

# Celebrating students at Canyon Creek Apartments

*Learning center is opening its doors to new students in 2011*

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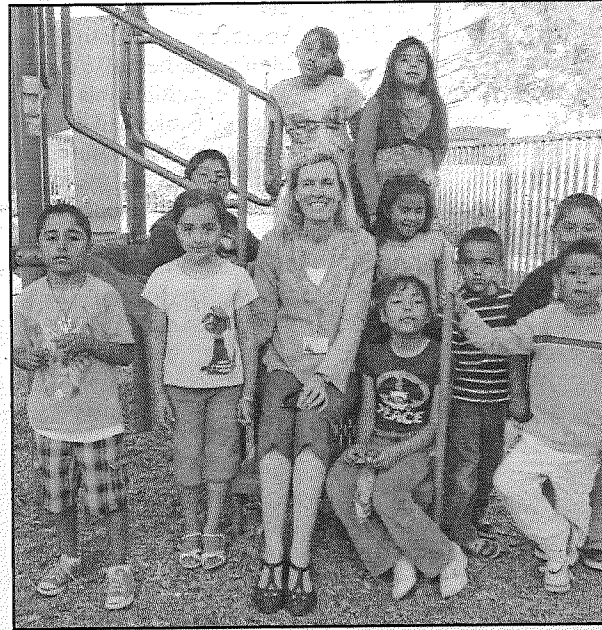
Local children raced to lap up cream pie, vied to knock over a row of pins, "fished" for prizes and scurried across the parking lot in search of piñata candy when Canyon Creek Apartments opened its doors to the public as part of an effort to spread awareness, celebrate student achievement and inform residents about vacancies available in the future.

The open house took place in front of the Learning Center building, which offers up a mix of education and fun to local children on the southwest corner of Nicklaus Drive and Oak Hill Road within a 68-unit apartment complex.

People's Self-Help Housing built the apartments about four years

ago, constructed for and in part by low-income families that qualify. Gaspar said the staff and residents at Canyon Creek pride themselves in maintaining both a quality place to live - the apartments - as well as a productive after school facility - the learning center - which has helped many Paso families and their children forward their education and quality of life in the city, according to organizers.

"[People's Self Help Housing] builds homes and apartments for low-income families, and when they build apartments they put in a learning center," said People's Self-Help Housing's Kim Gaspar. "The [Canyon Creek] learning center is for the children, and this learning center is funded by a 21st Century grant, so not only do we have children that live [at



**PEOPLE'S SELF HELP HOUSING** representative Kim Gaspar poses with students who attend the learning center located in front of Canyon Creek Apartments in Paso Robles. Through the center, kids complete homework, eat healthy snacks, partake in crafts and enjoy physical education.

Canyon Creek Apartments], we have children from the four Title One Schools:

Georgia Brown, Bauer-Speck, Winifred Pifer and Virginia Peterson [elementary schools]."

According to Gaspar, an estimated 60 students in kindergarden through sixth-grades utilize the learning center daily to complete homework, enjoy a nutritious snack and exercise through physical education.

The kids come to the center right after school and can stay until 6 p.m., according to organizers.

The recent open house drew a large crowd of families looking for a bit of summertime fun. The Ballet Folklorico dance group performed for the crowd, and a myriad of games kept kids entertained. The American Red Cross also performed a drawing for four emergency kits for families.

Gaspar said the open house was designed to celebrate the students while making the public aware of the services available.

"I wanted to have a

celebration for the students at the end of the year and for their families, and I wanted to open it up to the public so the public is aware that we are here," said Gaspar. "People know about the YMCA and know about the Boys & Girls Club, but many times they don't know about People's Self-Help Housing or that we even exist."

Gaspar also said that parents should know the learning center will have openings in the near future.

"We also wanted to open it up to the community to let families know that at Title One schools we have openings next year. We will have on the average six to seven openings at each of those four schools because we have fifth-graders that are graduating and a few people that moved at the end of the year," said Gaspar.