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Greensburg Reaches Another Milestone

More than three years after a tornado destroyed most of Greensburg, the town has a new community center, thanks to help from across the state.

“For those of us who remember all the rubble, every one of these is a major milestone,” said Dennis McKinney, Greensburg native and Kansas State Treasurer.

“As in everything we’ve done for the last three years, it’s quite a celebration to have a new facility,” said Mayor Bob Dixon.

The new community center sits on the county fairgrounds. The facility was built by the generosity of people all across the state.

“Very little of this building actually had to be paid for,” said Richard Taylor, Plumbers and Pipefitters Union. “Most of it was donated materials and donated labor.”

Taylor got the ball rolling right after the tornado hit Greensburg in May of 2007. Groups of plumbers, pipefitters and metalworkers set out to build the community center.

“It started growing out from the different people in the community, different entities around the state that just came together and were more than willing to help,” said Taylor. “I mean, usually with one phone call, people were jumping on board.”

The mayor of Greensburg couldn’t be prouder.

“It matters not if the disaster would have been in Greensburg or anywhere else in Kansas,” said Mayor Dixon. “Kansans pull together to help each other out.”

The building is opening just in time for the Kiowa County Fair next week. The energy-efficient facility will be home to all kinds of community activities in years to come.

“It’s a really great example of what it means to be a Kansan,” said McKinney. “If you’re in Kansas and you’re in trouble, the whole state stands behind you. This is evidence of that.”

Donations came from all over the United States and Canada to help build the community center.

The center will be handed over to the county and opened to the public next Tuesday.

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