During the groundbreaking Tuesday for the University of the Southwest’s new dorm building, from left, Sam Spencer, Paula Smith, Gary Dill, Melissa Ferguson, Nancy Shev and Bob Reid turn over their shovels.

**NEWSPAPER**

**USW breaks ground on new dorm**

**MARI WADSORTH**

Behind University of the Southwest’s two residence halls near the library, USW President Gary Dill and four other university officials threw white construction hats dug into the ground at 1:30 Tuesday afternoon.

The groundbreaking ceremony took place in the spot where a new titled residence hall costing more than $8 million has been promised, though it would put the university’s total beds at 232.

About 50 people attended the event.

“As soon as we get the financial constraints completed in the next couple of weeks, the equipment will start turning over,” Dill said. “We’re grateful for everyone’s continued patience. Putting in something like this requires a lot of behind the scenes work, and we’re glad we’ve near the point where we can begin construction.”

In September, USW’s board of trustees approved construction of the new residence hall pending the university securing funding for the project. Construction of the student living facility was originally slated to begin this summer but was delayed due to lack of funding.

“We’re ready to start construction,” Dill said.

RGG Architects of Lubbock will handle the project, which is anticipated to be finished in 15 months and be ready for students to move in fall 2010, Dill said.

The new hall’s design will be similar to the 38-bed residence halls built in 2001 and 2004.

“We need the beds available now because we’re growing,” Dill said. “This will address our residence needs for the next few years.”

**Pros offer financial advice**

**LEV HILL**

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That was the advice from Leslie Hoffman, director of lending and client services for Arrow New Mexico, and Michael Arnold, assistant vice president with Global Wealth Management/Merrill Lynch.

Lea County residents are encouraged to participate in the surveys that will continue through the end of the year.

Christine Brininstool said the surveys have no cost to the participating cities, since the survey was mailed in utility bills.

Taylor and EDC staff drew up a survey based on housing and child care, but asked one retail question to help recruit businesses, he said.

If it’s a larger retail outlet that might not necessarily come to Eunice or Levittown, they might want to go to Hobbs instead, he said.

Hobbs City Manager Eddie Honeyfield said the survey has no cost to the participating cities, since it was mailed in utility bills.

If the child care problem was restricted to city employees, Honeyfield and Collins said they would not spend taxpayer money to study the problem. If they were to pursue the need for child care, they would be investigating a need to allow classrooms to be named after individuals just before she stopped serving on the university’s board of trustees about two years ago.

Brininstool said.

Taylor said the response to the surveys has been better than he expected.

“I was really pretty impressed as far, he said.” We put in 487 (results) from Hobbs... I thought we’d be doing great if we got 200 (residential responses).”

It is too late for residents to turn in their surveys, although Levittown has had them for more than a month and Eunice residents should have completed theirs by Nov. 15, Taylor said.

Anyone who wants to participate in the surveys should return the paperwork to their local utility office by Friday, he said.

**USW dedicates classroom to ex-board member**

**MARI WADSORTH**

University of the Southwest junior Chris Cooper was the first to use the newly dedicated Christine Brininstool Room to recruit employees, but after arriving found that housing and diet were two obstacles keeping many potential workers from relocating to the area.

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**Child care, housing needs subject of survey**

**BETH HAHN**

A handful of city officials from around Lea County were meeting this fall when the subject of child care came up.

Eunice Mayor Matt White said residents of that city were already aware of a need for day care.

What didn’t know, he added, is that several communities have completed theirs by Nov. 15, Taylor said.

Anyone who wants to participate in the surveys should return the paperwork to their local utility office by Friday, he said.

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