

PEKIN **Daily Times**

TAPS construction set to begin on new shelter

By Shanna Shipman

Times staff writer

PEKIN - Crews are moving ground to make way for the new TAPS shelter, as those raising the funds move closer to their financial goal in what has become a community-wide effort.

The TAPS Capital Campaign Committee has been focused on its mission - to raise enough funds to build a new, larger animal shelter - for six months now. The amount of funds raised continues to rise, sometimes in leaps and bounds due to donations from local corporate sponsors.

"TAPS Board of Directors, the staff, volunteers and of course our dogs and cats would like to thank each and every person and business that have donated to TAPS new building fund," said Sue Kyle, TAPS Capital Campaign Committee member.

The committee members hope to raise a total of \$500,000, including proceeds from the sale of the current shelter and site. Their projection that the sale will bring approximately \$150,000 leaves an estimated \$350,000 to be raised by fundraising efforts.

Since October of 2005, the capital campaign committee has raised the vast majority of that amount, a total of \$333,300, from individual and corporate donations.

Proceeds from the sale of the present shelter's building and ground will be added to the capital campaign funds in a Herget Bank trust account. Cindy Beatty, a TAPS board member and Realtor, is in the process of putting the building and land on the market for sale.

In past weeks construction crews have begun clearing land at the site of the new TAPS building, on land donated by Henry and Alice Cakora, located on what is now called TAPS Lane in Pekin. Steel framing for the building is to be delivered in early May.

TAPS Board of Directors President Henry Cakora said the timeline for completion of the project is dependent on the capital campaign. The project will be completed as much as possible by in-kind donations of material and labor, many already pledged.

Confident that they will reach their fundraising goal soon, the capital committee has opted to initiate preparation of the site and proceed gradually as funds allow.

Donations are still being accepted, and those giving between \$500-\$4,999 will be honored on a special donor's wall in the lobby of the new shelter. A donation of \$10,000 allows the donor to name a room in the new shelter.

Capital committee members stress, though, that all donations large and small are welcome. They predict the new shelter will be completed by the end of this summer.

"We will soon realize our goal of providing a safe, healthy, and happy environment for this area's abused, abandoned and homeless cats and dogs," Kyle said.