

Major Phases Of Recreation Project Are Completed

Assisted by a contribution of \$5,500 from the Fieldcrest Foundation, an extensive program to improve playground and recreational facilities in the Tri-Cities has been completed in its major phases.

The final big goal in the three-year program was the lighting of the baseball field at Douglass High School and this has now been achieved.

In a dedication ceremony attended by more than 650 persons, John G. Cunningham, president of Consolidated Central YMCA, presented the keys to the lights to Robert Broadnax, president of the Henry Street YMCA.

J. D. Womble, principal of Douglass High School, responded by expressing appreciation to the YMCA Special Playground Committee, headed by H. E. Williams, of Fieldcrest; to the local industries, Harold W. Whitcomb, of Fieldcrest; Karl Bishopric, of Spray Cotton Mills, Bransford Edwards of Edwards Super Market and many other generous individuals throughout the Tri-Cities.

President Whitcomb officially turned on the lights, after which he congratulated all those who had a part in making the new facility possible.

A prayer of dedication was given by the Rev. J. K. McConnell. Dr. Gordon Clarke, chairman of the Leaksville Township School Board, tossed in the first ball.

C. J. Frank, Jr., director of industrial relations at Fieldcrest, assisted with the arrangements for the program. Playground director Herbert Spruill announced the teams and their managers to play during the evening.

When the Fieldcrest Foundation contributed \$5,500, it was agreed that the money would be used to match donations in money, time and materials by other organizations.

Y's Men Take Lead

Under the leadership of the Leaksville-Spray Y's Men's Club which took a strong lead in the project, a large number of community organizations and individuals cooperated.

In addition to the Y's Men's Club, Consolidated Central YMCA, Draper YMCA, Henry Street YMCA, and the Boys Club, those cooperating included Fieldcrest and other industries, merchants and other business firms, the town boards of Leaksville, Spray and Draper, the Tri-City Community Fund, the Leaksville Township School Board, the Century Club of the Tri-City Chamber of Commerce, the Tri-City Junior Chamber of Commerce and a large number of interested individuals.

Principal features of the improvement program were the renovation of existing softball fields and the addition of others. As a result, there are now 14 playing fields as compared with only three at the start of the improvement program in May, 1960.

The work included improvements in lighting, rebuilding of stands, the erection of backstops and dugouts, drinking fountains, new grading of fields and improvement of parking facilities.



In dedication ceremony, President Harold W. Whitcomb turns on lights for new lighted baseball field at Douglass High School. In center is John Cunningham, YMCA president, and at right is J. D. Womble, Douglass High principal.



Henry Street YMCA Committee on Lights raised \$1,000 toward cost of ball field improvements. Committee members shown, from left, are J. D. Womble, Herbert Spruill, H. L. Lassiter, Edgar Martin, Louis Broadnax and Robert Broadnax.

Children's playground equipment for Jamestown was secured through the Henry Street YMCA. A contribution by the Jaycees made possible the lighting of the tennis courts at the Leaksville-Spray Junior High School.

A major step in the program was the opening in May, 1962, of the Duke Power softball field which was made available to the YMCA by the Dan River Steam Station of Duke Power Company. The field was renovated, lights installed and a fence erected.

With the improvements in the physical facilities and in the leadership and supervision of the playground and recreation program, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of persons participating in the activities as well as in the number of spectators.

The Duke Power field was the scene of the district and state slow pitch softball tournaments last summer under sponsorship of the Leaksville-Spray Y's Men's Club.

The district tournament will again be held at the Duke Power Field Thursday, Friday and Saturday, August 1, 2 and 3, and the state tournament will be held there later in August.

The over-all project has demonstrated the success a community may attain when there is a spirit of achievement and a willingness to work together.