**Fairborn theater’s renovations stall due to a lack of funding**
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**Local association working to get money to finish work**

By Amber Riippa, Contributing Writer 8:31 AM Thursday, February 18, 2010

FAIRBORN — One of Fairborn’s most cherished and historic landmarks is undergoing a multimillion-dollar makeover to once again become the city’s marquee entertainment venue.

The organization leading the renovation project, the Fairborn Performing Arts and Cultural Association, has raised about $112,000 to date.

But with a $3 million to $5 million price tag to complete the renovations, the president of the organization working to open the Fairborn Performing Arts Center said the group does not have the money to complete the project.

“The biggest problem is getting the amount of funding we need to continue on. We’re at a standstill,” said Carol Baugh, president and historian of the Fairborn Performing Arts and Cultural Association.

Because the landmark was placed on National Register of Historic Places in 2005, she said the majority of the funding is expected to come through federal and state grants. But with the hefty price tag to complete the renovations, Baugh said the group does not have nearly enough money, and no one knows where the funding will come from.

# Donations key to restoring theater[Hyperlink to story, part II](http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/community/fairborn/donations-key-to-restoring-theater-554346.html)

## Association hopes to add 600 to 700 seats and 16,000 square feet.

By Amber Riippa, Contributing Writer 8:33 AM Thursday, February 18, 2010

FAIRBORN — The bid to restore one of Fairborn’s famed buildings will depend on whether the group leading the effort can receive enough money in grants and private donations during the next few months.

During its heyday, the Fairborn Theater closed once — in 1973 for renovation.

Carol Baugh, president and historian of the Fairborn Performing Arts and Cultural Association, said the theater finally closed in 2000 because of lack of business. The theater was donated to the association in 2002 by its original owners, the Chakeres family.

“The building is in need of a total renovation. I mean, it was built in ’48,” Baugh said.

The Chakeres family owned a chain of movie theaters, and the Fairborn location marked its 47th theater when it opened on Jan. 27, 1948.

Renovation plans have been under way since the association assumed control of the theater.

Baugh said their plans are to add about 600 to 700 seats and an additional 16,000 square feet.

She said plans call for installing heating, cooling and electricity and new plaster, and then building the addition onto the old theater.

Senior architect Laura Piersall said the association is working with Hardlines Design Company of Columbus to develop a master plan, which includes renovation and stabilization work. They will be working with Heapy Engineering of Dayton.

Phase one of the renovation — which was to stabilize the building and fix the roof — is almost complete, Piersall said.

Once all the work is completed, Baugh hopes to reopen the venue to offer plays, band concerts, dance recitals, old movie features and maybe even a battle of the bands.

The Fairborn Theatre was the first business to use the city’s name on a building, said Baugh. The 48-foot tower still displays “FAIRBORN” on the marquee, though it needs to be repaired, too.

“Most of our board members grew up in Fairborn and attended the theater as children,” Baugh said. “They have their stories to tell. It’s a lot of support that way, through stories. You know, of how they proposed to their wives at the theater. I think the citizens are quite anxious to see it renovated.”

She said the theater still has a mural inside of a military scene showing an airplane, a male soldier and the Women’s Army Corps. Plans are to keep the mural and other pieces of art that depict the idea of flight.

She said donors will have options to be recognized for their efforts to help restore the theater. They include receiving reserved seats, plaques or bricks on the theater with their name engraved, or even having the lobby named after them.

Sherwood Kelley, a former board member of the association, said several area businesses have already donated to the theater, including Cemex, Goodyear of Fairborn, Wright-Patt Credit Union and Dr. Horton’s Animal Hospital.

For more information or to donate, visit the association’s Web site at www.fairbornpac.org.