

## KTO Senior Living Center Groundbreaking, Thursday, September 20, 2012



Senior Living Center Groundbreaking - With shovels in hand and the future in mind, all five members of the Business Committee broke ground Thursday for the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma Senior Living Center. The project, funded with the HUD Indian Community Development Block Grant, will provide housing for up to 10 tribal elders most in need of housing.

Jennell Downs, KTO Business Committee Treasurer, had the idea for a Senior Living Center about ten years ago after speaking with Tribal Members regarding needs of Tribal Elders. Her goal was to provide a safe place for tribal elders to live free of charge with other members of their community. After its completion, the facility will be owned and operated by the Tribe. The Kickapoo Tribal Health Center will provide a nurse receptionist stationed in the building 24-hours per day in case of emergencies and to ensure residents' safety.

Also on hand for the groundbreaking were John Patterson, the building's architect, and Clayton Eads, President of Clayton Eads Construction. Clayton Eads Construction will have a 300 calendar day timeline to complete the facility. However, adjustments to this timeline will be made to allow for winter construction. The US Army Corps of Engineers will also be working on this project as construction inspectors and technical advisors to the Tribe.

Eads has successfully built several buildings for the Tribe and has developed a good working relationship with Tribal Administration through those projects. Patterson has also worked previously with the Tribe when he designed the Kickapoo Child Care Center in 2003. Patterson designed the Senior Living Center to be easily expandable up to 50 additional units.

Eads and Patterson were selected for this project by a five-person selection committee consisting of Boyd Ponkilla, BC Vice-Chairman; Juanita Rodriguez, Elders Nutrition Center Director; Janetta Mahtapene, KTHC Health Director; Jimmy Don Carter, KTHC Maintenance Director; and Nicholas Wahpepah, Grants and Compliance Department Director.

Nicholas Wahpepah will be the Senior Living Center Project's Manager and will work with all parties involved to ensure completion of the project in a timely manner.