

Mooseheart Stadium and Fieldhouse Will Become Ohio Moose Sports Complex After \$3 Million Renovation Ohio State Moose Association to fund project, which begins May 24

MOOSEHEART, IL, May 10 -- When first opened in 1940, Mooseheart's football stadium was one of the jewels in the campus' architecture, marrying Art Deco features with function in a graceful concrete edifice that featured not only seating for 3,500 and two pressboxes, but a 12,000 square foot concourse, refreshment stands, locker rooms and rest rooms beneath those bleachers.

The facility was further enhanced in 1963 with the completion, to the west, of the adjoining Fieldhouse, a 24,000-sq.-ft. gem that featured bleacher seating for nearly 1,500 and auditorium-style seating for nearly 4,000, and enough space to host not only Mooseheart events but also functions associated with the annual International Moose Convention and several area events.

Some 70 years and 47 years, respectively, after their completions, both the stadium and the Fieldhouse are in need of an overhaul -- and, thanks to the Ohio State Moose Association, they are about to get a big one.

Starting May 24, the Stadium/Fieldhouse complex will be the site of a \$3 million makeover, that, among many other components, will replace all seating bleachers in both facilities, fix broken concrete, improve air conditioning, heating systems, electrical and plumbing and install a new artificial-turf playing field at the stadium. Parking lot upgrades and landscaping will complement the project.

"It's a project that's big in scope, but it affects all the kids at Mooseheart at every age level," Mooseheart Executive Director Scott Hart said. "Whether they are in the stands cheering on a team or competing for the middle school or high school athletic teams - or attending or participating in Commencement or the many Moose association state days -- it all happens in the Fieldhouse or the stadium. Even though it sits on the outskirts of the campus -- other than the school or the church, it is the heart of the community."

The project is the single-largest in dollar value to be undertaken at Mooseheart since the 1948-50 construction of the House of God non-denominational worship facility. In terms of actual dollars spent, the \$3 million is the most spent on one project at Mooseheart since its 1913 founding.

The original stadium cost \$73,000 to build in 1940; the Fieldhouse cost \$600,000 when it opened in 1963, in time for Mooseheart's 50th anniversary.

However, adjusting for inflation, the original Stadium/Fieldhouse complex cost \$5.3 million, making it second only to the House of God -- which, though a \$2.1 million project in 1950, would have come in at a whopping \$18 million in today's dollars.

"This is the most visible portion of the campus to people driving past on Route 31," Mooseheart Director of Facilities Keith Strutz said. "But what we want to do is have people who normally drive by and say, 'Oh Mooseheart, they must have football there', become more engaged in more activities on the new field and in the Fieldhouse."

Initial work on the project is set to begin May 24, the Monday following Mooseheart Class of 2010 Commencement Exercises on Saturday morning, May 22 in the Fieldhouse. The project's work is scheduled to be completed before the football team's Saturday, Sept. 11 home opener against Luther North.

"I can't wait for the first part of demolition to start," Hart said. Ultimately, he said, "it's going to look outstanding and it will allow Mooseheart to interact more with the local community, whether through sports tournament competitions or concerts in our Fieldhouse or other activities. And we will be able to do it in an environment that will be pleasing to the eye."

The architect for the project is Joel Hestrup of Hestrup & Associates Architects, Inc. of St. Charles. Hestrup has been involved in a number of projects at Mooseheart, and he is aware of the quality of these buildings.

"They were built great," Hestrup said. "When the Fieldhouse was built, precast concrete wasn't used that much. You won't see facilities like this at any high school stadium. It's still in good shape."

The mechanical engineering firm on the project is Metro Design Associates of Elgin, IL. Replacement of the basketball bleachers will reduce capacity somewhat, from 1,460 to 1,352. But aisle width will increase from 3 feet to 4.5 feet, and the seats will be slightly contoured to improve comfort. Additionally, the Fieldhouse floor will be painted to cover the unused indoor track, and new motorized winches will be installed for all baskets. The wooden floor used for basketball and volleyball will also be refinished.

Additionally, the precast concrete panels on the building have, over time, lost protection from the caulking that initially sealed them, so a recaulking is also scheduled. L.J. Morse Construction of Aurora, IL will handle the work inside the Fieldhouse as well as the bleacher upgrade to the stadium and all mechanical systems work in the Fieldhouse.

