



COLONIAL FOX THEATRE FOUNDATION *Green Room Newsletter*

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A VIBRANT HEART OF THE CITY



“A great community deserves a great downtown!” Let us be more specific. The Colonial Fox Theatre is the key to a great downtown.

The Colonial Fox will offer fresh and compelling programming in a classic venue which will draw patrons into the downtown district. This steady influx of people will entice new retail stores to make downtown their home. Meantime, complementary retail businesses will be encouraged to relocate or start-up: i.e., Chocolatier, Pastry and Bread Bakery, Tobacco Shop, Fabrics and Fine Yarns, Coffee Bistro, Jazz Lounge.

Such exciting amenities in a thriving urban scene will entice businesses,

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The Fox is Poppin'!

Like the sound of a popcorn machine, the Colonial Fox is Poppin'. Our first POP: rescued from demolition; then more corn was POPPIN': New roof, tuck point west and south walls, and asbestos removal. Now things are really POP POP POPPIN: repaired cracks in north wall, dried out and reinforced the basements.

Although our display of before-

and-after photos illustrate these improvements, we kept hearing, “We can’t see anything!” and “Find a way to show us the progress.” Well, what could be more fun than to measure our successes in hot, buttered POPCORN! Enter Sue Robinson. Remember her from the Movie Screen

Mural? Talented professional faux design painter, Sue designed and

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*“I love thinking that we were a little kernel in that **BIG** popcorn machine. Awesome to see all of your accomplishments!”*

– Heather Horton

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Lucas Justice, Luke Huffman, and Aaron Cassada work from the Heikes Masonry lift platform cutting in the borders of the popcorn cart.

FRP-Yes, this is our Final Answer

Although the final reinforcement stage of the basement project only took a matter of days to complete, we have been preparing almost a year. We made a promise to use local contractors if possible. Therefore, once we decided to utilize the high-tech Fiber Reinforced Polymer (FRP) rather



L to R: John Krudwig, Derek Heikes, Vonnie Corsini, and Mary Kate Sullivan during pre-bid conference.



Craig Freise shows finished column FRP wrapped during training seminar.



Contractors applying epoxy soaked FRP to Colonial Fox basement beams.

than steel, we began exploring how we might familiarize local contractors with the FRP system.

To this end, we sought collaboration with the PSU Kansas Technology Center and SikaWrap® Manufacturing Management Consultant Craig Frieze of Frieze & Associates. Our goal was to offer a training seminar for local contractors alongside PSU faculty and students to introduce this specialized system of structural reinforcement.

We contacted John Krudwig, structural engineer with Krudwig &

Associates and an expert in the design and application of FRP, to present the seminar introducing this cutting-edge alternative to steel reinforcement.

We are thrilled that this state-of-the-art composite is both economical and has a low installation cost. Additional advantages, as you can see in our construction pictures, include its ease of handling. The material is lightweight and flexible. However, what is unseen is that FRP is high strength, non-corrosive and permanent. Final answer for sure!

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manufacturers, and entrepreneurs to relocate and put down roots. These new enterprises, which are attracted by a vibrant downtown district, typically offer higher-paying jobs in a skilled workforce.

A lively downtown atmosphere will attract students and young professionals to live and shop locally, which will increase our local retail sales.

The recipe is clear and from the

beginning the Colonial Fox Theatre Foundation has been on the move, researching and collecting valuable insights from urban renewal experts and historic theatre conferences across the country. Our mission? *To restore the historic Colonial Fox Theatre to be an enduring dynamic cultural center enriching the quality of life and economic vitality for Pittsburg and surrounding communities.*

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Little Shop of Flowers Mark & Jeanne Wretschko
Teresa & Richard Massa

*As of March 8, 2012

MEMORY LANE

Sweet Aromas

Just as aromas often bring to mind past memories, we have found that films likewise cause people to recall a specific time in their lives.

When Margie Brinkman thinks of *The Wizard of Oz*, she is taken back to when she was a little girl. Her mother started bringing her to the theatre as soon as she could walk, and she still remembers being scared to death by the flying monkeys. As she grew older she watched as the movie screen changed. "Before it was like your TV set, it was just a little square screen." Gradually the screen grew in size until she felt as if the action was surrounding her. As a matter of fact, the Colonial Fox was the first theatre to bring cinemascope to the area.



Gone with the Wind is another film tied heavily to a time in people's lives. Barbara Tims* reminisced

about how the movie drew such a crowd, one couldn't walk on Broadway for all the people. Barbara was working at the Colonial Fox at the time and also remembered meeting many people there, including actor Tom Mix. In looking back at her time spent at the theatre, Barbara assured, "It was a great time to be alive--I guarantee you that."

**Barbara passed away on October 16, 2011. We thank Barbara's family for allowing us to use this interview.*

Countdown to October 31st!

We still have a long way to go to match our Save America's Treasures (SAT) fund and our deadline is just around the corner – October 31, in fact. We'll get there, no worries, but we sure can use more help.

Let's review what the matched SAT fund will enable us to do. With these monies, we will have electrical service, heat and air conditioning, a useable stage platform, new exit doors and a beautified east façade. In short, we will have occupancy and ability for limited programs.

Every dollar counts and YOU can make the difference. Send your donation via check or you may use our online PayPal link from <http://colonialfox.org/donate-today.htm>.

MEET JAMES!

James Collver is a Graphic Communication Management major with the Pittsburg State Graphics and Imaging Technologies Department and the newest member of our Foundation staff. James was hired in December 2011 thanks to a grant from PSU's

Federal Work Study Program. His internship with the Foundation will provide him with valuable work experience. As Administrative Assistant and Research Coordinator, James is responsible for coordinating our quarterly Green Room Newsletter and researching archives about the Colonial Fox history. We are excited to have James' talent and research skills helping us drive our vision forward.



POPPIN' continued from page 1

brought to life our *Fox Is Poppin'* cart. Once again, master mason Derek Heikes, of Heikes Masonry, loaned us his forty foot Lull Lift.

Also instrumental in the completion of this exciting mural was a crew from the Caterpillar "Think BIGGER" program at PSU. Lucas Justice, Luke Huffmon, Aaron Cassada, and Michael Stewart were bicycling by the theatre when they saw Vonnie and husband Gene laying out the popcorn wagon design. "When they asked what we were doing I knew I had them," smiles Vonnie. "What kid doesn't want to draw on the wall?"



Sue Robinson stretches to add final touches to the popcorn cart detail.



COLONIAL

FOX

Theatre Vocabulary

Whistling in a Theatre

by Kevin Stone

Whistling seems innocuous enough and, as human behaviors go, it ranks as one of the happier. But within the realm of the theatre, whistling is fraught with dire import. To whistle is to court disaster, whether it's done in the dressing room, backstage, or—gasp!—on the playing area itself. As with most theatre superstitions, there's a reason whistling has such ominous implications. It has to do with backstage communication. In the past, stage crews were often culled from groups of sailors because of their familiarity with the ropes, knots, and pulleys used in stage rigging. Before the advent of wireless headsets, the backstage mariners cued each other in true nautical fashion—they whistled.

Actors, therefore, were careful not to whistle anywhere near the stage. A happy melody could be misinterpreted as a cue for a set piece to “fly in.” A piece of scenery or a backdrop descending at the wrong time could destroy a scene or injure an actor. The unwary whistler could, indeed, cause a debacle. Ever since those days, whistling in a theater has been considered bad luck.

So, no matter how melodious you sound—and no matter how catchy that show tune—wait until you're safely outside the theatre before whistling!