

# HARRINGTON OPERA HOUSE SOCIETY

## 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

### JANUARY 9, 2012

2011 was a very rewarding and productive year for the Harrington Opera House Society. We realized major accomplishments in moving the building forward ever closer to completion and greater utilization of the facility.

#### **Events at the Opera House**

During 2011 the Harrington Opera House held or sponsored numerous events that not only supported the arts but Harrington and the surrounding communities as well.

On March 6 "Handful of Luvin", a quartet from Seattle, performed in the Opera House bringing their unique sound of a cheerful blend of folk-rock, reggae and world rhythms featuring their classically trained violinist.

In April, the Panhandle Pole Cats bluegrass group from Post Falls performed. Several couples found themselves enjoying dancing to this great group.

In May, Charlotte Schacher once again held her art class, the Historic Preservation Committee held their meeting in the Opera House and Mary Michalesen presented a Humanities Washington program about Aunt Phoebe Judson and the Oregon Trail. The family of former Opera House Society member, Bob Steiner, held a memorial.

September and October were busy months. On September 10 the Ryan Larson Band entertained a small but enthusiastic audience. September 16 the Opera House hosted a program entitled "Cowboys and Cowgirls in Story and Song". On September 22 in conjunction with the Harrington Church of the Nazarene, we hosted a concert by gospel group, The Needhams. A return engagement by the Soda Creek 3, a delicious gourmet spaghetti dinner catered and donated by Templin's Country Corner, and an open house in the Opera House and crafts for young and old in the Art Room filled the Fall Festival weekend the end of September.

In October the Odessa- Harrington Titans danced away the evening during their Homecoming Dance and Rachelle Charlton and David Morton were united in marriage. Grammy Award winners, Tingstad and Rumbel, thrilled a filled auditorium with the beautiful music of acoustic guitar, oboe and other woodwinds.

December 3 found Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and an elf visiting the Opera House lobby, which was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season. Karen Robertson took pictures with Santa. The Art Room was open for children to have snacks and participate in craft projects. The day was a great success! In the evening, the Davenport Dance Academy held their recital for a capacity audience.

December also found grade school and high school music students performing the music of the Christmas season in a program under the direction of Ken Mallo. Once again the auditorium was filled capacity.

Billie Herron began teaching piano lessons in the Art Room with proceeds being returned to the Opera House. During lessons, Carol Giles and Amy Yirak offer art projects and drawing lessons in the Art Room. The children participating are having a wonderful experience.

The Art Room has also been used as a "Dressing Room" for entertainers and a meeting place for the H-CATS group.

As 2011 closes, we are looking forward to another exciting year of events and entertainment in the Opera House for 2012.

#### **Event Promotion**

All events were promoted by multimedia means. Posters were created by Karen Robertson for most public events and distributed in Harrington and surrounding towns. Paid advertising was submitted to various regional newspapers, ad papers, and several events were listed on KPBX Public Radio Community Announcements. Ads were placed in "The Venue", the Lincoln County Fair Premium Book, and Davenport Theatrical production programs. Donations helped defray some of our costs.

The Opera House website promoted all public events in advance and posted photos or mention of activities afterwards. A Facebook presence continues to be well received. Social media and internet access have become extremely important in our efforts to promote events and encourage attendance by reaching a much larger audience than just Harrington and even Lincoln County.

## **Museum and Public Exposure**

During the year several groups, including the Spokane Corbin Senior Center, toured the Opera House. In September during the Harrington Fall Festival the museum and Opera House were open to the public for touring.

The Opera House Museum remains popular. Many positive comments continue to be received including the amazement at the volume, quality and variety of the exhibits contained in such a small venue. We are continually accepting gifts and loans of historical interest for display but it is becoming more apparent that we need additional space.

We are actively seeking donations to help defray the expense for last year's purchase of original barbershop equipment.

## **Building Progress**

Slow but steady progress continues on the building rehabilitation. New sound equipment was purchased with funds from a grant from US Bank. Steve Brewster from Davenport Sound Techs gave a one evening workshop on how to run the equipment. Lights in the old stairwell were installed as well as fans in the auditorium. Heat was vented into the Art Room. The proscenium was repaired and a first scratch coat of plaster was put on. Ray Harrington volunteered his time and expertise. Additional painting of the millwork and trim on the front of the building was completed.

## **Grants and Funding**

Grant funding is becoming more and more challenging. This year we received a \$2,000 grant from US Bank, which was used to purchase a new sound system. We have access to the \$25,000 from the Lincoln County Economic Development .09% sales tax grant, but haven't received it yet. Work is just beginning on the Inland Northwest Communities Foundation Grant that is due January 24, 2012.

We received the Building for the Arts Grant of \$66,000, and the Harrington Opera House was the only recipient from Eastern Washington. Gordon is still working to fill out extensive paperwork and despite it's commitment this grant has been extremely challenging. It is yet to be determined if funds will actually be received.

## **Society Appreciation**

The Opera House Society would like to thank the many individuals, organizations and businesses that have so generously donated their time, their talent and their money. Without them none of the success during this past year would have been possible.

## **Summary**

As we end 2011 we look back with pride and are enthused about our progress and accomplishments. It was an eventful year that showcased the commitment and teamwork of our dedicated group. We are looking forward to 2012 with excitement and conviction that this wonderful project will continue to bring arts and entertainment to our community to enrich the lives of many.