

## A knighting ceremony at Crockett Elementary



Crockett honors students at Early Act First Knight Ceremony. October's virtue was respect and parents, students and Rotarians came to watch as students were given medallions by Lady Hannah. In the top row are, from left, Michelle Rodriguez, Emily Guerrero, Austin Ault, Fernando Carrillo, Dylan Nunez Middle Row: Jackson Eldridge, Lauren Dirkes, Violet Whitt, Jeremiah Lucero and Santiago Perez and on bottom row, Andrew Starns, Charles Helgeson, Dakota Turk, Azariah Fennell and Sofia Torres.

Submitted photo



Submitted photo

Abby Gillfillan and Kristy Stark accept the 2013 National Government Achievement Award for MyPermitNow at the 18th Annual Digital Government & Education Achievement Awards ceremony.

## City recognized for permit system

The city of San Marcos Permit Center has gained national recognition for its use of MyPermitNow to share information with the community and streamline the permitting process.

The Center for Digital Government awarded the Planning & Development Services staff with the 2013 National Government Achievement Award in the Government-to-Citizen Local Government Category at their recent national awards program and workshop in San Francisco.

The innovative online technology is being recognized for its ability to transform permitting operations for customers while offering more transparency and greater engagement in the development process for citizens.

"Since the implementation of MyPermitNow in January 2012, applicants have seen a 70 percent reduction in overall permit turnaround time or a nine-day average turnaround for all permit types," said Abby Gillfillan,

Permit Center manager. The program affords users the ability to apply for permits 24-hours a day from their computer, upload plans and documents electronically, pay for permits online and access numerous permit and planning reports.

"One of the unique strengths of MyPermitNow is that instead of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for an out-of-the-box permitting system, the city could implement the customizable program with no upfront costs," said Kristy Stark, assistant director of Planning & Development Services.

"Customers pay an affordable \$10 per permit technology fee which covers the annual cost of the web-based system."

The Center for Digital Government is a national research and advisory institute on information technology policies and best practices in state and local government. For contact Abby at (512) 805-2630.

## Mia's Mirror now open in H-E-B Plus store in Kyle

KYLE —H-E-B is excited to announce the grand opening of Mia's Mirror by H-E-B, a trendy new addition to the Kyle H-E-B plus! where visitors can find stylish 10 fashion jewelry collections, handbags and even shoes with prices ranging from \$8-\$30.

The boutique opened Nov. 1 and is located within the Kyle H-E-B plus! This is the fourth Mia's Mirror location to open within an H-E-B statewide.

Due to the success of the original location, H-E-B plans to open additional boutiques throughout Texas in 2014.

The freshly-remodeled

store will also offer customers new and expanded departments that include updated Grocery, Dairy and Frozen Foods options, an expanded deli and eatery, an expanded Health Living section, Fresh Squeezed Juice and Fresh Cut Fruit Bars as well as a Sporting Goods department.

"This is a tremendous opportunity to give our customers what they deserve; a larger variety of products and more shopping space. We are thrilled about the expansion and all the benefits it will provide to our customers," said Bill Kostan, the store's general manager.



Submitted photo

Pictured from left are Mia Hendricks, founder of Hope & Love 4 Kids and H-E-B representatives Bill Anderson, Garland Stansbury, Leata Bartlett, Bill Kostan and Ram Torres.



Submitted photos

Author Susan Stevens Crummel's assistants in telling a story included first grader De-Wayne Gallow (left) and kindergartener Alexstrasza Marrow

## Celebrated author pays visit to Mendez Elementary School

By Cheryl Sherman  
Mendez Elementary

Students at Mendez Elementary love to read. So when an author of some of their favorite books visited recently to talk about her books and how she writes them, the students listened intently to her many stories and laughed at some of the crazy characters she introduced.

Susan Stevens Crummel, author of many award-winning books such as "Help Me, Mr. Mutt," "The Dish Ran Away with the Spoon" and "The Great Fuzz Frenzy," talked about the importance of reading, writing and storytelling, as well as the creative process for writing.

Crummel's writing career began as a favor to her sister, Janet Stevens, who needed someone to write a story that would accompany illustrations she was

creating for Shoe Town, a story that was to be included in a school textbook reader.

Stevens, an award-winning illustrator, asked her sister to help her with the project after receiving a 50-page set of rules that demanded the story meet very restrictive guidelines regarding what types of words that had to be used. With only four days left before the publisher's deadline, the sisters rushed to complete the project.

That deadline in 1997 was the beginning of a new career for Crummel who was an educator in Texas at the time. Upon retiring after 31 years, she was able to focus more time and energy on her writing career. One of the things she enjoys most about being a children's author is visiting schools like Mendez where she has an opportunity to interact with the students.

