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TOP STORY

## Construction begins on memory care center

by Mark Gaschler [mark@sewardindependent.com](mailto:mark@sewardindependent.com) Jul 26, 2017



Pam and Randy Kozeal are building a new long term care facility in Beatrice. The couple runs their company, LTC Midwest, out of their home in Wilber.

Mark Gaschler/WR

LTC Midwest, a healthcare consulting and management company based in Wilber, has broken ground on a new assisted living memory care facility in Beatrice.

The company, owned by Randy and Pam Kozeal of Wilber, plans to build a 16-bed facility called Whispering Winds Cottage in Beatrice. It will provide on-site 24/7 care to patients with dementia and memory disabilities.

"When the building is complete, it'll look like an 8,000 square foot house," Randy said.

The residents will have meals, medication and activities tailored to them. Each resident, upon entering the facility, will have his or her life story written up so that the staff can be as responsive as possible to any memory issues.

"Typically, a person with dementia has fairly good recognition of the past, they just don't have good recognition of the present," Randy said. "Our staff know the life story of each individual resident, so when things occur, our staff can respond to that as if that event they are talking about is here present today."

Randy said the project started a year ago after a "very productive meeting with the CFO at the hospital in Beatrice.

"He was very excited, very open in those discussions with us about what they had experienced in the Beatrice market as far as staffing and potential residents."

The facility is expected to be complete in mid-October, Randy said.

Randy started LTC Midwest 10 years ago, after spending 25 years as a risk management advisor for long-term care facilities.

"I traveled coast-to-coast and border-to-border over the United States providing risk management services to long term care homes," he said. "Out of that, I gained a significant amount of knowledge, in addition to the fact that I'm a licensed nursing home administrator, assisted living administrator and a certified dementia practitioner."

He was working for a large Texas company called Graystone, which develops long term care facilities throughout the country, and used what he learned there to start a smaller-scale company that focused on rural areas.

"I wanted to take what I had learned from the management company I worked for before that, what I learned from Greystone, and apply all of that in a service-oriented business to rural providers who may not have ever experienced what I had seen, what I had worked with," he said.

Randy's company, LTC Midwest, provides risk management services to long-term care homes as well, but also helps with staffing and ongoing education, provides long-term planning and management, and owns and operates nursing and assisted living homes in Ord, Broken Bow and Rapid City, South Dakota.

One of the biggest challenges the company faces, Randy said, is that long-term care is becoming more like rehabilitation.

"No longer is it only a place to come to spend your final years," he said. "It's a place to come, to get rehab to be able to go back home, to your assisted living, whatever it is, and continue to enjoy life."

Randy and Pam have over 55 years combined experience in long-term care. Pam had started as a certified nursing assistant at Wilber Care Center and worked her way through most of its departments until she retired as the activities director in 2014 to join LTC Midwest full time as lifestyles coordinator, assisted living administrator and marketer.