

Beaming with pride

Construction at retirement community reaches highest point

By JOAN DEMIRJIAN

An American flag was raised last week as construction workers at the South Franklin Circle development in Bainbridge put in place the highest steel beam on the community center.

The center is the focal point for the Judson Services Inc. active and independent retirement community adjacent to Chagrin Falls Village.

William Fehrenbach, vice president of project development, for South Franklin Circle at 16575 South Franklin St., said the beam was painted white and signed by a number of staff members, including Cynthia Dunn, president and chief executive officer of Judson Services Inc.

The beam weighs about 700 pounds and is 22 feet long, Mr. Fehrenbach said. It forms a peak at the southeast corner of the community center.

It was hoisted 44 feet high to its place June 18, with the flag as well as an evergreen, which is another tradition in the construction trade, he said.

The community center, which faces South Franklin Street, is 80,793 square feet and will be the largest building in the complex. It will include a swimming pool, auditorium, business center, cafe, pub, restaurant and guest suites.

Taking shape on the acreage between South Franklin Street and Chagrin Road are seven apartment buildings and one assisted-living building.

Also being built are 27 cottage homes that stand alone, 16 garden homes, which are built in groups of two and 13 two-level townhouses, built in groups of three.

Phase one of the \$200 million project will be completed by September 2009, Mr. Fehrenbach said. "The project is on time and budget," he said. Phase two is to be done by 2010.

Roads within the complex are all paved. All utilities are in except for gas, and electric power lines have been placed underground.

An access road that will connect the existing Rocker Avenue to Chagrin Road is open to construction vehicles. Concrete trucks are using it, but that traffic will taper off in mid-summer when foundations and floors are completed, Mr. Fehrenbach said.

The access road will open to public traffic when the development is completed.

Judson spokesman Robert M. Lucarelli said even with all the current economic issues the development is holding steady and strong.

People are excited about the development as they see it rise out of the ground, he said.

And the site is not just being cleared



Photos by Kristine Leffler

Signing the 22-foot-long, 700-pound beam that was hoisted atop the community center at South Franklin Circle in Bainbridge were Hong Chae (from left), Hank Olszowy, Kristina Kuprevisius, Chuck Stephenson, Wes Jansen, Dave Meehan, William Fehrenbach and Cynthia H. Dunn, president and chief executive officer.

and flattened, he said. Slopes, hills and trees are being retained. There are five miles of walking trails in the community, he said.

"The majority of the charter members are from Northeast Ohio, but some are from out of state," Mr. Lucarelli said. At this point, 67 percent of the units at South Franklin Circle are pre-sold.

"I think the whole idea of creating an environment where people can re-invest themselves is attractive," he said. They can do what they love to do and remain active.

"We are seeing a community of people who are very special and will add to the Chagrin Valley," Mr. Lucarelli said. "It's like a community within a community."



Watching the topping off ceremony were all the dignitaries and officials as the beam was placed 44 feet in the air.