

Tribune photos by Susan Lorenz

The dedication ceremony for the Bangor Community Health Center operated by the Migrant and Rural Community Health Association (MARCHA) took place Sunday. MARCHA board of directors members pictured above singing during the ceremony are, from left, Vera Webb, secretary; Sandra Avery, president; and Guillermo Martinez, treasurer. Billy Sandlin (right), director of the Office of Migrant Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington D.C., was the keynote speaker at the event.



New MARCHA center open

By SUSAN LORENZ
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BANGOR — "Somos el mundo. Somos los niños. We are the world. We are the children."

The singing was in Spanish and English Sunday at the dedication of the Bangor Community Health Center on Charles Street. A plaque dedicating the center to "the children" was unveiled at the ceremony by Sandra Avery, president of the board of directors of Migrant and Rural Community Health Association (MARCHA) which was organized in 1971 to provide health services to migrant and seasonal farm workers.

MARCHA provides primary

vices; and referrals to other sources. The center will be open all year and will charge two types of fees: a regular fee for patients earning an average income and a discounted fee based on income, family size and ability to pay.

Although MARCHA is a private, non-profit organization, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides some funding for the program. Billy Sandlin, director of the office of Migrant Health of the Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., was the keynote speaker at the event.

SANDLIN STRESSED THAT the center was for the entire community as well as for the migrant and seasonal workers. He said the

"We in Washington do not feel like we own any of this. We feel it is owned by the people of the community," he said. "It's a clinic for the total community to avail themselves of. The bulk of the work that has been done here has been done by the people of the community."

"This magnificent structure is the result of 14 years of continual dedication to our citizens," said Joseph Distefano, mayor-pro-tem of Bangor. "You see the results of private citizens, local government and staff cooperating with state and federal government."

"A dream we had for many years has come to fruition," Avery said. "When people put their hearts and