

Golden Pond in Hopkinton celebrates its expansion

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HOPKINTON — A. Cherry Johnson gets lucky a lot, which means she's a good bingo player. Thursday afternoon at the Golden Pond bingo game she was first to fill her board with chips.

"I just win. I'm just lucky, I guess," she said at a table packed with bingo players at the assisted living facility on West Main Street.

Golden Pond Thursday celebrated its new wing of 33 new luxury apartments. The open house offered food, tours and words from the owners, Kerry and Larry Kunst.

After the bingo game, Johnson described the sense of camaraderie at Golden Pond. She sold her home on West Central Street in Natick about four years ago, when her husband died.

"I didn't feel like living there anymore because my husband wasn't there," said the former Pentagon secretary who also worked at the Natick Soldier Systems Center.

June Rogers, 79, sat next to Johnson at bingo. Rogers moved to Golden Pond from California just two weeks ago and said Johnson took her under her wing.

"You just take it one step at a time," she said.

Golden Pond, which opened in 1992, was the first freestanding assisted living center in New England, said Shelley Ryan, the marketing director.

The new apartments are a mix of studios, one- and two-bedroom units. Tours Thursday showcased model units prepped with everything from throw pillows to a jar of cookies.

"These are just a bigger, nicer apartment than what we had before," Ryan said.

The original wing has 132 residents including 44 people in a separate dementia unit, she said. Some residents have been there as long as 12 years, according to Ryan.

Golden Pond has four full-time nurses, a visiting doctor, X-ray labs and speech, physical and occupational therapy, she said.

According to 2010 U.S. Census figures, 17 percent of Hopkinton residents are 65 or older. Officials recently have said that percentage is growing and they are looking for ways to keep locals in town when their children graduate.

As part of Golden Pond's project, the facility paid the town Department of Public Works to widen the southern side of West Main Street across from the new entrance, similar to what already exists across from 50 West Main St.



Residents at Golden Pond assisted living facility in Hopkinton play bingo on Thursday



Residents A. Cherry Johnson, left, and June Rogers, 79, at Golden Pond assisted living facility in Hopkinton on Thursday.