

# SCL Phase 1 on schedule to open in May

By **MICHELE COLLINS**

Dressed in a fluorescent construction worker's safety vest, Ara Bagdasarian surveyed the progress at the Solon Community Living (SCL) site, a 3.65 acre site off Clearwater Court in Solon.

He can hardly contain his enthusiasm about the progress made on the community thus far, one that will be home to 14 adults with disabilities and their caregivers. The project is on track, he said recently, with eight residents expected to move in next May.

No one can blame him for his excited anticipation.

After all, this project has been seven years in the making.

Mr. Bagdasarian, and his wife, Leslie, are the co-founders of Solon Community Living, a project near to their hearts, as it will be home to their two adult children, Alex and Julie, who have Fragile X syndrome.

And who, come May, will no longer live with their parents, but instead be part of the SCL community as well as the greater Solon community.

Solon Community Living is a groundbreaking project for those with disabilities. The community is designed to provide care and socialization for its residents, allowing them to truly be part of their community, and to live as adults, within their own spaces, with support.

In addition to the ease of access for those with disabilities, SCL will include programming for its residents, entertainment and activities, trips to local restaurants and shops, as well as on-site caregivers, resident assistants and the continuing support of their families.

In fact, the future residents and their families, numbering 25 in all, recently attended a Fall Fest at the home of the Bagdasarians, where the future residents decorated pumpkins, ate fall-themed foods, and their parents enjoyed meeting one another.

"It is just so wonderful to get to know the other families, to get to know their children, and to share successes and challenges," said Theresa Markowitz, the mother of 26-year-old



**The future clubhouse of Solon Community Living, a housing community for adults with disabilities, is going up according to schedule. Organizers plan for a May move-in for its first residents.**

Hannah, a future resident.

Other upcoming SCL family events include a dad's golf outing to Top Golf in November, and a December family holiday celebration.

The mothers of the future residents recently met at Burntwood Tavern, and as Ms. Markowitz put it, "We became fast friends."

The families have bought into the Bagdasarians' dream of having a safe and sustainable place for their adult children, one that will allow them to be cared for when their parents are no longer able.

This dream inspires Mr. Bagdasarian as he visits the SCL construction site almost every day.

"I just love to come here, and I love to see what is happening that day," he said with a smile. "See beyond that pile there? They are ready to pour the foundation for building number 5."

As of this writing, Phase 1, including the first five residential unit buildings, and the clubhouse, which will offer eight two-bedroom townhomes and four caregiver suites, is well on its way to completion. Foundations have been poured for four buildings, with the fifth expected to be poured this week.

The roof and shingles are now up on the clubhouse, and walls are up on the four homes.

Phase 2, which will include six residential units and two caregiver suites, is scheduled

to begin construction soon.

Eleven of the 14 homes have already been spoken for, according to Mr. Bagdasarian. Just three units remain, and Mr. Bagdasarian is hopeful, with the interest in the community now that construction has begun, that those units will be contracted by the end of the year.

As for the site itself, water pipelines have been connected to Clearwater Court's water pipes, and additional water and utility construction is taking place along Aurora Road.

Soon there will be sidewalks, green areas, front porches and patios.

Of great importance to those families who have committed to having residents in Solon Community Living, 80 percent of the fundraising for the community has also been completed.

"We have a goal of \$3.3 million in funding for the entire SCL community," said Mr. Bagdasarian. "To date, we have about \$2.6 million. We are planning an appeal to finish out our goal."

Those interested in helping SCL reach its funding goal may donate at [soloncommunityliving.org](http://soloncommunityliving.org).

Any donation amount will be appreciated, especially by the 14 residents who are anxious to move into their new homes, start their new lives, and realize the dream that is Solon Community Living.