

Dorwood's Safety Village set for 38th unveiling

Kids' safety school started in 1965

For five weeks, starting June 9, a familiar event will return to Orchard Park School as preschoolers get behind the wheel for Safety Village.

The Dorwood Optimist Club founded Safety Village in 1965, making it the second-oldest of its kind in the state of Ohio. The "Village" was first located at Ernst School on Marshall Road, then moved to its present site in 1979.

Jerry Barnett had been the chairman of the project for 20 years while Bellbrook Fence Company has been volunteering its service by erecting the fence that encloses the village. Members of Dorwood set up the village and refurbish it as the need arises.

In its history, over 16,000 preschool children have been a part of the safety village program, which has both morning and afternoon sessions. Many of the children's parents have been participants in the program when they were preschoolers.

In 1975, Billie DeBrosse, safety coordinator for the City of Kettering, worked closely with Dorwood Optimists to develop the Safety Village program which eventually became a nationwide model. DeBrosse was also instrumental in the wide use of safety belts on a national scale. According to the Dorwood Optimists, if



there's one thing that defines DeBrosse, it is that "she finds a way to get things done."

The public is invited to stop and visit the Dorwood Safety Village, which includes a church,

school, gas station, library and other buildings, and get the opportunity to see a preschooler driving his car, obeying all the safety rules and stopping for a working, regulation traffic light.