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Maumee Uptown Business Spotlight



Originally constructed in 1946, the Maumee Indoor Theater is one of the most notable buildings in uptown Maumee. Today, it serves as a community gathering place for private parties, social events and business meetings. Discounted films are also shown regularly.

MIRROR PHOTO BY MIKE MCCARTHY



In September, Sam Johnson (right) was named the theater's new executive director, replacing longtime executive director Ty Szumigala (left).

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET

Iconic Maumee Indoor Theater Stands Test Of Time In Maumee

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

For seven decades, the Maumee Indoor Theater has stood as one of uptown Maumee's most popular iconic landmarks.

Originally constructed in 1946, the theater's 3-foot-tall neon letters and art deco design make it one of the most unique buildings in the area.

"I think that the theater serves as a touchstone for Maumee," said city administrator John Jezak. "It's not just a building, it's an architectural gem. It is also a place where countless memories have been made: first job, first date, nights out with family and friends. The Maumee Indoor is quintessentially Maumee; physically anchoring the uptown and psychologically, the residents to the city itself."

It nearly fell into ruin, however, after closing in 1996, when then-owner Great Eastern Theater Company could no longer keep the single-house movie theater open in the midst of large multi-theater complexes.

The city stepped in to save the old site, but quickly learned that it wouldn't be easy or cheap.

An appraisal report prepared in June 2000 concluded that the building would need \$3 million in restoration work.

Maumee Mayor Richard Carr, who at the time served as president of Maumee City Council, said the decision to move forward with the project stemmed from council's desire to maintain a building that is vital to the entire city.

"The location of the

Maumee Indoor Theater is at the center of our city," said Carr. "The building is at a critical focal point. A building that is in excellent condition with lights that has people walking into it reflects a community that has life," he said.

Using \$1.35 million in grant money from the Ohio Community Block Grant program, the three-year theater restoration project proceeded and the theater reopened in May 2004.

Today, an average of 500 community events take place there annually and the theater features full-length films in both regular and 3-D formats at discounted rates.

Three unique rental spaces are available for private screenings, birthday parties, business meetings, concerts and social events.

Sam Johnson, who was named executive director last month, replacing longtime director Ty Szumigala, said the events that take place there are part of life's important experiences.

"Our goal is to give back to the community that allows us to be here and operate on a daily basis. Hosting these events give us the ability to be a part of someone's wedding day that they will remember forever, or a child's first time on stage or even a novice filmmaker seeing their work go from a laptop screen to full-sized movie screen," he said.

The city owns and operates the theater and Great Eastern Theater Company manages the property. This year, the city estimates an operating deficit of \$54,820 to keep it running. Mayor Carr said the costs are worth it.

"The city pays for operating expenses of the theater, just as we pay operating costs for Rolf Park for swimming, soccer, softball and more. Our theater provides recreation activities that are just as important as athletic activities," he said.

In 2014, Heritage Ohio, a not-for-profit preservation organization, named it the Historic Theater of the Year.

The Maumee Indoor Theater is located at 601 Conant St. in Maumee.

For information about booking a special event, please call (419) 897-8901.

For information about show times, please call (419) 897-8902.

Information is also available at www.maumeeindoor.com.



Maumee Indoor Theater employee Mikayla Becker serves concessions with a smile.

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET



In September 2014, Heritage Ohio, a not-for-profit preservation organization, named the Maumee Indoor its Historic Theater of the Year. The theater once closed and fell into ruin until 2000, when the city stepped in and saved it. Pictured are (from left) Maumee City Council member John Boellner, city administrator John Jezak, former Maumee Mayor Tim Wagener, former theater manager Ty Szumigala, Maumee Mayor Richard Carr, former Maumee City Council member Jenny Barlos and Maumee City Council member Julie Rubini.

MIRROR PHOTO BY MIKE MCCARTHY

Uptown Update

THE LATEST NEWS IN UPTOWN MAUMEE

MUBA Hosts Monthly Membership Meetings

Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) membership meetings are open to all MUBA members. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

MUBA Announces Uptown Trick-Or-Treat

Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) will host the annual Uptown Trick-or-Treat on Monday, October 24 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Maps, bags and pumpkin painting will be available at the Maumee police station courtyard. The event is designed for children ages 12 and under and all children must be accompanied by an adult.

MUBA Hosts Maumee Holiday Open House

The Uptown Maumee Holiday Open House will take place on Sunday, November 13 from noon to 4:00 p.m. The event will feature holiday specials at uptown businesses. In addition, at 4:00 p.m. the Maumee Indoor Theater will host a free family holiday movie.