

Arthur Godfrey Gives Lights To Gillespie County Airport

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County received an unexpected and appreciated Christmas gift

on Thursday of last week, when one of the nation's top air enthusiasts and leaders in the entertainment world presented a gift to the Gillespie County Airport.

The airport is also used extensively during the hunting season, during the time of the Gillespie Fair and other entertainments events in the city and for emergency flights of medicine as well as chartered flights of various types.

The county, city and Chamber of Commerce are drafting resolutions of appreciation to Godfrey for his interest in the city, as evidenced by the gift of the landing field lights.

Arthur Godfrey, famed CBS radio and television star, through his friend, U. S. Sen. Lyndon Johnson, presented the community the gift of an air strip lighting system for the airport.

Godfrey wasn't able to be here personally to make the presentation, but sent the lighting system to Senator Johnson's home near Stonewall, where the Senator Thursday morning presented the system to County Judge Victor Sagebiel and Fredericksburg's Mayor Wm. Schroeder.

Godfrey sent a telegram in which he expressed his delight with this section of the state, which he visited for the first time when he was a guest of the senator last October.

Gift of the lights were a result of Godfrey's visit, when he flew his personal plane down, arrived late in the evening and had to land in Austin, since no night landing facilities were available here.

County Judge Sagebiel accepted the gift of the system on behalf of the county and said installation of the system would improve facilities at the airport and make it available for wider use.

Mayor Schroeder, himself a licensed pilot, stated the city would cooperate with the county in making the installation of the lights along the 3,000 foot runway.

Felix Wilke, head of the city's utility system, is supervising installation of the lights with this work getting underway on Wednesday. It was estimated several days would be required to install the lighting system.

Plans for operation of the lights are to be worked out by the city and county and their use in the future will no longer make it necessary for caravans of autos to line the field for emergency landings at night.

The airport is located three miles south of the city, where it was built through a county bond issue in 1948. A beacon light was installed at the field several years ago, but the night landing lights were lacking.

Heavy traffic has been flowing in and out of the airport during the past several months, with many of the nation's top governmental and political leaders using it for visits to Senator Johnson.



REPORT LIGHTS — Lights for the Gillespie County Airport were donated this past week by Arthur Godfrey, prominent radio and television star. They were presented through his good friend, Sen. Lyndon Johnson, center. Receiving the lights were County Judge Victor Sagebiel, left, and Mayor William Schroeder, right. The lights were installed Wednesday. —Staff photo



LANDING FIELD LIGHTS for the Gillespie County airport are inspected by County Judge Victor Sagebiel, Senator Lyndon Johnson and Mayor Wm. Schroeder, before the Senator turned them over to the county and city for installation at the Gillespie Airport. They were given by Arthur Godfrey, CBS Radio and Television star, who sent them to his friend, Sen. Johnson, to be turned over to the community.—Standard Photo Engraving