

Church youth group fixes up member's home

BY BJ LEWIS
VICTORIA ADVOCATE

On any given summer day, swimming or sitting inside under the air conditioner would be on the agenda for Ashley Hicks.

But on Thursday, she gave up those pleasures to help a

15-year-old joined 12 other First Baptist Church youths in the first day of a two-day mission project.

That member, Cleopatra Mumphord, has been with First Baptist since 1973. The exterior of her 303 West Murray St. home was covered in chipping paint and the ground around the house was devoid of flowers.

She did not have enough money to pay to have it worked on, Ashley said. So the group decided to help her out.

needs it, it helps me inside," she said. "To grow closer to God."

Ashley and the others were all smiles as they worked, even though they were wet, sweaty and covered in paint speckles. On breaks from work, the group filled up on fruit and water.

The youth met at the church at 7:15 "ready to work hard" on Thursday morning, Tara Gresham said. They worked until 3

SEE HELP, B3

ONLINE VIDEO



To see video of the First Baptist Church youth group working, go to www.VictoriaAdvocate.com and click on the story.

Gulf Bend is a step closer to moving

BY ALLISON MILES
VICTORIA ADVOCATE

Gulf Bend Mental Health Mental Retardation Center is a step closer to its cross-town move after buying a new building Thursday.

The 38-year-old center purchased a 55,000-square-foot building on DeTar Hospital's north campus at 6502 Nursery Drive.

The three-story brick structure, known as the Regional Medical Plaza, will help to eventually increase the services the center offers the public, said David Way, Gulf Bend's director of operations.

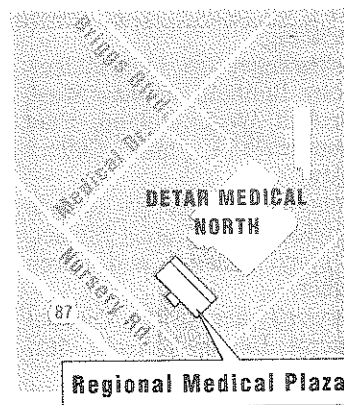
"It's not unlike making the decision of owning a home or renting," he said, noting the center took out a 15-year loan.

"We pay rent today, but this way ... at the end of 15 years we own a building and we're able to redirect those monies into direct services."

The non-profit organization serves about 1,000 adults and 250 children monthly in the seven counties it covers, but only receives state funding to help 609 adults and 125 children, Way said. Those extra funds, he noted, will come in handy.

The relocation will cost an estimated \$3,657,000, he said, and the center's board committed \$500,000. The M.G. and Lillie Johnson Foundation will contribute \$300,000, he said, and the rest will be financed. The organization will approach other entities for additional funds.

The center will only use about



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40,000-square-feet of the building, Way said, and will look for other healthcare or social services companies to rent out the property.

The building's current occu-

pants, Rogers Pharmacy and Angel's Care Home Health, will remain there, the center's executive director Don Polzin said, an added benefit for patients.

The Social Security Administration and women's clinic are also nearby, Way noted, and there's a bus stop right at the building's entrance.

"This is very convenient for folks," he said.

Gulf Bend should be situated in its new home by Oct. 31, Way said, but it has until Nov. 1 to be out of its current home. The plan is to create a seamless move without any disruption in business.

Allison Miles is a reporter for the Advocate.

Question of the day:

What do you think about Senator Clinton suspending her presidential campaign?



Guadalupe Gauna, retired, Victoria

I'm disappointed because not too long

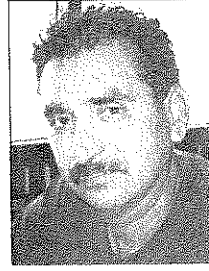
ago she said we don't quit, we're not quitters. Well, I realized that Obama won but I'm disappointed. I expected her to win. I voted for her. Maybe she'll still make it, stranger things have happened. We won't give up. I'm like she is, we don't give up.



Jackie Robinson, oilfield equipment operator, Telferner

It's about time. Was

she going to win? Barack had the most delegates. She wouldn't have caught up to him.



Alfredo Gonzalez, truck driver, Mission

I guess when you can't continue on, you have

to quit in a way, but support the other candidate. You never give up, you just keep on supporting the other candidate, hope for the best. For the Democrats — let's see what happens. It's an adventurous period.



Mike Wettstein, truck driver, Schulenburg

I probably wouldn't vote for her, but I'd probably rather

see her than Barack Obama. I'm not necessarily Democratic. I'm for the person who has the most moral values. I'd rather not have seen another Clinton in office. I don't think she should have given up. I think she should have given it a better shot.