



## Community Medical Center Ground Breakers

The history of Community Medical Center continues with recognizing another individual that pioneered health care in our community and made a difference in our medical history – people we call Ground Breakers.

### **THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF LEAVENWORTH**



Taken when the hospital was blessed in 1940.



The tea in 1955 when the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth turned the hospital over to the community of Falls City.

*Photos courtesy of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth archives.*

Dr. Hustead continued to own and operate the hospital until May of 1940 when he sold the institution to the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas. They assumed operation in August and renamed the hospital Our Lady of Perpetual Help Hospital.

As promised four Sisters of Charity arrived in Falls City. They were Sisters Ann Raymond, M. Bernard, M. Jeannette and Rose Victor. These sisters constituted the staff for the their fourth Catholic hospital in the Diocese of Lincoln. Its predecessors were: Saint Elizabeth Hospital in Lincoln, 1889; Saint Mary Hospital in Nebraska City, 1917; and Saint Catherine of Sienna Hospital in McCook, 1921.

In the first year patient census was low and the sisters took no salary. At the end of the first fiscal year, the bank balance for the hospital was less than five dollars. Many organizations initiated a fund drive to help the sisters meet their expenses and purchases much needed new equipment. They succeeded and a renewed interest in the hospital resulted. The hospital was staffed with qualified laboratory and x-ray technicians, dieticians and nursing supervisor from the order. A resident Chaplain was employed. Several retired nuns made their home here and rendered service of the lawn, chapel and repairing of the hospital linens.

The Sisters of Charity served the community for fifteen years with high standards and a homelike atmosphere it was reported. Their enthusiasm and dedication stabilized the hospital from its early form.

Challenges did still remain and in the fall of 1954 Mother Ancilla Superior of the Sisters of Leavenworth decided to cease operation of the local unit. She felt that a different type of ownership would improve the hospital's situation. The Falls City community sold bonds and purchased the hospital from the Sisters of Charity in July of 1955.