

Smith Crossing breaks ground for new addition

by Heather Warthen
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With residents in bright yellow hard hats, continuing care retirement community Smith Crossing broke ground on its 32-acre campus as part of a \$35 million expansion project in Orland Park Wednesday, Oct. 20.

The new construction will provide 50 percent more living space to the campus, with a new two-story wing housing 14 additional assisted living residences and 16 units for residents with memory care needs. The next phase of construction will include two more wings, with 76 independent living apartments and common areas to be constructed.

Smith Senior Living Special Project Manager James Fitch told attendees at the ground breaking ceremony that in 2003 he stood where they sat.

"I looked at Smith Crossing for the first time and all I could see was butterflies, bees and lots of soybeans," he said, adding that he and his wife liked Smith Crossing so much they moved in as well.

Fitch said that construction will likely begin next spring, with a grand opening for the facility tentatively scheduled for December 2012.

Current Smith Crossing resident Virginia Bailie spoke to the audience, telling them how much she has enjoyed living at the facility.

"It's a hard decision, having lived in your homes for a long time," she said. "Life is constantly changing and you have to roll with the punches. We have met so many new people that we never would have known if we didn't live here."

Mike Flynn, CEO of Smith Senior Living, said that it's a great time for the expansion, with construction costs at a good level.

"I've been in the field for more than 20 years and in very trying times, other organizations are struggling," he said. "We're proud and pleased to have the foresight to go forth with the expansion project at this time."



Breaking ground on Smith Crossing's \$35 million expansion includes (left to right) Smith Crossing Special Projects Manager James Fitch, Smith Crossing Board of Trustees President Andrew Anello, State Rep. Renee Kosel, State Sen. Edward Maloney, Smith Senior Living CEO Mike Flynn, Sawgrass Partners' Janice Maloney, SSL Board of Trustees President Robert Berghoff, future resident Edward Rorison and Smith Crossing Executive Director Frank Guajardo. *photo:Heather Warthen/22nd Century Media.*



Smith Crossing resident Bea Leyendecker smiles



[Nick and Ruth Zaglifa, current residents of Smith ...](#)



[Ben Harrison \(left\), George Quebbeman and John Voigt ...](#)

Other speakers at the ceremony included Smith Crossing Executive Director Frank Guajardo, Smith Crossing Board of Trustees President Andrew J. Anello, State Sen. Edward Maloney (D-Chicago), State Rep. Renee Kosel (R-New Lenox), future resident Edward Rorison and a toast by Smith Senior Living Board of Trustees President Robert A. Berghoff. Village of Orland Park Trustees Bernie Murphy, Pat Gira and Ed Schussler also attended.

"It's wonderful that the needs of the community will be met," Gira said.

Smith Crossing, which opened in November 2004, is located at 10501 Emilie Lane in Orland Park. For more information, visit www.smithcrossing.org.

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