



Advertiser photo by Luke Slaton from airplane courtesy of Tennessee Valley Aero

Jesse Owens Park at Oakville will be the scene of a lot of activity today and Thursday as Owens' daughters join volun-

teers from Hampton Inns doing renovations. The project is part of the hotel company's Save a Landmark program.

Jesse Owens' daughters to aid in facelift

Museum, park gets big boost by Hampton Inns

By Luke Slaton
Editor

Over a dozen volunteer workers from Hampton Inns will be at Jesse Owens Park and Museum in Oakville Wednesday and Thursday painting, landscaping and cleaning.

They will be joined by the three daughters of the park's

namesake. Gloria Hemphill, Marlene Rankin and Beverly Prather, all of Chicago, are flying in today to join the effort.

But the volunteer work is the tip of the iceberg, according to Jesse Owens Park board treasurer James Pinion.

"The Hampton Inns Save-a-Landmark program will present us a check for \$38,240," Pinion said.

Pinion applied for the program after Rankin called him to alert him to its existence.

"I made a long list of what we need and they approved everything on the list," Pinion said.

Most of the volunteer workers are Hampton Inn employees.

The grant money from the program was used to hire contractors for much of the painting, landscaping and cleaning, but each contractor left work for the volunteers to do, which increases their involvement while reducing direct costs.

Pinion said volunteers will complete the painting of the visitor's center near the park entrance. The job was begun by a contractor.

A new sign at the park entrance will also be completed.

Other volunteers will work with power sprayers to clean red mud off the lower exterior of the main museum building. Mulch and landscaping around the building will help prevent a recurrence of the mud.

The bronze statue of Owens that overlooks the park will be cleaned and polished.

Some repair work will be done on the replica of the home where Owens was born.

Owens, who gained fame by winning five gold medals in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, was born near the present site of the museum. He lived in the Oakville area until he moved with his family to Cleveland when he was nine.

Pinion said the project will be a big boost for the park and museum. He said television crews will record the work for national broadcast.

"The exposure the museum will get will be priceless," Pinion added.

"This project will show an immediate improvement in the park," Pinion explained. "It is really going to look good when we're finished. I'm tickled to death they chose us for this project."

Local volunteers Joyce and Curtis Cole will spearhead feeding the Hampton Inn volunteers while they are working on the project.

"It will mean a lot to have Jesse Owens' daughters here helping with the project," Pinion added.