

# **Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.**

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## **Strand Theatre Weekly Email: February 10, 2012**

Written by David on February, 9 2012

The work continues. The Strand started our renovation work on March 3, 2007. Our goal for the initial renovation was to work West to East. With little more than a vision and some helping hands the Strand has been transformed from that day into the performance space you see today. The furthest point East for the Strand is the marquee. We are trying to finish it this week. (Warning, serious tech talk ahead)

We, that would be Steve Dennis, Darin McIntire, Ron Moenter & Bob Schlick, in this case, got to work. Several other Strand volunteers worked daily, but the 4 of them did the bulk of the work. That is a good thing. Steve and Darin are our electricians, Ron is our sign guru and Bob....is well Bob. He keeps the place in tip top shape.

The work consisted of several things needing accomplished. First was the replacement of all our fluorescent lamps and cleaning the inside cabinets of the marquee. There are 5 spaces that had to be cleaned. There were a total of 20 lamps replaced. That work went well. Next was the installation and testing of the remaining 300+ light sockets for the chase lights. We had about half of them done before hand. Steve and Darin made sure all sockets were properly installed and wired. That is easier said than done. The corners that curve are very hard to reach. Good thing Steve has long arms. Also the wiring sequence is every fourth socket is tied together. After about 200 of those it gets confusing. All the wires are color coded, but it still took lots of time and patience.

After that was completed and tested, the polycarbonate panels were re-installed. As most of you know, we have never installed the two front panels, they have been sitting in the Cabaret Area against the wall for 2 years. We were not allowed to use the original glass panels, so we had to fabricate new polycarbonate replacements. These were installed and the wire frames for the letters were put in place. It, as with everything else, didn't go quite as easily as hoped. The front panels were a bear to install. It took three people, two ladders and a bucket truck to accomplish. The life of the fluorescent lamps behind those panels is 3 years, so in the spring of 2015 we will pull them out to replace the lamps. We can hear the clock ticking already!

Next project was the sequencer for the chase lights. The sequencer is the unit that makes the lights flash in their pre-determined order. In our case 1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4 and so on. Our solid state sequencer had excellent local provenance....it came from the old Blue River Inn. It was new in the box and never used. Unfortunately it wouldn't do the job. It was 1 off 2 off 3 off 4 off in its sequence. This made the marquee flash. That wouldn't do. Since the new lights run from relays, the sequencer actually controls very little load. We gave Steve Dennis the 2 original units used to sequence the lights that we found inside the marquee during our work. One was from the 1930's and the other we guess is from the 1950's. Steve chose the induction motor driven 1950's unit. It worked like a charm! It was completely adjustable and reliable. There is no doubt that we have the historic look for our marquee lights. The marquee lights are being automated by the same piece of machinery that ran them 60 years ago. We think that is fun.

When was the last time we had flashing lights on the Strand Marquee? According to Dick Delaney, former owner of the theatre and Strand Fan, he guesses it was the late 1970's. In the history of the Strand, that is just not that long ago. Dick, Jim, Patty and Connie have all been great with their advise and help in our entire project. The best gift they gave was being excellent caretakers and operators of the Strand, then known as the Cinema 3, for over 30 years.

Now we have internal lights, external sequenced lights, the only item left was the neon on the top of the marquee. Some of you might remember the original neon on the marquee. It was in the shape of stylized "S" on the rounded corners of the marquee. We opted, at Ron Moenter's suggestion, for a simpler band of neon outlining the top of the marquee. Most of the new neon was installed in 2009 so it was just a matter of applying the power and we would be ready to go. Guess again. Three days later, 4 trips to Indianapolis for parts, hours of head scratching and an outside air temperature that was cold, they still didn't work. Finally Ron found the problem and they should be ready soon.

In case you are wondering, here is how the Strand Marquee will operated. It is lit dusk to dawn daily. We do this not only to have our message read, but also to provide much needed light for the safety of our downtown. The daily lighting consists of 50% of the internal fluorescent lights and the neon on top. During a performance we will bring the other 50% of the internal lights on and run the sequenced lights. When everything is bright and flashing, there will be no doubt something is happening at the Strand!

Even with all the free labor, donated items and general good will, we estimate that we will have around \$10,000 invested in our marquee. We think it is worth it. Next time you see the lights flashing, stop in and catch a performance!

Finishing the marquee means a tremendous amount to the volunteers of the Strand. To celebrate the event we will be holding an official "lighting" ceremony and party. We will schedule it once we are confident everything is done and works. We will let you know when. Until then enjoy the marquee.

This week we have 2 very special events at the Strand. On Saturday night February 11, 2012 comedian Mike Malone will film his concert DVD at the Strand. We need to fill the house for this event. Tickets are available at Mickey's T-Mart. The evening will be Mike and some of his comedian friends. During the filming don't be surprised if the producers re-shoot a few things or turn and get audience shots. We are as curious as you on how it will go. One thing is for sure...it will be fun (and funny).

On Sunday we have a wonderful FREE event. Shelby County Reads selected the book "October Sky" for our one county, one book selection. To help promote and celebrate this selection, the Shelby Community Band will be performing a short concert of space themed music. Immediately following the concert the motion picture "October Sky", an adaptation of the book, will be shown. This is a FREE event. Bring the family from some great live music and a wonderful film. Shelby County Reads involves many facets of our community in the goal to inspire reading amongst our population. The Strand is honored that we can be a small part of their mission.

Thank you for everything you do. We continue to get unsolicited donations into our account at the Blue River Foundation. We are honored that so many help support us. We also are grateful for your attendance at our concerts and events. The Strand is a magical place, and we enjoy helping keep it a vibrant part of our community.

See you at the Strand!

MIKE MALONE COMEDY  
DVD Filming Event  
Saturday  
February 11, 2012

8:00 PM  
\$10

OCTOBER SKY & BAND CONCERT  
Shelby County Reads  
Sunday  
February 12, 2012  
2:00PM  
FREE

**Images on this post:**

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