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Press Release

Keystone Theatre Suffers Extensive Flood Damage

The Keystone Theatre in Towanda, owned and operated by the Bradford County Regional Arts Council, sustained extensive damage during the recent flood.

“The lower level of the Keystone, which includes the Rehearsal Hall, Board Room, a small office, and the dressing rooms, had approximately 4-5 feet of water,” stated BCRAC Executive Director Brooks Eldredge-Martin. “All the rooms will need to be gutted and refurbished. But it could have been much worse. Once it became clear how high the water levels might go, staff and volunteers worked to get as many things out of that level as possible.”

The items removed from the basement were placed in the theatre lobbies on the street level, where the water did not reach. Due to the extent of the damage and the displaced items in the lobby, the theatre has been shut down temporarily. Preliminary estimates put the damage at about \$75,000, depending on final elevator and furnace repair costs.

“We’re happy to report that, due to the overwhelming support of staff and volunteers, the new cinema will re-open for movies on Friday, September 16,” said Elaine Poost, BCRAC Associate Director. “The needed clean-up and repairs are getting underway in the lower level and we’ve been able to clean up the newer lobby enough that we can re-open that side for movies. The historic portion of the theatre will remain closed until early November, as planned, for previously scheduled renovations.”

Support is still needed. Those wishing to help can make monetary donations to the BCRAC (a 501(c)3 organization, so donations are tax-deductible) through straight donations or by purchasing a brick in the new brick plaza. Volunteers are also still needed.

“We’re currently looking for individuals or groups to sign up for a painting bee,” said Poost. “We have 10-11 rooms in the basement level that will need to be painted once the new sheetrock goes up. We’d love to

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have 10-11 community or service groups sign up to come out and spend an afternoon painting. With that many groups helping, we should be able to get it all down in a couple hours. Our tentative date is Saturday, September 24th – as long as the sheetrock is up and ready to go.”

Those interested in volunteering to paint, should contact the BCRAC at 570-268-ARTS (2787).

The Sayre and Rialto Theatres both sustained some water in the basements, but nothing major. The Sayre Theatre will host a Valley Rally on Saturday, September 17 being sponsored by the Kiwanis, The Choice and The Bridge of Penn-York. People are asked to bring cash donations to the Theatre between 9am and Noon to help support the clean-up efforts. They will also be accepting donations of household and other items as well.

The Bradford County Regional Arts Council (BCRAC) is an arts service organization committed to supporting arts and culture throughout the region. For more information, visit BCRAC online at www.bcrac.org or www.facebook.com/BCRAC.

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Photo Captions:

BCRAC_pickett.jpg

Representative Tina Pickett stopped by the Keystone Theatre on Friday, September 9th to check on the theatre's status and to offer words of encouragement and support, “The passion and dedication of volunteers was striking...also the range of generations.”