

# Riverfront

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1998

THE DECATUR DAILY

## Park board sets Owens hours

**By Ronnie Thomas**  
DAILY Staff Writer

OAKVILLE — The Jesse Owens Museum is officially open for business.

Henry Buchanan, chairman of the Jesse Owens Memorial Park board, announced the year-round schedule and admission prices today.

The museum will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

The facility will be open Memorial Day from 1 to 3 p.m. and on two other holidays, Labor Day and the Fourth of July. It will be closed Christmas Day, Thanksgiving Day and New Year's Day, and normally closed each Monday for cleaning and maintenance.

The fees are:

▶ Adults, \$5

▶ Adult groups of 10 or more, \$2 each

▶ Senior citizens, \$4

▶ Youths 6 to 18, \$3

▶ Students and youth groups of 10 or more, \$2 each

All other park facilities are free for public view and use, including the visitors center, the Jesse Owens Olympic sculpture, his home, picnic and walking areas, the basketball court and ball field.

Buchanan said all groups are encouraged to make reservations and may do so by phoning (256) 974-3636 or (256) 974-2464.

The visitors center is open daily but Monday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Sunday afternoon from 1 to 4.

James Pinion, who, along with Buchanan and Therman White, has been instrumental in the park's development, said calculations reveal that the museum's operation costs are \$10 per hour when it is open.

"The cost includes utilities and maintenance, and someone to be there

at minimum wage," Pinion said. "Our primary purpose from the start has been to perpetuate the memory of Owens, who was born here, and to have the museum open to the public for use as a learning center.

"As so many of us know, or will know from touring the museum, Jesse Owens was so much more than a track star who stood down Adolf Hitler by winning four gold medals in the 1936 Berlin Games. He was one of America's greatest humanitarians and goodwill ambassadors. And for the first nine years of his life, he lived in a sharecropper's shanty in Lawrence County."

Pinion said that during dedication of the museum Saturday, the souvenir shop took in over \$600 and that about \$85 was dropped into the donation box.

All funds collected go toward the utilities, maintenance and improvements of the museum and park.