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# THE VISTA NEWS

## Vista Community Clinic breaks ground on latest location

By Gideon Marcus

VISTA — It may have looked like a big pile of dirt, but the executive staff of the Vista Community Clinic was all smiles as they announced the beginning of construction on their newest medical center site at 134 Grapevine. Clinic notables were joined by Vista Mayor Morris Vance as they broke ground with 11 golden shovels July 31.

The event has been four years in the making, the first three spent looking for a suitable site and the last spent in

comprehensive planning. The result is a facility which, when it is completed next summer, will not only replace the existing Tri-City branch of the clinic but greatly expand it, housing pediatric, OB/GYN and internal medicine departments, a pharmacy and several labs.

The current center on Thunder Drive consists of five noncontiguous suites in a rented building which together are too small to adequately meet demand.

"This new 12,000-square-foot facility ... will double the

clinic's service to 50,000 patient visits annually," Tom Capizzi, president of the clinic's board of trustees, said. "We're here to meet the growing needs of the health care community in Vista ... (and) to save lives and to give a hand to those who need it while ensuring our community stays healthy and safe."

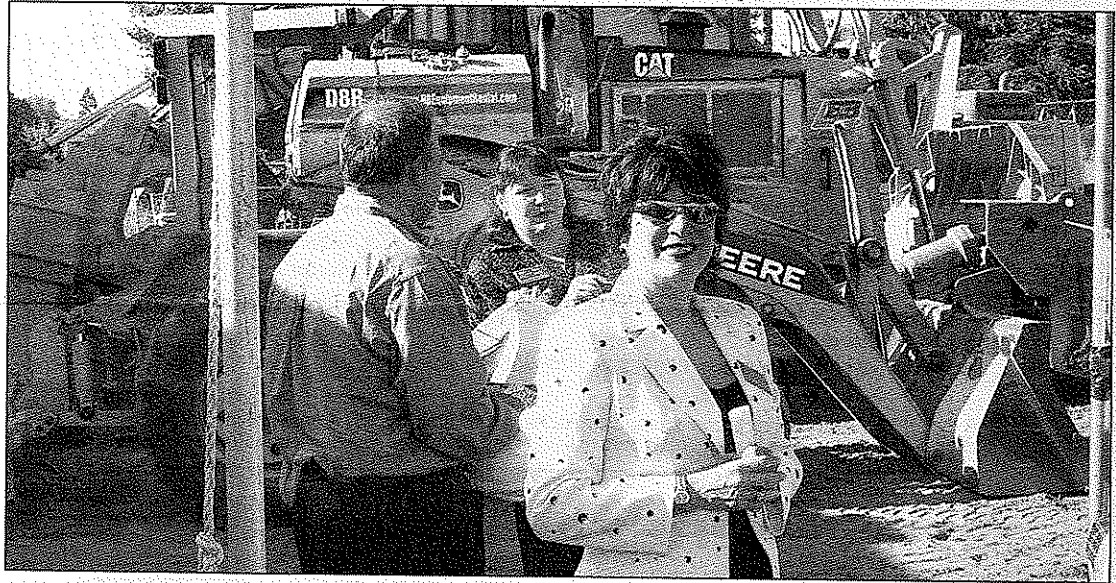
It is no coincidence that the new clinic is within walking distance of Tri-City Medical Center, the region's biggest hospital. The clinic receives almost 900 referrals a

month from the hospital, mostly follow-up visits for patients who go to the emergency room and don't have primary care insurance.

"We've had this program since 1995, and it was always paper-based," Jennifer Jones, spokeswoman for the clinic, said. "When we switched to electronic, the numbers went through the roof, which is great."

"This whole referral process has really been a

TURN TO CLINIC ON 17



**IT'S A START!** Vista Community Clinic CEO Barbara Mannino is all smiles as she stands in front of the tractors which prepared the new clinic site at 135 Grapevine. The groundbreaking ceremony took place July 31. *Photo by Gideon Marcus*

## CLINIC

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win/win for us as well as the community," Betsy Heightman, clinic development director, said. "If you just have a cold or something not life-threatening, you're clogging up that hospital for

someone that's going to need it in a more emergent manner. So if you can go to a primary care facility outside that hospital, it's going to free up that hospital setting for those that really need it."

Vista Community Clinic is a publicly and privately funded health care provider whose

mission is to serve the community, particularly those facing economic, social and cultural barriers. The clinic operates five facilities in the cities of Vista and Oceanside. More information can be obtained by visiting <http://www.vista-communityclinic.org/> or by calling (760) 631-5000.