

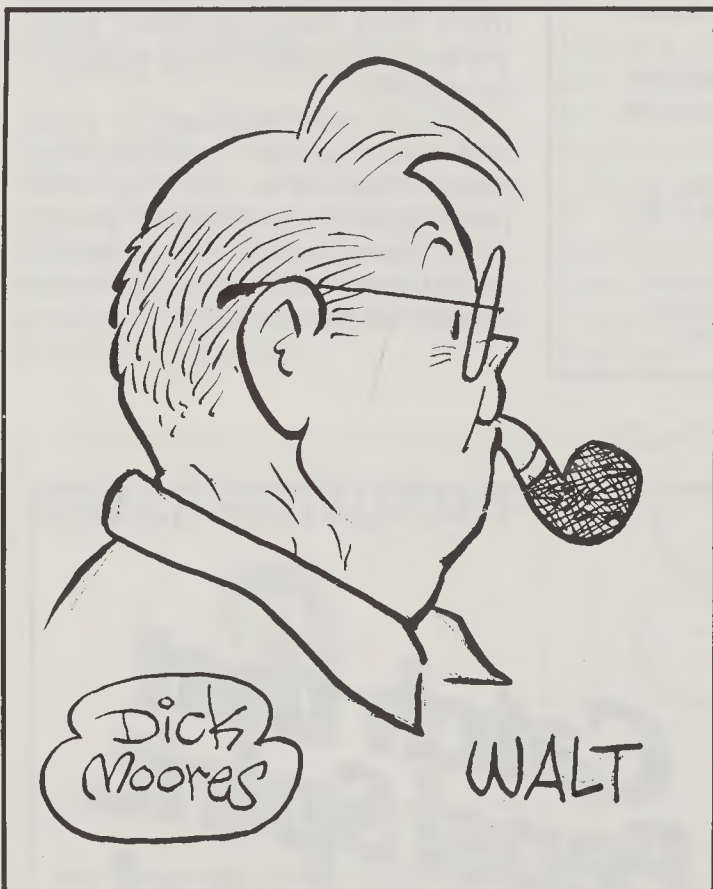
Write Up Gasoline Alley

Ever read the familiar cartoon "Gasoline Alley?" The master-mind behind the lines is 72-year-old Dick Moores of Ballard Creek Road in Fairview.

Moores is a tall man with chin-length white hair. He is a modest, easygoing person who has advanced from \$5 a week as letterer for another cartoonist in 1935, to selling his own strip to major papers worldwide.

"I wasn't very good at drawing, just mediocre, but I had this tremendous desire to become a cartoonist," he said. This "mediocre" artist received the Rueben Award for outstanding cartoonist in 1974.

My reception of this award was the culmination of a dream because it was presented to me by my peers, Moores said.



Moores has worked for Chester Gould of "Dick Tracey," Walt Disney, and Frank Keene, the originator of Gasoline Alley."

It was Moores' employment with Disney World that kept him from getting drafted in World War II. "Yep," he said, grinning, "I was kept out of the war because I could draw cartoons." He said the only money coming into Disney World was through our

by Janet Royster

cartoons and books. This money in turn paid for the training films that Walt Disney supplied to educate and entertain the soldiers.

"My cartoons are supposed to amuse people," Moores said. "A person reads all the terrible stuff in the front pages of a newspaper; he needs to turn over to the comics and find something lighter to ease his mind."

Moores studied art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Chicago. Soon after graduation he was employed as letterer for the cartoon "Dick Tracey." In 1942 Moores published his first strip "Jim Hardy" which later became "Windy and Paddles."

After these strips ran their course, Moores accepted an offer from Disney World. "In 1950 I started a television company that aired the first coast to coast cartoon show."

Frank Keene, the initiator of "Gasoline Alley," hired Moores in 1955 to do the lettering for this cartoon. After three years Moores took over the strip, and by 1960 he was doing it all.

Moores said, "I kept the strip alive by bringing in new characters that appealed to a variety of readers."

"I build characters by watching people and combining their personalities to form one person," he said. "I never use one person per se, through my son is similar to the character "Slim," and the Great Dane in the strip is like my daughter's dog was."

Moores is an avid dog lover. He is the owner of three frisky, ferocious Doberman Pinschers, one of which lay prone at our feet for the duration of the interview.

At 72, Moores works at home seven days a week to keep 10 weeks ahead in his daily strip; at this rate their seems no room for retirement.

Moores appeared perfectly content; snug and secure in his home perched on top of a secluded mountain with a spectacular view.

He is a perfect example of the "American Dream." He made his way to fame, successful in both career and family, retaining all the way a twinkle in his eye.