There are some "Green" elements as well. The Fieldhouse and Stadium roofs will be replaced with a white reflective and modified roofing system as opposed to its existing black, to ease air-conditioning load. And, roughly half of the existing glass block windows, which are currently all painted red, will be stripped and cleaned to allow in natural light.

"Even though most of the focus is on the stadium, the (Fieldhouse) is going up five levels over what it is now," Hart said. "It's already a great facility. We had the opportunity to host a high school girls sectional (IHSA basketball tournament) and a boys regional this year, and we feel the opportunity for Mooseheart to host future tournaments is a very real possibility."

The exterior stadium is to see significant changes inside and out. As with the Fieldhouse, all existing bleachers (currently fiberglass) will be removed and replaced with modern aluminum.. Again, with wider aisles, this will reduce capacity, from 3,212 to 3,076. The stairwells which currently allow fans to exit the grandstand directly onto the track will be removed and the entire concrete wall at the base of the grandstand will receive a brick facing. All concrete in the grandstand will be repaired and sealed. Railings will be introduced throughout the seating area.

The area beneath the stadium is to see nearly as dramatic a series of improvements. The home locker room will receive new lockers and other improvements while the visiting locker room will also receive a more modest upgrade. Rest rooms will receive new toilets and new partitions for all bathroom stalls.

Two new locker rooms will be built into the concourse area, allowing the facility to accommodate

four-team competitions without overcrowding the current locker rooms. These will be built so as to not affect the concession area underneath the stadium, which will receive a new four-color tiled floor.

In addition to the bleachers, the most visible exterior change will be the switch to artificial turf, installed by local representatives of FieldTurf, based in Montreal. This new surface should not only resolve field drainage problems, it will furnish a consistent-quality surface, regardless of a rainy or dry autumn. The field will be lined for both football and soccer, with additional markings allowing for lining for either rugby or lacrosse. Eric Mancke of Cemcon, Ltd. is the civil engineer on this project for all exterior work. G.A. Blocker Grading Contractor of Oswego, IL is to perform all work for the preparation of the field in preparation for the installment of the FieldTurf surface.

The track surrounding the field is to be repaired and resurfaced, with that work to be done by Track Surfaces Co. of St. Charles.

"We're going to be able to potentially host everything from junior football to high school level lacrosse and boys and girls rugby and all levels of football or boys and girls soccer," Hart said. "We're talking about a field that is multi-purpose, even to the point of being able to use it for marching band practices or competitions."

Environmentally friendly elements to the stadium portion of the project include an on-demand water heater to replace the aging water tank currently beneath the stands. Installing FieldTurf is, in its own way environmentally-friendly as well. It uses recycled rubber pellets as in-fill which keeps the blades of plastic grass upright. Mooseheart will also no longer have to water, fertilize or burn gasoline to cut the grass on that field or paint field lines before every game.

The last major enhancement to the fieldhouse and stadium was the \$176,000 renovation in 2006 of the Otto Meyers Foyer between the two structures. There will be ceiling work done in that foyer, but otherwise that portion of the structure will remain untouched.

Mooseheart Child City & School is a 1,000-acre community and school for children and teens in need of a secure home, located just south of Batavia, IL, between Illinois Route 31 and Randall Road.

Founded in 1913, Mooseheart is supported completely through private donations - the great majority of which come from the 1.1 million men and women of the Moose fraternal organization, in roughly 1,800 Lodges and 1,600 Chapters located throughout the U.S., Canada, Great Britain and Bermuda. Moose International headquarters is located on the Mooseheart campus.

Since its founding, Mooseheart has operated a complete, accredited kindergarten-through-high-school academic program, plus art, music, vocational training and interscholastic sports. It is an extremely nurturing and student-tailored program, with an average student-teacher ratio of 12-1.

Mooseheart students who complete their studies with a 3.0 GPA or better (4.0=A) are eligible for up to five years of annually renewable scholarship funding, covering tuition, room and board in an amount comparable to that required for an in-state student at an Illinois public university.

Mooseheart is currently home to nearly 230 students, ranging in age from preschoolers to high school seniors. Applications for admission to Mooseheart are considered from any family whose children are, for whatever reason, lacking a stable home environment. Mooseheart boasts its own U.S. Post Office and a fully functioning branch of Fifth Third Bank.

In addition to Mooseheart, Moose International also supports Moosehaven, a 70-acre retirement community near Jacksonville, FL founded in 1922; and conducts more than \$90 million worth of community service programs annually.