

# Bill Cornelius: A lot has been accomplished in nine years

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It is almost hard to believe that it has been nine full years since a steering committee was formed to investigate the feasibility of the non-profit, State Theatre for the Arts, purchasing the historic State Theatre for use as a performing and cultural arts center by the entire community.

At that time, STFTA occupied the theater on a rental basis, and opened its doors around a dozen times per year to offer movies and other low-budget events. Without owning and restoring the theater, it was impossible to fully realize what the theater could be to the community.

After a year-long study, the 14-member steering committee swallowed hard and recommended that STFTA, with the support of the entire community, purchase and restore the 75-year-old theater—and boy, has this wonderful community supported our decision.

In the past eight years this economically-challenged little community has opened their hearts as well as their checkbooks, and today the STFTA owns the State Theatre property free and clear.

Additionally, the STFTA owns free and clear the Marv Locke Annex building adjacent to the theater that serves as a green room for touring concert performers.

Lastly, because of the amazing support of a giving community, the State Theatre is substantially restored. It looks very much like it did when it opened its doors in 1946. Best of all, there is no outstanding debt attached to the purchase and restoration of the theater; in fact, at the present time the State Theatre bank account holds a very prudent reserve.

In addition to purchasing and restoring the theater, the STFTA Board of Directors has worked very hard to build a performance-based product to be enjoyed by all segments of the community. At the current time approximately 50 events, concerts, programs take place at the theater on an annual basis. These events fall in to two distinct categories: the State Theatre Performance Series programming and the State Theatre Rental programming.

Performance Series programming: In 2018, the State Theatre for the Arts sponsored 22 concerts featuring nationally recognized entertainers such as Clint Black, Lee Ann Womack, the Bellamy Brothers and the Gatlin Brothers. It is only with the financial

support provided by our Performance Series Sponsors that we are able to bring such quality entertainment to this small community.

If you would like to continue to have quality entertainers appear at the State Theatre, I suggest you do two things. First, when you see a representative of the following great Performance Series Sponsors, let them know you appreciate their role in bringing quality entertainment to Red Bluff: PJ Helicopters, Haleakala Walnuts, Dignity Health, Rolling Hills Casino, David and Tina Gunsauls, Tehama Angus, The Paint Smith, Mill Creek Ranch, The Prescott, John Wheeler Logging, Tedon Specialties, Ken Miller Attorney at Law, Banner Bank, KIXE Public Television, Sierra Pacific Foundation and Cornerstone Bank.

More important, you should know that in order to continue bringing quality entertainment to the theater, we need people to attend our events. Rest assured that a half-empty theater would see us lose money. We have an obligation to our sponsors, membership and other donors not to lose money. Please attend when you can.

Rental program: Perhaps even more important than bringing famous entertainers to the Haleakala Stage is what is achieved through our rental program. We make it a priority to rent out the theater at a very reasonable rate for use by for profit and non-profit groups within Tehama County.

In calendar year 2018, the theater served as the venue of choice for 24 such community-based groups as the Tehama Concert Series, various academic graduations, the Search for Talent contest, Mercy High Musical, the Masterworks Chorale, the Selah Dance Academy, class reunions, the Missoula Children's Theatre, the Writing Celebration and the State Theatre Children's Theatre workshop.

These events provide members of the community with a platform to achieve agency goals. We are particularly proud that thousands of children are exposed to the arts at the historic State Theatre through these programs. Let me share with you information about one such program that will take place at the theater this coming Saturday, Jan. 19, at 2 p.m.

This Saturday the dedicated group of citizens belonging to PETS, Providing Essentials for Tehama Shelter, are sponsoring a one-of-a kind event at the State Theatre that they have appropriately named, Not Every Hero Wears a Cape.

The event will feature a nationally acclaimed animated film titled "Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero." Sgt. Stubby is unlike anything else you will see in feature animations. Sgt. Stubby was unquestionably the most decorated canine to ever serve his county. Sgt. Stubby saw front line action in 17 battles, was promoted to the rank of Sergeant, and was made a lifetime member of the Red Cross, the YMCA and The American Legion. In honor of the American Legion's 100th anniversary, there will be a very special presentation as part of the event.

In what this writer thinks is a terrific idea, the event also will honor this community's local heroes by recognizing members of the Young Marines; the Red Bluff Police Department; Tehama County Sheriff's Department; California Highway Patrol; Cal Fire; Tehama County Veterans Services; the American Legion/VFW and the Tehama County Police Activities League.

In summary, this is one event that is too good to pass up. Where else for only \$6 for adults and \$3 for children can you get out on a winter afternoon and enjoy a bag of popcorn in the most beautiful and comfortable theater around; and enjoy all this while watching an award-winning animated film honoring one of the most famous dogs of all time—along with our hometown heroes for what they do to keep us safe each and every day.

The folks at PETS have worked like dogs (pun intended) to make this a great event. You can thank them for all they do by being in your State Theatre seat come Saturday afternoon. Tickets available at the door.

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