

Assisted living provides new options for Moundridge Memorial Home residents

Residents of the newly completed assisted living wing of Memorial Home of Moundridge are understandably a little overwhelmed with their new homes.

They have moved from a 150 square-foot room to a 700 square-foot apartment unit complete with living room, kitchenette, bedroom with walk-in closet, and bath with walk-in shower. But, they are certainly enjoying the additional space.

“One of our residents was excited because he had room for a queen-size bed. They now have space for furniture and other items that they had to put in storage. Hopefully, (the apartments) will meet our needs for many years,” Jason Stucky, Memorial Home finance officer said.



Dining and kitchen area for residents of the new assisted living addition. Meals are served out of this kitchen. Residents may also use the kitchen to bake or prepare meals with family members in a comfortable, home-like atmosphere.

The assisted living apartment addition is the most recently completed component in the \$2.6 million, multi-phase project

PROJECT PROFILE Memorial Home

Owner:	Memorial Home Inc.	Project Type:	Nurses Station, Assisted Living
Location:	Moundridge, KS	Square footage:	12,250
Project Scope:	Renovation, addition	Design Build Team:	Fuqua Construction & Gossen Livingston Architecture
			Jason Stucky is available as a reference on this project at 620-345-2901



undertaken by Memorial Home, a skilled nursing care facility serving the Moundridge community since 1958. Partnering with Fuqua Construction in the design-build project was architect Tom P. Montgomery of Gossen Livingston Architecture of Wichita. In addition to the 12,250 square-foot assisted living wing, the project included renovations to the central nursing station in the skilled care unit, renovation of the office area and construction of a maintenance building.

According to Jim Huxman, Memorial Home administrator, the project was designed to position the facility for future needs. While Memorial Home had always received high ratings for the care received by its residents, focus groups of stakeholders and core constituencies pointed out that the baby boomer generation was looking for a different type of care environment than the traditional nursing home room. The new assisted living unit apartments will provide a needed bridge between the facility’s 53 independent housing units and its health care beds.

Now that the ribbon cutting is done, the open house held, and the residents moved into their new apartments, facility staff are as pleased with the end result as the residents.

“It all went very well. We are very, very pleased with the final product,” Huxman said. “The residents are very pleased with what they’ve got...Now that everyone is moved in, it’s just a matter of making it feel like home.”

Achieving an end result that pleases facility owners, residents and regulators in the most efficient and cost-effective manner is the goal of the design-build model. Effective communication between all those involved in a project is a key factor in the process.

To that end, Max Fuqua and the project foreman scheduled

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regular meetings every two weeks with Huxman and other facility staff throughout the project, which allowed any questions and/or construction or design glitches to be addressed quickly.

“It’s inevitable that you’ll find things as you go along that you want to change,” Stucky said. “We had a couple of little hiccups. Max was proactive in those instances and did research and presented options. They were very aware of our budget. We felt Fuqua Construction staff and crew were looking out for us and trying to keep costs down when they could without sacrificing quality. Both foremen who worked on the project showed very good leadership.”

That conscientious approach to the project was evident in the whole Fuqua crew, according to Bob Loganbill, facility maintenance manager, who had the task of keeping up with the facility’s normal maintenance issues while also dealing with the expected disruptions caused by renovation and construction projects.

“Paul (the supervisor) was really, really good to work with. He would check in every morning to see if we needed anything (that the crew had to work around). I really appreciated Paul,” Loganbill said. “In construction you have to expect some dirt and dust. They kept it down as much as possible.”

The crew’s sensitivity to the impact construction could cause on the daily routines of the care facility during renovation of the nursing station/commons area was greatly appreciated, Huxman noted. And, while the concerns were different during construction of the assisted living wing, the crew continued to be mindful of safety, noise, dirt and other issues. They were excellent, courteous and kind to Memorial Home staff and residents, he said.



One of the public gathering areas available to residents in the assisted living wing.

The design-build team’s familiarity with nursing home facilities and the special demands of those facilities carried over from the interpersonal relationship with staff to the construction. Fuqua Construction personnel and architect Tom P. Montgomery’s knowledge of state health and fire code regulations and adaptive building techniques for an older population was much appreciated during the planning and building process. But, it became very clear during the inspection process just how valuable the team’s experience was.

“It was a very thorough inspection,” Stucky said. “In those inspections, Al Gutierrez (the inspector for Kansas Department of Aging) is flushing every toilet, checking lumens of light and



Remodeled nurse station and commons area in the skilled nursing wing of Memorial Home completed in 2008. Residents find it an inviting place to gather and socialize.

water temperature. It was definitely a benefit that (Fuqua Construction) was up to speed. They were aware of the regulations and knew what needed to be done.”

The result? The Kansas Department of Aging inspection showed no construction deficiencies.

“It’s my job to do a thorough inspection to ensure the facility is in compliance,” Gutierrez said. “I have worked with Max in the past, and I wasn’t expecting any big problems. I was not disappointed. There were no deficiencies with the building. That’s not very typical in this business. In my five years on this job, I average 30 to 40 inspections every year. I can count on one hand the number of times this has happened. It’s only the third or fourth facility in all five years that has had no problems. When I know Tom (Montgomery) and Max are working on a project, I feel confident that work will be done well.”

This was the first project on which Montgomery and Fuqua had partnered. In the design-build model, the contractor typically takes on the role of point man, communicating with all those involved as the project progresses. Montgomery was pleased with Fuqua’s coordination of the work and the quality of the construction.

“Max was really good to work with. He was right on top of things early and kept the project going, even with the added challenges of working around an operating facility. It speaks to his coordination skills,” Montgomery said. “I wouldn’t hesitate to work on a project with him again.”

While there are always a few things that might have been done differently on a project of this size, Huxman said, those things pale in comparison with the positive end result that has been achieved.

“I’ve been in this business long enough from facility to facility that I have often found myself cleaning up someone else’s project. But, I really do feel we did things right on this,” Huxman said.

-- *Feel free to contact Jason Stucky as a reference on Fuqua Construction’s work at 620-345-2901.*

Written by Cindy Baldwin, Baldwin Creative Services