



New Braunfels Community Recreation Center
Attendees of the “topping out” ceremony on Thursday, June 15, 2017, sign a beam that will be part of the New Braunfels Community Recreation Center.

Topping out ceremony brings pride to New Braunfels officials, citizens

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Miles Smith | Posted: Friday, June 16, 2017 12:00 am

The city’s \$23.5 million community recreation center is officially a step closer to its February 2018 grand opening as of Thursday, when elected officials and New Braunfels business leaders gathered at the Landa Street construction site for the facility’s topping out ceremony.

In building construction parlance, “topping out” refers to a builders’ ritual traditionally held when the last beam is placed atop a structure. While no beams were raised at Thursday’s

ceremony, city officials and Texas State Sen. Donna Campbell beamed brightly as they lined up to sign the beam, which was propped up at waist height near the front of the unfinished building.

Community pride was palpable at the ceremony, where both Campbell and New Braunfels Mayor Barron Casteel referred to New Braunfels as the best city in the nation.

“I am excited to be a part of this — it’s my first time to get to see it,” Campbell said. “It’s going to be not only for individuals, but for families, and that’s the best thing we can do for our nation right now.

“When we talk about New Braunfels being the best city in the nation, this is the kind of stuff that makes us the best city — people having the facility to get children off the street and get families together in a safe, clean and energetic environment.

“And I’ve never signed a beam before, so I’m excited about that!”

Shortly before festivities gave way to the signing of the beam and a tour of the facility, New Braunfels Mayor Barron Casteel addressed the crowd, thanking former Mayor Gale Pospisil and current and former city council members for their contributions.

“Have y’all stepped into the gymnasium?” Casteel said. “It is impressive to stand here under the roof and I’m excited to be with y’all there in just a few minutes. This is just one small part of the 2013 bond package which is being brought to you, the citizens, under the same tax rate when you voted in the \$86 million bond package. I don’t know how that is possible, but I know it’s possible because we have greatest city in the nation and the strongest economy you could possibly have.”

“It’s just an exciting time to be in New Braunfels now, and it’s going to be even more pleasurable when this is open.”

The project includes two gymnasiums, two swimming pools, an elevated walking track and other amenities the city hopes will encourage use by families. It has been under construction since its Oct. 10 groundbreaking.

It is being built in partnership with the New Braunfels Industrial Development Corp., which dedicated \$5.8 million to the project and the New Braunfels Independent School District, which is spending \$2.2 million to construct and operate one of the pools, an eight-lane competition facility that will be used for swim meets.