

# Community building takes shape

## Selden work turns dream into reality

By MARYLOU OLSON

Selden should be full of excitement on Sunday when the new Community Center holds its grand opening on Main Street.

The event will mark the culmination of a dream by community boosters, as well as nearly 100 volunteers who put their shoulders to the task of making the center a reality.

Congressman Jerry Moran and state Rep. Jim Morrison are among dignitaries expected to attend.

A ribbon cutting for the new structure, at 114 N. Kansas Ave., will be at 11 a.m., with Mayor Darrel Bruggemann doing the honors. A free barbecue, provided by the City of Selden, will be served in the new building. A ceremony to recognize those who helped, a history of the building, and a drawing for raffle items will follow.

Jacque Boultinghouse, a member of the Selden City Council, said the idea for the building began when Irene Kruse came into Karls Store, where she works, and asked her if the city would help with repairs on the Senior Citizens Center building. She said it needed a lot of work, Ms. Boultinghouse recalled, and she didn't know who to get to do the repairs.

"After I heard all the things that needed to be done," she said, "I suggested that the city apply for a grant for a new building. Irene and I went to talk to Sheridan County Development Director Bert Mosier, and he set up a meeting with the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development Commission. After they did some checking, we were told that we would probably not get the grant.

"They told us that a senior center was too narrow of a scope for use, but said that if we were to change it ... to a Community Center, we would stand a better chance of getting the grant."

Ms. Boultinghouse said that they were told that since the information from the 2000 census was not available yet, the only grant that the city could qualify for was from the Kansas Small Town Environment Program, known as KAN-STEP.

The two women then talked to the council to see if members were interested in a new Community Center. After the women explained what a KAN-STEP grant was, the council decided to have a community meeting to see how many people were in favor of the idea and how many would be willing to donate their time.

"We were so impressed with the number of people that showed up in support of the building," she said. "Nick Koerperich, who has his own construction company, said he felt this was something our community needed and volunteered to head up the project.

"Then, when the Hoxie Medical Clinic learned that we were trying to get a grant for a new facility, they asked us if it would be possible to make the building a little bigger to make room for them. We ran that by the grant people, and they told us that if we let the clinic in the building, that would almost cinch our getting the grant."

So, the group went back to the drawing board and made plans to include the clinic, and that did it — the grant was approved.

"The building site was donated by Les Pratt of Pratt Realty of Hoxie," Ms. Boultinghouse said. "Volunteers included both men and women, and meals on Saturdays were provided by the Selden Senior Citizens. When volunteers worked at other times, several businesses in Selden offered to pick up the tab.

"Once the project got started, Bernie Koerperich and Chris Bainter headed up



IN THE BACKHOE, Leroy Spresser dug down to the water line with the assistance of Greg Bruggeman.

all the work needed to get the floor poured, then Nick Koerperich took over from there. Concrete was poured in July 2005 and the building was completed on Aug. 18.

The wood-frame building, covered with metal siding, measures 48 by 70

feet. It includes a community room, kitchen, bathroom and store room. The Hoxie Medical Clinic, on the north side, has a reception area, office and two exam rooms.

All of the work was done by volunteers and the City of Selden provided \$2,500

to complete the project, Ms. Boultinghouse said.

"Although certain people headed up specific areas during the construction, the project took lots of volunteers to complete it, both men and women. It took all of us to see it to the end," she said.



WORKING WITH HIS SCREW GUN, Nick Koerperich (above left) and Steve Rogers put the finishing touches on the front awning of the new Selden Community Center. Mike Fisher (left in photo above right) from the Kansas Rural Water Association, Nick Koerperich (center) and J.R. Albers worked to get the sewer in before the concrete crew were ready to pour the floor. The new building (right) is ready to go.



Herald photos  
by Jacque Boultinghouse