

Junior League breaks ground on new quarters

By **NATASHA BUTLER**
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The Junior League of Boca Raton has spent several years running from pillar to post in search of a meeting place, said group president Cynthia Krebsbach.

"In the first five years, we operated strictly out of the trunks of people's cars," Krebsbach told an amused crowd of more than 100 people outside the site of a former dance studio on Jan. 23. "Then the next year, we operated

next to a Chinese restaurant where the scent of won-tons drifted through the copier on an almost daily basis."

With the Thursday groundbreaking ceremony outside of the studio purchased in May, the league drew closer to its goal of establishing permanent headquarters as well as a major community resource.

The Countess de Hoernle building, at 261 N.W. 13th St. near Glades Road and Boca Raton Boulevard, will house the

Vegso Community Resource Center, named after Junior League member Anne Vegso and her husband, Peter.

The Vegsos contributed \$500,000 toward the cause, while Boca philanthropist and activist Countess Henrietta de Hoernle provided another gift of \$350,000.

"I've been very proud of the Junior League for many years," de Hoernle said. "I feel that this project is one of the most important ones being attempted, in terms of the

different things [the center] will be able to do for the community."

The resource center at the 5,500 square-foot facility will offer a family Caregiver Information program, an office for a professional social worker from The Children's Place at Home Safe, Inc., as well as meeting space for education and training programs.

But the center's highlight will be a specialized grant center library open to the public. It will connect area groups and

agencies to local, as well as international funding groups relevant to the group's needs, said League member Carole Putman, co-chair of the event and member of the Junior League's capital campaign committee.

The grant center would function as a satellite branch for the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin counties.

The Junior League currently leases offices at an industrial park on South

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Rogers Circle, said Pattie Damron, chairman of the group's capital campaign committee and league president from 1992 to 1993.

The studio will be demolished to make place for the new building, which will extend its borders northward to the adjoining lot also owned

by the league, Damron said.

The project is expected to cost \$2.5 million, including a \$750,000 endowment to help run the facility, Krebsbach said. The league has already raised \$1.5 million toward its goal.

Construction on the Vegso Community Resource Center is expected to be complete by the fall.