

Groundbreaking held for new United Pioneer Home facility

by Mary Stirrat
Leader staff writer

LUCK — More than 100 people were on hand to witness Tuesday evening's groundbreaking ceremony for United Pioneer Home's new facility at Second Street and Butternut Avenue in Luck. Digging will start in earnest Wednesday, Sept. 29, said UPH Administrator Dan Valentine.

During the brief ceremony, Valentine read parts of the presentation made in 1952 by the Rev. H.E. Sandstedt of Frederic at the groundbreaking of the current nursing home. The words were well-suited to the present occasion.

Sandstedt's speech began with answering the question, "When are they going to start doing something?" The answer, he said, is that numerous meetings and a tremendous amount of work went into the project even before ground breaking could take place.

The building project, he said, could be likened to pioneers of old who blazed a trail through the wilderness.

"As pioneers of old reached the place for which they had been looking," Valentine quoted Sandstedt, "so now we have come to the point where we can start building."

"Now we will have new problems and, perhaps, more of them. But we must go on. We must build in faith."

"Just as this nation of ours, today, stands as a tribute to the faith of our fore-



Former and current staff pose with hardhats, shovels, and excavating equipment to celebrate the groundbreaking for United Pioneer Home's new building. — Photos by Mary Stirrat



Fifty-seven years ago, 16 churches banded together to found a nursing home for the elderly in this area. Three of those churches were represented at Tuesday's groundbreaking ceremony for United Pioneer Home's new facility. Shown (L to R) Mike Rozumalski (West Denmark Lutheran Church), Carolyn Saunders (Atlas United Methodist) and Freddie Kirk (St. Luke's United Methodist, Frederic).

fathers, when the United Pioneer Home for the aged is completed, we will be able to look back with pride in that we might have had some small part in the building of this home."

Valentine concluded as Sandstedt had concluded, by saying, "The fear of getting old and not being wanted has haunted many people. To grow old without being



Enjoying the groundbreaking ceremony were construction field manager Carl Brooks, at right, and Tom Martin, project manager and co-founder of Community Living Solutions.



United Pioneer Home Administrator Dan Valentine and his wife, Jo, are all smiles at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new nursing home. The project has been in the works for about 20 years.



Fireworks were shot off at the end of the groundbreaking ceremony, adding to the festive atmosphere. This group of youngsters had to tilt their heads back pretty far to watch them explode.

surrounded with loving care is a dismal prospect.

"Now, thanks to your generosity, many in this home will enjoy Christian fellowship and loving care. This home will be concrete evidence of the meaning of the gospel of Christ. To that end it needs our continued prayer."

Discussion on the project began about 20 years ago, Valentine told the crowd gathered at the property on Second Street and Butternut Avenue.

Initially, he said, plans were to renovate the existing facility on Park Avenue. That was eventually found to be not feasible, and in 1993 UPH purchased the 20-acre parcel on Butternut Avenue. In 1997

water and sewer were stubbed in.

"This journey's been going on for 20 years," said UPH board President Dick Coen. "The old nursing home has served us well. This will hopefully, prayerfully serve our residents for another 50 years."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Valentine said a prayer asking God's protection and blessing on the construction project and crew, the future residents, employees and resident families.



Turning over the first spades of dirt for the new UPH building project were current and past board members. Shown (L to R) are board member Wayne Shirley, former UPH administrator Edna Lawson, former board members Marlys Pederson and Mary Jo Nelson, board members Nora Asper and Craig Adair, with Marie Bazey behind, board member Irvin Hermstad, board President Dick Coen, board member Mike Broten, and former board members Gayland Jensen and Edwin Pedersen.



Village officials at the groundbreaking ceremony (L to R) are village Trustee Marsha Jensen, village President Steve Nielsen, village Trustee John Wilcoxon and members of the Redevelopment Authority Tam Howie and Ed Seck.



More than 100 people turned out for the groundbreaking ceremony for United Pioneer Home's new skilled nursing facility on Butternut Avenue at Second Street.