

Dicus Facility Becoming A Reality

Written by Mike Kelly

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Patti Turner and Marty Lambert aren't easily discouraged. On the contrary, the tougher thing gets, the more appealing it becomes to those two. Take the Will Dicus Indoor Training Facility project these two have strongly pushed the last two years. It's a facility named after a wonderful young man that left us way too soon; and it's a valuable tool that will benefit

both the Watauga High baseball and softball programs for years to come.

"The weather in Boone can really be a challenge in the spring, Lambert said at the media blowout he organized last Friday at the WHS Media Center. "This will allow our players to work around the weather in our region of the state. In the long run this facility will be a huge benefit to our players."

A nice thought by a gracious group of people willing to donate their efforts and time to such a project. But such a project also includes a cost, and this one has a price tag somewhere between \$120,000-\$140,000. Such a figure would strongly stop someone dead in their tracks. Unless, you're Marty Lambert and Patti Turner.

And those two, with the help of many, including the Will Dicus Memorial Baseball Tournament, have more than \$45,000 in their bank account over a two-year period---a very encouraging sign.

"And we could possibly have the building erected by the end of this year," Turner said. "We have enough funds that we can have it ordered."

And the Friends of WHS Baseball and Softball received a huge shot in the arm last Friday, when Bill Dicus presented the group with a \$7,000 check earned from the Will Dicus Tournament last summer.

"And the rain cost us a day, or the total could have been even higher," Lambert said. "But we're making progress, and that's what matters the most."

And Lambert and Turner, always searching for ways to succeed, have added other avenues of revenue that they feel will benefit the project that much more. They've added a men's softball tournament and a benefit 5k Will Dicus run that will be held sometime in August.

"Our goal is to raise \$15,000 this year," Lambert said. "And if the weather cooperates, and all goes as planned, I'm confident we can get this accomplished."

Another plus has been Turner's tireless effort of selling memorial bricks that will be engraved with donor's names for \$100 apiece concerning the project. The goal is to sell 200 bricks, and so far, Turner has sold 165. The group has even gotten McDonald's to sponsor the visitor's dugout at the baseball field, and the home dugout will be sponsored by anonymous advertiser that will be revealed at a dedication later this year. The group is still working on possible sponsors for the dugouts at the softball complex.

The building will be a 5,000-foot facility, and it will be located right behind the left-field fence of the women's softball field. And the facility has received the approval of the Watauga County Board of Education, the Watauga County Commissioners and the Boone Town Council.

"It's been a lot work, but it's well worth it.," Lambert said. "We still have a ways to go, but things are starting to come together."

For more information, or if you would like to make a contribution, you may contact Marty Lambert at mlambert@chemi-con.com .

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