

## **From Breaking Ground to Pouring Concrete**

**By Sue Knapp**

**Board Chair, Deschutes Rim Clinic Foundation**

Our ground-breaking event (“Break Ground with Us”) on October 9<sup>th</sup> was a wonderful success; we are now ready and eager to roll the big equipment for construction!

The ceremony was dedicated to Michael Wilson of Westby Associates, who, except for his untimely death in July, would have been the emcee. In his place Sue Knapp and Dennis Beechler were the emcee duo. Nine speakers, from state and local government, MCMC, to our past provider Sharon DeHart, gave perspectives on their involvement with the vision of the new clinic. Golden shovels and white hard hats were at the ready for the official breaking of ground and flinging of dirt. Sixty-one people were in attendance and over 20 sponsors defrayed the cost. Their logos and names embellished the “It’s YOUR Community Health Care Center” banner, sponsored by Bohn’s printing. All was captured by the photography team led by Jennifer Mitchke. Except for the wind, it was a perfect day.

We thank the volunteers who helped set up and take down, issue name tags and take donations, the 22 businesses and individuals who sponsored the event, the school for lending their chairs and tables, the Deschutes Rim Clinic Foundation steering committee who helped plan and execute the event, the contractor who supplied the shovels, hard hats and displays, the photography team, the donors, speakers, and above all, the attendees. You all were a part of making this event a success.

By early November, the approximate 1,800 cubic yards of dirt, rocks and other debris, that has been on site growing weeds since the civic center construction, will have been hauled away; safety fencing and construction equipment and office trailers will be on site; and, the foundation pouring will have begun.

It is hard to believe that after 5 or more years of planning and fundraising, challenges and setbacks, and dedication and perseverance, the new Deschutes Rim Health Clinic will be taking shape. Following a major fundraising event in early spring, we hope to have a ribbon cutting and take occupancy by early summer 2022.

Our partnership with MCMC is also taking shape. Stronger together, we will be providing improved health care services to South County residents after the new clinic is built. Other partnerships are also developing to address unmet health care needs in the community. Partnerships are invaluable in providing the services and filling the gaps toward better community health and well being, especially in rural areas. The school-based health clinic continues to focus on wellness exams, vaccinations, testing and patient visits are ongoing at the clinic (and will continue during construction) and our part-time dentist helps to fill the gap in dental care until a full-time dentist is hired.

Please stop by to see the construction activity and progress which will continue for the next 8 -9 months. Afterall, this is YOUR future community health care center!