

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Articles prior to December 5, 2018

Strand Theatre Weekly Email: September 25, 2008

Written by David on September, 25 2008

Winter weather will be upon us. The Strand is being proactive in the steps necessary to prepare for the cold. We learned many things earlier this year when we opened in January. One of the biggest items learned was the cost to heat our theatre. We only had heat for part of January, so that wasn't a fair assessment. February, March and April were a different matter entirely....it cost a bunch!

To help ourselves we have all sorts of small projects and procedures that should ease the pain at the gas pump, or gas meter as it were. The first item we have started to tackle is the weather sealing of the exterior doors. Our front doors are very old, and just don't seal all that well. Weather stripping is being installed on all our exterior doors, and we will make them as tight as possible. Another improvement is the second floor windows. Although they have been covered by plywood for decades, they were broken and ill fitting. The rebuilding lead by Steve F. had solved those problems. By the time the cold weather hits, we should have more windows done. When the wind would blow, we could feel the breeze coming through that plywood! That will be a thing for the past.

The backstage area last heating season wasn't done. We now have fire-rated curtains that close off the backstage from the draft of the exit doors. We can also isolate the back stage area from the heated auditorium. In addition we have rebuilt the bathroom back stage. To accomplish this required re-mortaring the rear wall. This west wall is exposed to the cold of the outside, so the whole area should be warmer. The last project is to seal off our basement. There is an area that extends under the alley. This is draft city. Soon it will be sealed and secure.

We have learned allot about how to set our thermostats, and how quickly it takes to heat (or cool) the theatre. The temperature isn't the only thing that we monitor. The balcony seats are metal. If they are cold in the heating season, the patrons will feel cold, even if the air temperature is OK. We allow time to not only heat the air of the theatre, but also the mass of the auditorium. Having warm walls and floors helps keep the heat nice and even during a performance. We still have a bit of the learning curve ahead of us with this issue, but it will only get better over time. Our heaters also breath a mix of inside and outside air. We always have fresh air entering the theatre ventilation system. This is something that we can adjust. Bob S. will be busy minimizing the amount of fresh air needed during the winter season. We found this is especially important when performance time temperatures are less than 10°.

The best solution for the heating season is to have the Strand jumpin' and jivin' with great performances on our stage! That is the ultimate goal. 450 warm bodies heat the place up quickly! As we go forward into these uncertain energy cost times, we are doing our part to be prepared.

Thanks for all the support!

Images on this post:

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