

Pelican Valley Nursing Home Moves in to New Addition

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After seemingly endless years, a project that once seemed like a dream finally became a reality for Pelican Valley Senior Living. On January 17th, the nursing home moved residents in to their new addition. While the process of moving about 25 residents might seem a bit daunting, the facility managed to get it done in mere hours. “We had a plan and knew who had to go where and we were fortunate to have a lot of help,” said Executive Director Barbara Axness. “We started a little after 8 am and we got the last resident settled just before lunch, it was an incredible team effort.” Some familiar faces helped out with the move, former Director of Nursing Maria Stokka spent almost 36 years at Pelican Valley and came back to help usher in the new era of the nursing home. Board member and Construction Committee chairman Les Rotz brought several family members to help out. “It was actually a lot of fun and went really well, moving isn’t really fun but so many people have been waiting so long for this that it didn’t even feel like work,” said Axness. This project has been in the works for almost ten years and has evolved over the years. There were some times where it seemed like the project would never happen. “Our board is incredibly dedicated to seeing Pelican Valley continue its long legacy of serving the Pelican Rapids community. This project cements its legacy and ensures we’re going to be here for at least another 50 years to provide excellent care and services to people in the community,” said Board Chairman Rich Bratlien. “There have been countless people involved with this project over the years and we’re extremely thankful for all the support we’ve had to help get this done.”

Leading up to the big move, the facility spent a few weeks working out a plan; determining who would be moving in to the new addition, creating teams of staff members who were then assigned a group of residents to move and trying to figure out just what day the big move would happen. “We actually set two dates since we weren’t sure if we’d be ready in time for the first date,” said Axness. “We had some last minute things we wanted to get done and ended up moving on the later date we had selected.” To keep the excitement building for the move, in early December the facility had staff put in their guesses for what date the move would happen. Staff put in guesses ranging from December through April. In the end two staff members picked the right date, one was Maintenance Director Mark Neu, who was extremely involved in the project. “People were wondering if Mark had inside information since he was so involved but truly, he and I had no idea until about three days before whether or not we’d be able to make the move or needed to

push it back again,” said Axness. “He and I talked about moving dates with contractors over several weeks and it was really up in the air and not completely certain until right before it happened so honestly he really just had a lucky guess. We had the same information and my guess wasn’t even close,” she added.

The first few days in the new addition have gone well for staff and residents. “Our residents have absolutely loved their new rooms and were so excited to move, they really love having their own space and being able to say they’re the first ones to live in the new addition,” said Director of Nursing Chandra Eaton. “And our nursing staff have loved having more space to work in and have our new tub room and nurses station.” The new addition added more space to the nursing home. The facility has had trouble competing with more modern nursing homes in the area and also had only a handful of private rooms. With the new addition completed, the nursing home now has 20 private rooms. “We are absolutely loving our new space and we couldn’t be more excited to welcome the community in to see how beautiful our nursing home is,” said Axness. A formal open house will be scheduled for February.



