

GIC: Making plans for future successes

Have you ever heard the phrase “rolling with the punches?” Usually this phrase is used when the outcome is looking a bit tough and things are not going your way. It is meant to be uplifting advice that you may have heard from an important person in your life; like a coach, parent, or friend.

When I began to write this article on how the Gothenburg Improvement Company is working to continue business recruitment to Gothenburg by purchasing the old Parker Hannifin (Baldwin) building, the phrase “rolling with the punches” came to mind. The common definition that I came across was: To deal with a problem or situation by doing whatever you need to do, rather than by trying only one method.

“Rolling with the punches” is an old boxing phrase that meant the boxer should adjust to their surroundings and make something positive come from a poor situation. The best competitive boxers are not the ones that have the huge knockout punch, but they are the ones that can “roll with the punches.” In boxing, as also in life, everyone will eventually take a hit as no person or community is immune. Baldwin’s closing was what I would consider to be one of those shots.

When something like this happens, this is the perfect time to come together and make a positive outcome with the hand that you were dealt. In my opinion this is what that GIC board is doing right now with Gothenburg’s recruitment efforts. Creating a positive outcome and new business recruitment is our goal. By purchasing the recently closed Parker Hannifin (Baldwin) facility, we feel it has put the ball in our community’s court and has allowed us to market our community to potential businesses.

Having the community come together to support and pass LB 840 was a huge undertaking and first step. This allows our community to use sales tax funds to assist in the building purchase and allow us to take control of our future. There is a GIC committee that is overseeing the empty facility and making sure that everything is being taken care of and ready to be marketed to companies across the country.

I take great pride in working with the Gothenburg Improvement Company to ensure that our community is continually working to recruit businesses. I am proud of how they have stepped up to ensure the facility is ready for our next recruitment. In situations like this you can either be a community that sits back and complains about how great things were, or you can be the community that gets back on your feet and plans for future success.

“Rolling with the punches” is a key to finding success and stepping up and making things happen has always been the Gothenburg way.

Luke Rickertsen
GIC Board Member



‘Revitalize the Sun’ project will make theatre accessible to everyone

Many people have fond memories of places or events from their childhood. Growing up in Gothenburg, I have several fond memories surrounding the Sun Theater. As a kid, my first introduction to volunteering took place at the Sun Theater, as I would help work the show with my grandmother. It was a lot of fun to be involved in taking care of the movie-goers, with the payment of a free pop and all the popcorn I could eat (which was never as much as I thought it would be). But the most enjoyable part for me was running the leaf-blower to push all the trash to the front row to sweep up at the end of the night. I was having fun doing something to help others, and I felt proud that I was making a difference.

I am certain there are numerous stories from others involving the Sun Theater, and I’m thankful that unlike so many other communities that no longer have a community theater, ours can continue to provide such fond memories for future generations. I think it is very symbolic of our community that our Sun Theater has been able to stand the test of time and remains a thriving part of our community.

The theater was originally built as an opera house in 1909. In 1926, it was changed to a cinema house and operated privately by Glen VanWey. His son Ernie VanWey, with the help of his wife Ethel, would later take over the management of the movie theater and run it until 1981. During that time, a dime would get you not only a movie but also some live orchestra music. When it was time for them to sell the business and no one was able to make a private purchase, the Sun Theater sat vacant for two whole years. This was a critical time for the future of the theater. A successful “Save the Sun” fund drive occurred, and the Gothenburg Community Playhouse stepped up to purchase the property in 1983. The Gothenburg Community Playhouse was established as a non-profit 501(C)(3) corporation that was founded in 1968 with a mission to play a vital role in “promoting an appreciation of fine arts and

cinema in Central Nebraska, to provide diverse opportunities accessible to all, improve quality of life for Gothenburg and neighboring communities as a partner to local businesses and organizations, advocate education and voluntarism, and establish and sustain a safe and inviting gathering place for citizens of all ages to celebrate a shared quality and affordable theatre experience.”

