

Theatre

From Page 1

development board.

The Lund Theatre didn't stand alone in facing the same dilemma, Petersen explained.

"The film companies were going to cease making 35mm prints," he said. "It started getting incrementally harder to get 35mm prints, and some (theaters) stopped (their operations) altogether."

However, Petersen and other area residents decided they couldn't allow the lights to go out on the Lund Theatre. The local development corporation, known as SVEN (Strengthening Viborg's Economy Now), conducted a feasibility study to determine if the movie house could remain a viable business.

"Emotionally, everybody wanted it," he said. "We formed a committee that spent a lot of time and work exploring it. The committee determined there was overwhelming support (for retaining the theater), not only in Viborg but from the entire region."

The Lund Theatre runs its shows at 7:30 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays, Petersen noted. But the cinema offers more than entertainment, as it provides economic development, he added.

"We feel it's a very vital part of our Main Street. When people come to the movies, they also go to one of our restaurants for supper. They pick up some groceries, fill up with a tank of gas, or they may stop at the hardware store and other businesses in town. It creates more income for those businesses."

Volunteers and financial support have come not only from among Viborg's 800 residents but from area communities, Petersen pointed out.

"We had fundraisers, and we had capital campaigns. In about four months, we raised a little over \$150,000 to support the movie theater, and another \$12,000 has come in since then," he said.

"The development corporation purchased the building, then we sold it to the city for \$1. The reason for the \$1 sale, we couldn't do this project unless we had the city's insurance. It's a lot more affordable than private insurance."

While the city owns the theater for insurance purposes, the theater board was formed to operate and manage the theater and its maintenance. The theater board also recruits volunteers to work on movie nights and at other times.

"We are constantly looking for volunteers. We have a good base of support, but we can always use more people," he said. "The more people we have, the easier it is to fit them into a schedule. They may need to work only once every month or two. As they say, many hands make light work."

The 11-member theater

board is divided into committees for bookings, advertisements, concessions and supplies, and maintenance, Petersen said.

"We still have our normal board of directors to oversee the entire operation," he said. "We've got to make sure that we're getting all the things done and we're not overlapping anyone."

While initially faced with a daunting task, the theater board immediately received good news, Petersen said.

"We originally estimated it would be \$75,000 to \$80,000 for the projector," he said. "We were able to pick up a second-generation used projector, with the new warranty, for \$55,000, so that was a big advantage."

The projector may not be new, but it offers a high-quality digital picture and Dolby sound system, Petersen said.

"It's working really well, and people are pleased," he said. "It's like watching HD (high definition) at home on your TV or home theater system. And you have the surround sound with the Dolby system."

Before installing the new projector, the board ordered an assessment of the building's electrical system, Petersen said. The findings provided another pleasant surprise.

"We had to rewire the building to accommodate the projector. But the old equipment required three-phase power, and we only need single-phase power with the new projector," he said. "We have updated all the wiring, and it has gotten us all up to code. With the new projector on single-phase power, it will actually give us a cheaper electrical rate."

The board has also undertaken renovation of the lobby and other areas, Petersen said. Thanks to donated materials and professionals' time, the board was able to cover the entire cost. The theater has also received new heating and air conditioning, all paid for.

"We had to replace the popcorn machine, that would have cost \$2,000, and even that was donated," he said.

The next project calls for restoration of the marquee out front, which requires some new glass panels and work with the neon, he said. The board also plans more interior renovations and work with the wall boards and sound boards.

The theater effort has rolled forward thanks to the generous donations of time, talent and materials from SVEN members and the general public, Petersen said.

"We have received a lot of little gifts, and a couple of larger gifts," he said. "We have had one donation for \$10,000 and one for \$5,000, and we have had a five-year pledge of \$21,000. Otherwise, it's been anywhere from \$25 to \$1,000 pledges. People are just giving what they can. It really goes to show, when everyone gives, it doesn't have to be a major gift."

The theater board has accomplished its goals with no

outstanding debt, Petersen said.

"I just came from a development meeting (this week)," he said. "I was very pleased to tell them that people have been very faithful with their pledges, and

they are continuing to come in."

The Lund Theatre has survived because people believe in it and want it to succeed, Petersen said.

"We are seeing people at the theater that we haven't

seen before," he said. "This is important not only to Viborg but to the entire region."

For more information about the Lund, check out its Facebook page or visit

online at www.lund-theatre.com.

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at twitter.com/RDockendorf. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

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President Signs Minuteman Law For Visitor Center

INTERIOR (AP) — President Barack Obama has signed into law legislation that clears the way for a new visitor center at the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site at Interior.

The new 7,300-square-foot center will house displays, a theater, retail space and the park's administrative offices.

It's scheduled to open in November 2014.

The Minuteman Missile National Historic Site was established in 1999 to commemorate the history and significance of the Cold War. The site preserves the last remained Minuteman II missile system in the country.

South Dakota's three members of Congress say the law will transfer about 29 acres of National Forest Service land to the National Park Service.

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