

35 years in the making ...

CRDC dedicates new admin home

Beneath a bright, blameless blue sky, some 200 visitors stood quiet and respectful as members of Co. A, 875th Eng. Bn., Arkansas Army National Guard raised the American Flag in front of the new Crowley's Ridge Development Council administration building on Fox Meadow Lane in Jonesboro on August 18.

Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran 1LT Brian Mason then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and the open house ceremonies were off to a memorable and auspicious beginning.

Following opening remarks by Martin Buchman, CRDC board president, and Robert Wilford, executive director, State Rep. Dustin McDaniel praised the efforts put forth by the agency's staff to bring aid and assistance to the poor and elderly in Northeast Arkansas.

McDaniel kept his remarks to a minimum and cited the withering heat on one of the hottest days of a very hot summer as "a very good reason to keep my talk short." Despite the brevity of his comments, McDaniel brought home his points of praise for CRDC and its mission.

A brief ribbon cutting ceremony coordinated by the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce followed the representative's remarks and the large crowd then filed into the new building.

"I was truly grateful that so many people took time out of their busy schedules to come join us for the open house," Wilford says. "And it was a brutally hot day. I'm thankful for our military folks who endured the heat in their uniforms and gave us such an inspiring ceremony at the new flag monument."

Wilford noted that he is also appreciative of Father Mark Wood, pastor of Blessed Sacrament Church in Jonesboro, and Rev. Dwayne McCray, a member of the CRDC board, for delivering the invocation and benediction, respectfully.

"And I know I speak for all on our board and staff when I say that we are most grateful for Rep. McDaniel's kind comments about

our agency," Wilford adds. "His support and generous remarks truly boosted our spirits."

While dining on hors d'oeuvres provided by Gordon Foods, members of the large gathering had the opportunity to tour the new facility that includes offices for administrative management and staff, a conference room and a large training room and kitchen facility.

Later in the evening, the board of directors held its first meeting in the new building. Many glowing remarks were directed at the new facility and its functional design.

"We're all very proud of the new building," says Wilford. "It sets the tone for the future of this agency as we prepare to continue our mission of 'eliminating the causes of poverty in Northeast Arkansas.' Our hope is to have a campus-like setting here, someday, with all administrative functions of all departments having headquarters on the seven acres we are leasing from the state."

Wilford concludes that "we are proud of the new facility. With work being finished on the exterior, it is more attractive with each passing day. We urge Northeast Arkansas residents to come by and look us over."



State Rep. Dustin McDaniel joins CRDC board members in cutting the ribbon to officially open the new administration building in Jonesboro.