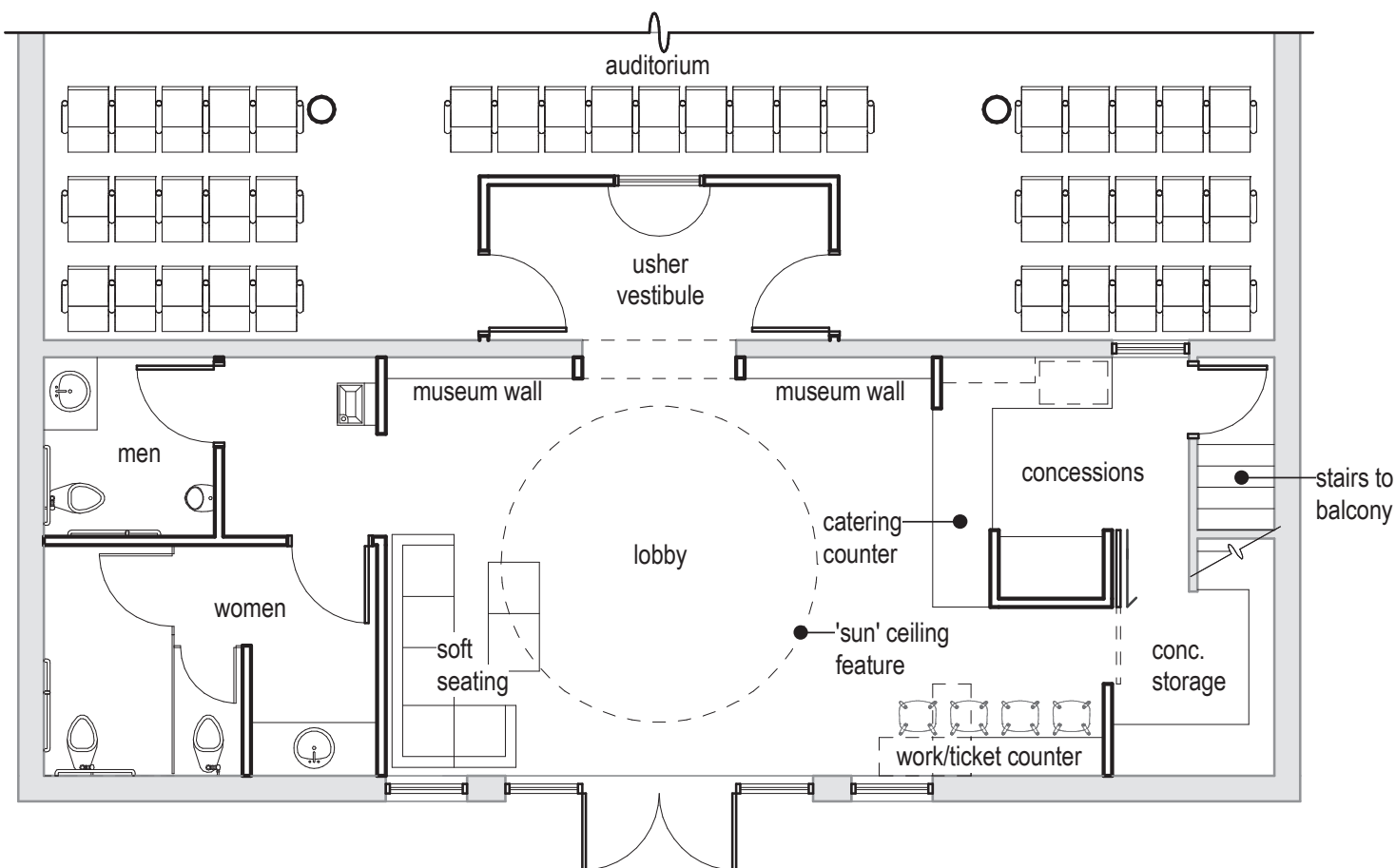
Since the 1983 purchase of the Sun Theater it has been a volunteer-run, self-supporting theater that shows new release movies on the weekends in addition to offering live entertainment throughout the year. Make no mistake about it, if the Gothenburg Community Playhouse would not have stepped up to purchase the movie theater, it would not be in operation today.

Over the years, the movie theater has been able to complete some impressive improvements. The projection system switched from film to digital, the sound system was replaced and is now one of the best in the state, the theater seats have been replaced and the concession and ticket areas have been greatly improved.

The memories I have of the Sun Theater are etched into my mind and I feel it always has been a great Gothenburg treasure. These wonderful memories, however, are able not able to be easily enjoyed by everyone. Due to the age of the building and the small size of the restrooms, there are many people who are unable to attend the Sun Theater movies and events. It is nearly impossible for those who use a walker or wheelchair to use the facilities.

The Gothenburg Community Playhouse is addressing this concerning issue head-on by implementing a fundraiser to complete a remodel of the theater. To improve functionality, the lobby area and theater entrance will be remodeled to improve the flow of attendees, and the front doors will be replaced with more efficient, lighter weight doors. The





restrooms will be made handicap accessible and the seating area for those in need of additional accommodations will be revitalized. This project will update the Sun Theater for the next generation of Gothenburg community members.

Our community has always stepped up to do what is right, and right now we need to make it possible for everyone in our community to attend the theater. There are a lot of memories to still be made at the Sun Theater!

What can you do to help?

This revitalization project is estimated to cost \$383,000, of which \$70,000 has already been raised. By acquiring donations, pledges and grants, the Sun Theater is looking to have raised the money needed to begin construction by the fall of 2019. While this is an aggressive time line for a fundraiser, the Gothenburg Community Playhouse board feels it is achievable because it will be improving such an iconic building in Gothenburg that is used by so many. Over the next several weeks and months you will be asked to step forward and give to the Gothenburg Sun Theater. Please consider helping the cause by making a business or personal donation (all donations are tax deductible). If we come together, we can make this project a reality.

Let's continue to ENJOY THE SHOW!

Luke Rickertsen
GIC Board Member

REVITALIZE THE SUN CAMPAIGN

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Revitalize the Sun project is to renovate and update the front of the theatre for handicap accessibility and efficiency.

- Accessible restrooms
- Plumbing with hot water
- Handicap compliant entrance
- Energy efficient doors
- Improved traffic flow
- Accessible auditorium entrance & seating
- Sound & light reduction into auditorium

EXPENSE

Capital Campaign Cost \$383,000

INCOME

Individual & Business \$64,719
Existing Donations \$68,281
Private Foundations \$100,000
State/Federal Programs \$150,000
Total Fundraising Income \$383,000

To make a donation, contact
Roxanne Converse-Whiting at 308-529-2275

Please join us!

The Community Development Office's 2019 awards night will have a bit of a different feel. We are going away from the traditional sit-down style banquet and are hosting a Business After Hours at the NSG Conference Center on Thursday, March 14, from 5:30 to 8 pm.

With this format change, we are encouraging a more social setting while presentation of awards will be done throughout the evening, on behalf of both the Chamber of Commerce and Gothenburg Improvement Company. Please consider joining us next Thursday for drinks, hors d'oeuvres and an enjoyable evening at the CDO's Business After Hours.

No tickets and no reservations are necessary.



Chamber of Commerce & Gothenburg Improvement Company

BUSINESS *after* HOURS

& AWARDS

Please join us at the NSG Conference Center
5:30-8 pm on Thursday, March 14
for a social event with drinks & hors d'oeuvres

Awards will be presented at various times
throughout the evening.

No tickets or reservations necessary

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