoring program, but it can also be enjoyed by children whose mothers are shoppers in the rummage room or participants in various classes, and the basketball-game slab will also be utilized by the Senior Citizens. Money for the play equipment has been donated by a grant from Levi-Strauss Foundation, Margaret Amini, and the Southside Neighborhood Association.

Britt Gardner, a member of Boy Scout Troop 160 from St. Luke's Methodist Church, has completed work on the project for his Eagle award by designing, supervising and executing the painting of game stencils such as hopscotch and 4-square on the slab. His helpers have been Alan Mills, Darryl Barnes, Jeff Dailey, Mark Miller and Larry Whiteside. Five members of the Texas National Guard spent a Saturday "on maneuvers" building a balance beam, a log-hop, and installing the rainbow climber. Some members of Community Gold (Andy Hemphill, Charlie Walne, Kathleen Bynum, Russ Powell, Bruce Barton, Phil Hoppman, Sam Joliffe) have given a total of 71 hours assembling a climbing tower, inclined ring-climber and park bench. Thank goodness for architects' ability to read construction plans! Debbie Lashford, the new M-W tutoring co-ordinator, who is working on a degree from UTPB with emphasis on children with learning disabilities, is designing skills courses for the tutors and tutees to follow as part of the tutoring program.

Speaking of the tutoring program, we are still in need of tutors. Currently there are 15 children from Crockett School and 14 tutors; we have some urgent needs among children at DeZavala. The tutoring requires two hours per week and a concern for a child's education. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 15 AT 2:00 P.M., THERE WILL BE AN ORIENTATION MEETING FOR PROSPECTIVE TUTORS. Please consider this as a New Year's resolution for 1980. If you don't care, who will?



The overall purpose of the Casa mission is to help people help themselves, and through the 15 years of its existence the Casa program has tried to be flexible enough to encourage whatever ways that self-help might manifest itself. One interesting and possibly significant event occurred recently in East Midland in which Casa played a small role as facilitator and this role was probably as important as any more elaborately researched and implemented program we might present.

Residents of the neighborhood surrounding the Northgate Shopping Center has requested advice and assistance in protesting the application to the City Council for a specific use permit to sell and consume alcoholic beverages on the premises of a proposed disco hall at 500 E. Nobles. Casa's role was to advise them that writing and circulating a petition through the neighborhood, as well as the importance of appearing before and addressing the Planning and Zoning Commission, and subsequently the City Council, were the necessary steps. The residents of this area of town, by their own admission, are not noted for participating in the democratic process in this manner and were reluctant to so act because of "not being able to make a speech" or that "my English is not good enough". They were encouraged to speak in Spanish if that seemed more comfortable to them. The Crockett PTA and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Mission participated in the same manner as Casa; the rest is now history. The neighborhood did come together to the two public hearings; they spoke sincerely and were understood by the decision makers, and they won their fight. They have learned that they can be heard at City Hall by using the same tools available to any citizen or neighborhood, and they feel good about their accomplishment.

Current needs among Casa clients (which we hope some of you will be able to fill) include: a double bed (mattress, box springs and frame), hot plates (gas or electric), a couple of portable TVs in good working condition, and a clothes dryer. Good warm children's clothing is a big need this time of year (send us good socks even if you don't have their mates!).

Current volunteer needs are someone to teach basic sewing skills, and a teacher for making plaster of paris molds. Call Isabel Gonzales here at Casa if you'd like to do this sometime in 1980.

FELIZ NAVIDAD Y PROSPERO ANNO NUEVO PARA TODOS USTEDES DE PARTE DE TODOS NOSOTROS DE LA CASA DE AMIGOS!

