

July 8, 1950

TWO DUNKIRK MEN HONORED THURSDAY

Dunkirk VFW Honor Gene Mathewson And Lewis Douglas

On Friday evening, Sept. 20, Dunkirk Rite-Now Park 3816 Veterans of Foreign Wars paid a special Tribute to Gene Mathewson, owner of Strawberry Acres and Lewis Douglas local mail carrier. Mr. Mathewson and Mr. Douglas were presented VFW citations and medals for outstanding community service.

James Shuff post-commander acted as master of ceremonies and Jack Alge park quartermaster presented the citations and medals.

Rev. Lilly of the EUB church, Dunkirk gave the invocation for the services and Rev. Heacock of the Methodist church gave the benediction, after the presentation commander Shuff unveiled the trophy presented the post by the Dept. of Ohio Veterans of Foreign Wars for being seventh among Ohio's 448 posts in community service.

A Man's Dream Will Come True When Dunkirk's Park Dedication Is Held

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DUNKIRK, July 7—There's a dream of a quiet Dunkirk man about to come true when the new playground for the Dunkirk kiddies will be dedicated by Gov. Frank J. Lausche during the Dunkirk festival here from August 9 to 12.

The quiet chap is Lewis Douglas, a village mail carrier, who for many years has repeated the phrase "What Dunkirk needs is

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a playground for its kids." Now the village is assured of such ground, together with a baseball diamond with lights and everything and all because of Lewie.

It seems that "Lewie" hatched the idea that if each family in the community donated \$10 towards a playground fund, the project would be assured, so hopefully he started out, only to find that some years before someone had had a similar idea but after a collection, there was no playground.

"LEWIE" with a family of two boys and a girl, all practically grown, has a one-track mind. If a village of 150 families could be induced to contribute \$10 per family, his playground dream would become a reality.

Evenings and on Saturdays the letter carrier tried to put his idea of the playground over "Lewie" was weary but his heart was still stout.

Patience has its own reward and all at once the plan got underway. "Lewie" enlisted the aid of Pat Patterson, Dunkirk sign painter and barber, to paint the name of each \$10 donor on a sign to be displayed in the window of the Grand theater operated in Dunkirk by William "Bill" Day. It was plainly announced that if the plan did not go through all money would be refunded.

CAME THE DAY when passing citizens saw the names of 100 donors on the sign and noticed that Tom Patterson was buying more paint. Shaking itself "Like a bear in the spring," the community went into action. The idea was sold and "Lewie" devoted his idle moments to making cement blocks for the park, his lifelong dream.

Gene Mathewson, proprietor of "Strawberry Acres," got into the plan and told the park committee he would donate all the strawberries for a festival to boost the park, if the kids would pick the berries. The result was that each morning during the berry season several carloads of kids went to the Mathewson farm. The result was that 2,500 quarts of berries were picked for the festival and placed in lockers awaiting the event.

IT'LL BE A grand old time in Dunkirk from August 9 to 12. "Lewie" won't be on the speakers' stand with Governor Lausche at the dedication, for he's a quiet sort of man and will likely be standing among the crowd with his hands behind his back, a smile on his face and a bigger smile inside, for, you see, "Lewie's" dream is just about to come true.

There'll be plenty of attractions at the park festival. "Satchel" Paige, the celebrated baseball pitcher will be there, there will be an amateur talent contest and dozens of interesting events as the program is being developed for the big occasion.



Park In Hardin County Village Will Be Dedicated Next Month

Dunkirk Project Is Result Of One-Man Civic Betterment Program Begun By Mail Carrier

From The Blade Correspondent

DUNKIRK, O., July 11—A one-man civic betterment program will result in the dedication of a new park here Aug. 9 and a park festival Aug. 10, 11 and 12.

For years Lewis Douglass, Dunkirk rural letter carrier, cultivated the idea that the village needed a playground for the children.

Enlisted Aid Of Barber

Throughout a 10-year period, Mr. Douglass often passed the hat for \$10 bills and enlisted the aid of Pat Patterson, Dunkirk barber, to paint the name of each donor on a store window.

As the list grew to more than 100 names, Gene Mathewson, owner of Strawberry Acres, told Mr. Douglass that he could have

all the strawberries he could pick for the benefit. During the season, carloads of children were hauled to the farm to do their part.

Other civic organizations joined the cause as the campaign grew. One group donated a large shelter house, another several ovens and a flagpole.

New Lighting System

A new lighting system, with 36 units totaling 108,000 watts, will provide sufficient light for night baseball with double the requirements for softball games.

The park is located near the northeast edge of Dunkirk on land donated by Village Council and Dr. S. P. Churchill, formerly of Dunkirk. Merle Blue is festival chairman.