



Press Release: Immediate

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Harding Presidential sites

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Mathews Auto Group is major donor for Harding Presidential Library

Mathews Auto Group donated \$200,000 to help build the Warren G. Harding Presidential Library & Museum and was recognized as a major donor during September dedication events.

Mathew Auto Group encompasses 11 dealerships – Mathews Ford, Mathews Honda, Mathews Acura, Mathews Hyundai, Mathews Dodge Jeep Ram, and Mathews Budget Center in Marion; Mathews Ford in Newark; Mathews Ford in Sandusky; Mathews Ford in Oregon; Mathews Dodge Jeep Ram in Mt. Vernon; and Mathews Chevrolet Buick in Bucyrus.

“We understood how the Harding project was going to help Marion, and we wanted to be a part of it,” said Tom Mathews, Marion attorney and one of the businesses’ owners. “Marion has been very good to us for many years, and we want to pay back the community. Our involvement also gives us a chance to honor my mother, Rose Mathews, and the memory of my father, Thurman Mathews.” Thurman Mathews, patriarch of the Mathews family, passed away Dec. 26, 2017. Besides Tom, the family-run dealerships include brothers and owners Bob of Sandusky; Tim of Oregon; and Mike of Oak Harbor. Tom Weston of Marion also is an owner.

“We are very excited to be partnering with the Ohio History Connection in this project,” said Tom Weston, general manager and one of the owners of Mathews Dodge Jeep Ram in Marion. “This is a significant step forward for Marion. Telling the story of President Harding to its fullest is a ‘must’ for Marion.”

The Harding project called for restoration of the Harding Home, grounds and Press House to their 1920 appearances, the year that Sen. Warren Harding staged American history’s last front porch campaign and subsequent election victory. The other portion of the project was construction of the Warren G. Harding Presidential Library & Museum. The restored Home and new presidential library opened to the public in May.

“We at the Ohio History Connection are grateful for this significant donation from the Mathews Auto Group,” said OHC Executive Director Burt Logan. “We are well aware of the presence of the Mathews name in the Marion area and throughout central and northern Ohio and are happy to welcome them aboard in this wonderful project.”

The presidential center includes an exhibits gallery to allow visitors to learn about Warren and Florence Harding’s early lives; Warren’s career as publisher of *The Marion Daily Star* and his entry into politics; the mechanics of the 1920 presidential campaign; the issues faced by the Harding Administration and how it dealt with them; the Hardings’ lives in the White House; Harding’s premature death while in office; and his legacy. The stories are told in many different ways, using interactive features, historic newsreel film, historic objects, the Hardings’ personal letters and other evidence from the Harding Presidential Papers. An exhibit about the president’s trip to the western states, Canada and Alaska in 1923 acknowledges Mathews Auto Group.

A versatile event space provides areas for public programs, children’s programs and school groups, temporary exhibits and the annual Warren G. Harding Symposium. The Harding Presidential Papers also will be moved to Marion from their 60-year-old home at the Ohio History Center in Columbus to allow students, authors and historians access at the presidential site.

The Harding Presidential Sites, which include the Harding Home, Harding Memorial presidential gravesite and the new presidential library, are owned by the State of Ohio and are under the care of the Ohio History Connection.